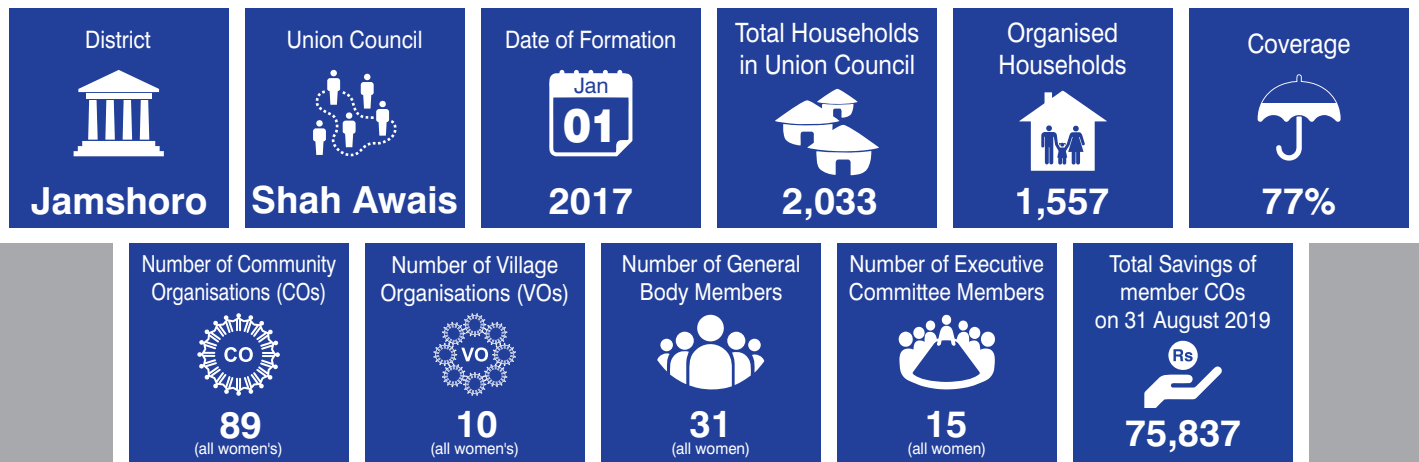


What are LSOs?

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 Shah Awais Qarni, Jamshoro



(LSO Profile as of 31 August, 2019)

LSO Shah Awais Qarni, from District Jamshoro was formed in January 2017 by 1,557 member households organised in 89 COs and 10 VO. Women leaders of LSO Shah Awais Qarni 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.

Exhibition to Promote Embroidery Products by LSO Members

Under the EU funded SUCCESS programme, community members have access to vocational training in various trades, to earn an income. Embroidery is traditionally practiced by a large number



of women in Sindh. By improving their basic skills, these women can earn a steady income. However, they face problems in marketing their products with adequate pricing because there is a huge gap between the rural



artisans and urban marketing centres. Additionally, they do not have access to other artisans work to learn from their expertise.

Therefore, in August 2018, LSO leaders organised an exhibition and invited artisans from six LSOs of Taluka Manjhand, District Jamshoro. Over 100 women artisans participated in the exhibition and displayed their products. This exhibition proved productive for the artisans as they learnt from each other's expertise. Some of their products were also sold during the exhibition.

Mr. Sohail Arain, the Additional Deputy Commissioner (2) Jamshoro visited the event and assured his support to further promote their products. The District Team of Thardeep Rural Development Programme (TRDP) also visited the exhibition and appreciated the work of the artisans. On the advice of the TRDP District team, the artisans decided to form artisan groups to promote marketing of their products. So far, six artisan groups have been formed. These groups are trying to contact the officials of Chamber of Commerce (Hyderabad), wholesalers and large outlets of embroidery products in Hyderabad and Jamshoro.

Campaign on Enrolment of Children in Schools

Earlier, people in most of the villages of UC Shah Awais Qarni had no interest in enrolling their children in schools. The main reasons for this lack of interest, includes unavailability of washrooms in girls' schools and irregular attendance of teachers in schools. Additionally, most parents do not know the strategic importance of basic literacy and numeracy for their children.

However, when the Community Resource Persons (CRPs) conducted awareness raising sessions on the importance of basic education in the socio-economic development of human beings, they realised its

importance and decided to enrol their children in schools. LSO Shah Awais Qarni organised enrolment walks in 22 villages of their Union Council. As a result of their efforts, 843 children were enrolled in the year of 2018.



Utilisation of SMC Funds

All government schools have School Management Committees (SMCs) to promote the cause of education through public-private partnership. The Education Department pays annual funds to these SMCs. However, most of these SMCs are not functional and the funds are either never utilised or utilised in improper ways. As such, a large part of these funds are embezzled by the SMC members.

The LSO leaders of Shah Awais Qarni learnt about the misappropriation of funds through the SUCCESS programme. The LSO leaders decided to meet SMCs of government schools in their Union Council to persuade them to use the SMC funds on missing facilities and the renovation of schools. So far, the LSO leaders have held meetings with 10 SMCs. According to the LSO leaders, the initial response of the SMCs members was very positive and they have promised to utilise the SMC funds appropriately.



"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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 Edited by: Ghamae Jamal, RSPN
 Acknowledgement: Khimchand, Documentation and Communication Officer, TRDP
 Designed & Printed by: Masha ALLAH Printers, Islamabad

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