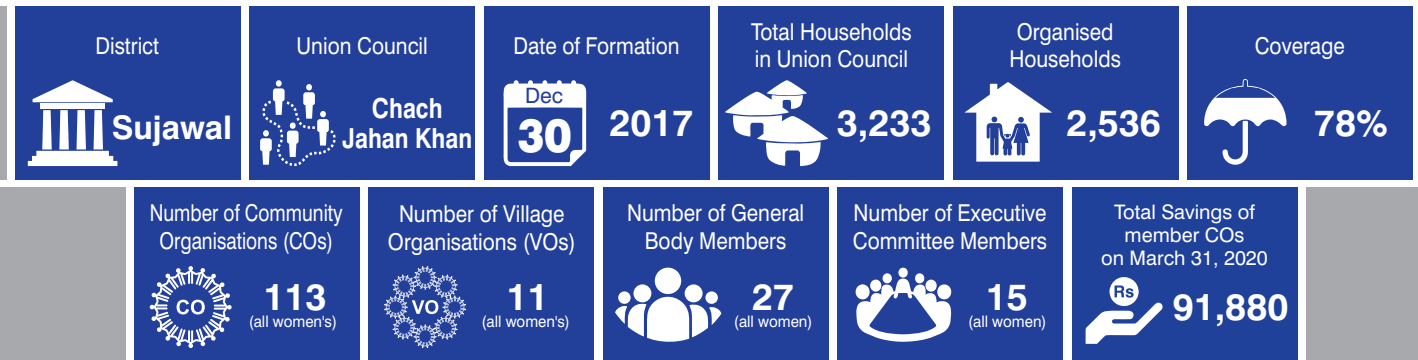


What are LSOs?

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 Chach Jahan Khan, Sujawal



(LSO Profile as of March 31, 2020)

LSO Chach Jahan Khan, from District Sujawal was formed in December 2017 by 2,536 member households organised into 113 COs and 11 VOs. Women leaders of LSO Chach Jahan Khan are planning and implementing development activities both on self-help basis as well as in collaboration with government agencies. 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, making the service providers accountable and also taking self-initiatives to improve their lives.

Response to COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic is the biggest public health challenge the world has faced in recent history. In Pakistan, the pandemic initially hit the cities, however, it gradually started spreading in the rural areas of the country as well. Both the Federal and Provincial governments are trying to provide healthcare, educate public, provide financial assistance to the poorest families and conduct research to better understand the disease.

The organised communities in the form of COs, VOs and LSOs under the EU funded SUCCESS programme are also trying their best to combat the pandemic at local level. The women leaders of LSO Chach Jahan Khan have undertaken several activities in this regard. The women Community Resource Persons (CRPs) are



Awareness Sessions on COVID-19 in LSO Chach Jahan Khan

providing awareness to LSO members about the pandemic and educating them about safeguarding and preventive measures during the Community Awareness Toolkit (CAT) sessions in the COs. Following the guidelines of Government of Sindh, the CRPs ensure keeping a distance of six feet among the participants during the CO meetings. After delivering the scheduled CAT sessions, the CRPs educate the participants about preventive measures against the spread of COVID-19, which include: a) wash hand frequently with soap, b) avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth without first



washing hands, c) follow cough/sneeze hygiene practices, d) stay home, e) maintain physical distancing (avoid large gatherings and keep a distance of at least 6 feet when in the company of others), and f) wear a face mask if sick with cold/ flu-like symptoms or when outside the home in an area with others. So far, CRPs have conducted such sessions in 45 COs.

The women LSO leaders have also distributed 450 face masks among LSO members. The LSO members who had received tailoring training through the Technical and Vocational Skills Training (TVST) programme, under the EU funded SUCCESS programme, started stitching face masks and decided to distribute them among members free of charge. So far, they have prepared and distributed 100 face masks made of cloth. Meanwhile, the LSO leaders contacted the UC Chairman and requested him to provide additional face masks. The UC Chairman provided 350 face masks and the LSO leaders distributed them among the members.

In addition, the LSO leaders have distributed 5,400 hand washing soaps among their members. They first collected funds from members for purchasing soaps, while also distributing 1,000 soaps with their own funds. They then approached the UC chairman for support, who provided 4,400 hand washing soaps which they distributed among their members. The soaps were distributed among some 2,450 families according to their family size, i.e. more soaps in households with larger family members.



Distribution of hand washing soaps by the activists of LSO Chach Jahan Khan

The women LSO leaders managed to register 1,250 poor families under the Federal Governments EHSAAS Emergency Cash Programme. All these families have received PKR 12,000 each from the Programme. Thus the LSO leaders' support to these vulnerable families was instrumental in getting PKR 15 million from government sources. In addition to that, the LSO leaders have supported 280 poor families in getting registered under EHSAAS Ration Programme. The LSO leaders hope that this government support will significantly help the poorest families in overcoming socioeconomic hardships in these difficult times.

Plantation of 10,150 Trees

As part of its environmental improvement programme, the Government of Sindh (GoS) launched tree plantation campaigns in the past winter. Under this scheme, the GoS Forest Department provides rooted forest plants on subsidised rates to people for

planting in their courtyards, farm fields and other free spaces in and around residential areas. Realising the strategic importance of trees as family assets, providing shade in hot weather, providing fodder for domestic animals and cleaning the air etc., the LSO leaders decided to join hands with the GoS in this campaign. The LSO leaders recognise that they learnt about afforestation during the CAT sessions provided by the CRPs. On the instruction of the LSO leaders, the Village Organisation (VO) leaders raised awareness among their member COs about the benefits and importance of tree plantation and created effective demand for planting materials. They submitted the demands for tree saplings to the LSO leaders. The LSO leaders then approached the Forest Department for provision of rooted trees for onward distribution among CO members through VOs. The LSO leaders bought 1,000 saplings at subsidised rates from the Forest Department, and distributed these amongst the VOs. The VO leaders further distributed the saplings among their member COs after receiving the actual cost of the saplings. However, due to the awareness raising campaign for tree plantation, the demand for saplings was quite high among the LSO members. Therefore, the LSO leaders requested the Forest Department to provide more saplings, and received 4,100 additional ones for onward distribution among the CO members. However, the demand of saplings from the CO members was so overwhelming, the VO leaders themselves contacted the Forest Department and managed to get an additional 5,050 saplings. The aggregate number of trees planted by the LSO has risen to 10,150.

Support Government Health Department in Polio Campaign

The women LSO leaders actively supported the Government Health Department in the effective launch of Polio vaccination campaigns at the UC level. The LSO leaders announced the date of the Polio vaccination across the UC well on time and informed each residing family via their network of VOs and COs. On vaccination day, the CRPs, who work under the LSO, joined the Health Department's vaccination teams to administer Polio drops to children. The VO leaders helped convince those families that were resisting vaccination, to allow Polio drops to be given to their children. They also made a note of the children missed in the campaigns, and informed Polio teams so that they could overcome the gap during their follow up visits. Due to the coordinated efforts of the LSO and Health Department, the vaccination campaigns achieved maximum results at the UC level.



Polio Campaign in LSO Chach Jahan Khan



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