

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 Shahanshah, Jamshoro



<p>District</p>  <p>Jamshoro</p>	<p>Union Council</p>  <p>Jaffarabad</p>	<p>Date of Formation</p>  <p>20 2018</p>	<p>Total Households in Union Council</p>  <p>1,471</p>	<p>Organised Households</p>  <p>1,328</p>
<p>Coverage</p>  <p>90%</p>	<p>Number of Community Organisations (COs)</p>  <p>74 (all women's)</p>	<p>Number of Village Organisations (VOs)</p>  <p>10 (all women's)</p>	<p>Number of General Body Members</p>  <p>26 (all women)</p>	<p>Number of Executive Committee Members</p>  <p>15 (all women)</p>

(LSO Profiles up to 31 December 2020)

LSO Shahanshah, from District Jamshoro was formed in January 2018 by 1,328 member households organised into 74 COs and 10 VOs. Women leaders of LSO Shahanshah 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 are now gaining awareness about their rights, making the service providers accountable and also taking self-initiatives to improve their lives.

In the union council of Jaffarabad, 73% of school-going age children including 81% girls and 73% boys are out of school (SUCCESS PSC Survey 2016). Among many supply side and demand side issues, lack of awareness among parents about the importance of education is one of the reasons for such huge number of out of school children. The women Community Resource Persons (CRPs) under the EU funded SUCCESS programme have conducted awareness raising sessions with women community leaders and members on the strategic and practical importance of education. As a result of these sessions, the LSO leaders decided to transform this mass awareness into action. The women LSO leaders then motivated all VO leaders to lead enrolment campaigns for admission of girls and boys into schools. The women VO leaders first identified the number of out of school children and found that a total of 575 children (345 girls and 230 boys), were not going to school in union council Jaffarabad. They then started doing house to house visits in their respective villages to motivate and guide the parents for enrollment of their children in school. Simultaneously, they held meetings with the head teachers of the schools and sought their support for maximum enrolment of students. Because of these efforts, 275 children (165 girls and 110 boys) were enrolled in the local government schools during the last two years. The remaining

Campaign for Enrolment of Children in Schools

Enrollment of Out of School Girls and Boys in Government Schools			
	No of Out of School Children	Children Enrolled in Schools by LSO Leaders	
Girls	 325	165	51%
Boys	 250	110	44%
Total	575	275	48%



300 boys and girls are still out of school. The LSO leaders are committed that they will ensure 100% enrolment of school age girls and boys in schools by the next academic session.

Activities to Enhance the Status of Education

During the enrolment campaign, the LSO leaders learned that three government schools were closed in villages Ramzan Panhyar, Koor Miyani and Sher Muhammad Khoso due to unavailability of teachers. Moreover, they realised that due to lack of a middle school for girls in their UC, the girls drop out of school. Some of the girls were going to the neighboring UC Bhan Saeedabad for getting education, while a majority of the girls had to discontinue their education after primary level.

On 10th of November 2019, the members of LSO Executive Committee invited the Assistant Commissioner (AC) Sehwan Mr. Noor Ahmed Khahro and Union Council Chairman Mr. Ghulam Qadir Bhalai in their monthly meeting. The LSO leaders briefed them about the problems they faced regarding education, especially female education, clean drinking water and health facilities and other development needs in their UC. As part of their Union Council Development Plan, the LSO members submitted an application to the AC Sehwan for establishing a girls' middle school in UC Jaffarabad. The AC promised to raise their problem with the Education Department to allocate funds for construction of a girls' middle school in the UC.



LSO leaders meeting with UC Chairman

The LSO leaders also explained the issue of unavailability of teachers in three schools and submitted an application to appoint teachers in those schools. On the advice of the AC, the Tehsil Education Officer (TEO) appointed teachers in two government schools located in villages Ramzan Panhyar and Koor Miyani. These two schools are now functional and both girl and boy students have resumed their education.

The government school in village Haji Khan Bozdar has no boundary wall. Due to lack of the boundary wall, the girl and boy students feel themselves unsafe in the school. Moreover, the playground around the school building could not be maintained properly, therefore, the students cannot play in it. The LSO leaders explained the issue with the AC and the UC Chairman and asked them to arrange funds for construction of the boundary wall. The AC and the UC Chairman promised to provide the needful help in this regard.



The Govt. Primary School without a boundary wall

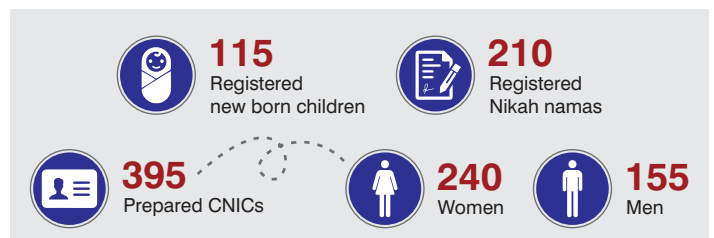
The women LSO leaders feel so proud for being able to invite the AC and UC Chairman in their monthly meeting. Though most of their development issues were not resolved through this meeting, but they feel satisfied that at least first time in the history of their UC, both the AC and UC Chairman accepted their invitation and came to meet them at their LSO office, listened to them and promised to provide whatever help they can to resolve the development issues raised by them. They rightly think that this was a new window of opportunities that they have opened for themselves with the help of their LSO forum.

Support to Malnourished Children

Identified 7 malnourished and treated children

After getting sensitised about the importance of nutrition during the awareness-raising session on nutrition under the EU funded Programme for Improved Nutrition (PINS) programme, the LSO leaders conducted a survey in the union council to identify the number of malnourished children. Seven children were identified who were suffering from malnourishment and in critical condition. The LSO leaders shared the data of these children with the nutrition experts, who checked them properly and provided them with required food and food supplements. The LSO leaders are taking these children to Bhan Saeedabad and Sehwan Hospital for regular check-up on monthly basis. As a result of the treatment and proper care, the health status of these children is improving steadily.

Support to Members for Civic Registration



There was no tradition of birth registration among the common people in UC Jaffarabad. If the birth registration is not done on time, people face immense difficulties at the time of admission of children in school and later on getting National Identity Card.



In Pakistan, all adult citizens are required to hold a valid Computerised National Identity Card (CNIC) upon reaching the age of 18. It serves as an identification document to authenticate an individual's identity as the citizen of Pakistan. A valid CNIC is required to get financial support from BISP, Zakat and Baitulmal departments, receive medical facilities from Government and private health institutions, buy a bus or railway ticket for travel, buy a SIM card for the mobile phone, caste vote during elections and open bank accounts. However, a large number of adult women and men of UC Jaffarabad had never made their CNICs. Moreover, a significant number of women and men had not renewed their expired CNICs. Therefore, they were deprived of many important services and supplies from Government and other agencies.

The Muslim Family Law Ordinance, under Section 5, requires mandatory registration of all marriages performed under Muslim Law. For the purposes of registration, every Union Council appoints a Nikah Registrar in its area and that Nikah Registrar is issued a license by the Union Council. The Nikah-nama describes the rights and obligations agreed upon by both parties (the bride and the groom) which confirms the consent of both the husband and the wife. If the Nikah is not registered, then both partners have to face legal and social problems in settling sustenance, divorce and inheritance cases. But very few families used to register Nikah-nama.

The awareness sessions delivered by the Community Resource Persons (CRPs) on the need and importance of basic registrations was instrumental in inspiring the LSO leaders for launching campaigns on birth and nikah registration and having valid CNICs. So far, they have been successful in registering 115 new born children and obtaining birth certificates, preparing 395 CNICs including 240 women and 155 men and registering 210 Nikah namas.

Activities to Improve Health Status of the UC Residents

400 souls including
160 women and **240** men
vaccinated against **Hepatitis B**

UC Jaffarabad is located in a remote corner of district Jamshoro. Therefore, the medical institutions and staff of both the Government and private sectors are out of reach of a large number of the poor families of the UC. The drinking water sources are mostly polluted across the UC, so diarrhoea and skin diseases are common among both children and adults. Therefore, the LSO leaders informed the members of their VOs to go and get medical checkup and medicines from the two medical camps organised in the neighboring UC Bubak.

Hepatitis B is spreading fast among the UC people due to using polluted water for drinking and dish washing. The good

news is that the hepatitis B vaccine gives more than 90% protection to people who get the vaccine. However, the community members were not aware about Hepatitis B vaccination. The LSO leaders took efforts and conducted meetings with community elders and convinced them for vaccination. They also approached the District Health Officer (DHO) and requested him to organise a medical camp at village Nangar Khan Brohi. The DHO agreed with the LSO leaders and sent a vaccination team to the village. The LSO organised the medical camp and informed the community people about the date and venue of the medical camp in advance. Over 400 people including 160 women and 240 men were vaccinated against Hepatitis B. The LSO leaders are planning to organise more medical camps to vaccinate maximum population of their UC.

Efforts to Combat COVID-19

When COVID-19 pandemic hit the country, the LSO leaders initiated self-help initiatives to address the issues faced by their community at local level. Later on, they coordinated with the Government and helped the authorities in their fight against the pandemic. Below are the activities of the LSO Shanshah in this regard:

97 families were provided
ration bags from **local Sardar**

- During the lockdown period, the poorest families who were dependent on daily wage income faced a food crisis, as their income sources were closed and the prices of food items had gone very high. The LSO leaders decided to help such families. They went to meet a local Sardar/ land lord, briefed him about the plight of the poorest families and requested him for help. The Sardar provided them ration bags to such families. The Sardar asked the LSO leaders not mention his name and never take pictures of the beneficiaries, because he wanted to avoid worldly reputation. The ration bags had 20kg wheat, 5kg rice, 2kg edible oil, 2kg sugar, garam masala packets and 4 body soaps. The LSO leaders, with the support of VO leaders, identified deserving families and distributed food items among 97 families in villages Nangar Khan Brohi, Koor Miyani, Ramzan Panhyar, Sobho Khan Lund, Haji Khan Bozdar, Arbi Daro. Shaikh, Bangal Khan Bozdar, Bahadur Khan Chandio and Sher Muhammad Khoso.

More than 500 poor families received
funds from **EHSAAS Cash Grant**

- When the Federal Govt. announced EHSAAS Cash Grant Programme, the LSO leaders realised that a large number of eligible families would not be able to register themselves online. They, therefore, held meetings with their VO leaders



and motivated them to help the poor families get themselves registered with EHSAAAS Cash Grant on time using mobile messages. As a result of their timely effort, more than 500 families received PKR12,000 per family from the Govt.

250 families were provided ration bags from Government

- As part of the agreement signed between RSPN/RSPs and NCOC to take collaborative efforts to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, TRDP signed an MoU with the district Government Sehwan to support in COVID-19 efforts by involving the LSOs. LSO Shahanshah also took part in this initiative. On the request of the Local Government Authorities, the LSO nominated the LSO President and Community Book Keeper (CBK) to become member of the Local Committee for identification of eligible members to receive ration bags and other support from the Government. The two LSO members validated the list of beneficiaries prepared by the Government Authorities and took out the non-eligible families from the list and included the missing eligible members in it. The CBK accompanied distribution of the ration bags in three villages to ensure that the ration bags are distributed among the listed families. The Government Authorities distributed in the remaining villages. A total of 250 poor families received ration bags from the Government.
- TRDP decided to provide Income Generation Grants (IGGs) to the poorest families on an emergency basis from the EU funded SUCCESS programme, so that they start small scale income generating activities. The LSO leaders helped the member COs and VOs to process the identification, documentation and distribution of IGGs on a fast track.



The poorest members of the LSO receiving their IGG cheques from TRDP

Plantation of Trees

A total of **2,200** trees planted by the **LSO members** in their **UC**

The people of UC Shahanshah had never realised that how important roles trees play in their lives, like reducing the heat during summer by providing shade, improving the air quality by producing oxygen and inhaling carbon di oxide gas, producing fodder for their domestic animals and fruits to improve their nutrition. After attending the CAT awareness sessions under the EU funded SUCCESS programme, they learned about the benefits of trees. Therefore, they decided to plant trees in their UC area. They purchased rooted plants from government and private nurseries and distributed them among their members who planted them in their courtyards and other free spaces. They also advised their members to uproot the unwanted tree saplings grown in their farm fields and re-plant them in free spaces in their courtyards and other nearby places.

They also received 800 Moringa tree saplings from the EU funded ER 3 programme and distributed among the poorest members. Moringa tree has several nutritious benefits. Its leaves have 7 times more vitamin C than oranges and 15 times more potassium than bananas. It also has calcium, protein, iron, and amino acids, which help human body heal and build muscle. It is also packed with antioxidants, substances that can protect cells from damage and may boost people's immune system. Thus, the Moringa trees will improve the nutrition status of the family members after they are grown up and the family members eat its leaves. So the LSO and VO leaders were succeeded in planting a total of 2,200 trees in their UC.



An LSO member watering her newly planted tree



"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"

Reported by: Mohammad Ali Azizi, RSPN
Edited by: Fazal Ali Saadi, Programme Manager, SUCCESS Programme, RSPN
Acknowledgment: Abdul Saeed Soomro, Unit Incharge Taluka Sehwan, District Jamshoro Khimchand, Documentation and Communication Officer, SUCCESS TRDP
Designed & Printed by: Masha ALLAH Printers, Islamabad

THE LSO INITIATIVES SERIES IS BY THE RURAL SUPPORT PROGRAMMES NETWORK



Web: eas.europa.eu/delegations/pakistan_en
Facebook: European Union in Pakistan
Twitter: EUPakistan

Web: www.success.org.pk
Facebook: [successprogramme](https://www.facebook.com/successprogramme)
Twitter: [SUCCESSinSindh](https://twitter.com/SUCCESSinSindh)

Web: www.rspn.org
Facebook: [RSPNPakistan](https://www.facebook.com/RSPNPakistan)
Twitter: [RSPNPakistan](https://twitter.com/RSPNPakistan)