



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 mobilise rural communities 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 Ibtida, Kambar

 District Kambar Shahdadkot	 Union Council Dhori	 Date of Formation 2017	 Total Households in Union Council 5,293	 Organised Households 3,330	 Coverage 63%
	 Number of Community Organisations (COs) 146 (all women's)	 Number of Village Organisations (VOs) 19 (all women's)	 Number of General Body Members 38 (all women)	 Number of Executive Committee Members 11 (all women)	

(LSO Profile as of October 2017)

Management of Blood Donors' Group

In, and around, the LSO UC, there is no hospital facility available. Before the formation of the LSO under the EU funded SUCCESS Programme, a large number of women had succumbed to death during delivery due to a lack of availability of trained health workers. After the formation of LSO Ibtida, the LSO leaders started supporting their members in times of need. Whenever the members had any problem, they started contacting the LSO leaders and other members for help. Similarly, the daughter-in-law of one of the poorest LSO members had complexities during her delivery at midnight, the member asked the other LSO members for help. The members arranged a vehicle and took her to the government hospital in the town only to find that there was no staff to attend her at that time. They then took her to a private hospital where the doctor said that she needs a caesarean delivery. They convinced the owner of the hospital to carry out the surgery free of cost.

However, the patient had lost a lot of blood and required two to three bottles of blood, which unfortunately could not be arranged on time. The LSO members had great difficulty in motivating people to



LSO briefing visitors on their plans and activities

donate blood and to identify their blood groups. After this incident, they decided to form a group of blood donors in cases of emergencies. The members enlisted 107 blood donors with their name, blood group, contact number and address in a register maintained in the LSO office. The benefit of this has been that so far these donors have given blood to 102 needy people.

Celebration of Cultural Day

Co-existence among different cultures has been a pride of the communities of UC Dhori. People belonging to Barohi, Balochi and Sindhi cultures have been living in harmony for centuries in the LSO area. The respect of women is a common cultural thread among these three different cultures. With the view of highlighting this important practice, the LSO decided to celebrate a Cultural Day in the LSO office. Around 170 women members of the LSO attended the event. Girls presented tableaux on the importance and strategic role of providing women with equal opportunities in the society. The beauty of cultural diversification was highlighted and the need for respecting cultures of other groups was emphasised. The immediate result of this event was that the women not only developed a proper understanding about the ethos and cultural practices of other groups, but also learnt the benefits and needs for respecting them.

Enrollment of Girls and Boys in Schools

The leaders of VO 121 realised that a large number of school aged girls and boys are not going to schools due to lack of awareness in their parents and lack of space in local schools. The VO leaders raised this issue during one of the LSO meetings and asked for their support. The LSO leaders contacted the officials of Sindh Education Foundation (SEF), which is mandated to provide free education in Sindh by the government with financial support of donors. They managed to enrol 121 children, including 53 boys and 68 girls in two SEF schools. The SEF officials said that they need four teachers to teach the newly enrolled students and asked the LSO to identify good teachers. The LSO leaders identified four educated girls from their members and after following the due process, SEF recruited them as teachers.

Motivated Members for Vaccination

Due to a lack of proper awareness and misunderstandings about vaccinations, people of the UC were not ready to vaccinate their children and pregnant women. After the CAT awareness sessions by Community Resource Person (CRP) in CO meetings on importance of vaccinations for children and pregnant women, a large number of the members understood the benefit of vaccination and as a result, started vaccinating their children and pregnant women. According to the LSO reports, 285 children and 53 pregnant women had taken vaccines.

Opening of LSO Office

The LSO Ibtida needed a proper office for holding meetings and safe keeping of records. The rented premises were expensive, therefore, the LSO President offered the guest room of her house for the LSO office free of cost. When the local landlord, who lives in the same village, learnt about this decision, he called on the brothers of the LSO President and asked them to leave the village immediately as they had brought disgrace on him by first allowing their women to form the LSO and then opening the LSO office next to his house. The brothers of the LSO President told her that they have no other option except to leave the village and settle themselves down in a rented house in the town. The LSO leaders, however, did not lose the hope, and they went and talked to the wife of the landlord so that she could convince her husband to allow them to continue their work. They explained that the LSO plays an imperative role in changing the lives of so many poor village. However, she was unable to convince her husband. The LSO leaders, therefore, jointly went to the land lord's house and directly spoke with him and told him that they had formed the LSO to support poor families of their members, which has nothing to do with his honour. Finally, the landlord understood their point of view and allowed them to continue their LSO and open its office in his village.

Provision of Access to Ambulance Services

There is no hospital and health facility available in UC Dhori. Therefore, patients are taken to the government or private hospitals in the town nearby in privately rented vehicles, which are expensive and unaffordable for the majority of the poor LSO members. To resolve this issue, the LSO leaders contacted Ali Gohar Trust who provides ambulance services free of cost. All VO leaders have been given the contact number of Ali Gohar Trust, and at the time of need the members contact their VO leaders who in return arrange for the ambulance service on time. So far, 8 families have received free ambulance services.



CEO SRSO opening the LSO office



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