



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, donors agencies and the private sector.

LSO Initiatives

LSO Wartair

Date of Formation:	23 February, 2010
District:	Malakand
Union Council:	Wartair
Total Households in Union Council:	1,469
Organised Households:	876
Coverage:	60%
No of Village Organisations (VOs):	3
No of Community Organisations (COs):	73 (61 men's, 12 women's)
No of General Body Members:	36 (all men)
No of Executive Committee Members:	12 (all men)

SOCIAL MOBILISATION

At the time of the formation of the LSO, only 532 households were organised into 47 men's COs. The LSO has so far been able to organise 344 more households into 26 new COs. Before the formation of the LSO, no women's CO was formed in the area due to customary traditions. However, the LSO has been able to change this mind set and has formed 12 women's COs. They have plans to elect women into the General Body and Executive Committee of the



Condition of the road before and after widening and repair

LSO in future, so that women can also play an active role in the development of the area and its people.

FLOOD RELIEF

Despite the fact that the LSO was only 5 months old at the time of the July 2010 flash floods across the country, they managed to collect Rs. 100,000 in cash and 3 suzuki van loads of clothes, shoes and kitchen items and distributed them among flood affected families at various locations in Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

WIDENING AND EXTENSION OF FARM ROADS

The area is mountainous and therefore road communication is quite difficult. Their farm fields and commons, i.e. pastures, farm and natural forest are 2 km above their residential areas. A narrow 6 foot wide road was the lifeline for them that linked them with their natural resources. Since both sides of the entire road was private property of people, where they had farmland and fruit and forest trees, it was extremely difficult to convince each one of them to voluntarily donate precious land and cut down their trees for extension of the road. Therefore, despite repeated efforts by the local Jirga and other influential people, no progress was made.

Acknowledging the complexity of the matter, the LSO first formed a larger committee of 22 people, comprised of the Executive Body of the LSO and members of the local Jirga to resolve the road issue. The committee discussed the matter and resolved to widen the road to 14 feet on a self-help basis. The committee surveyed the road side, and convinced each and every family to donate their land and cut those trees that fell in the area of the road site. The concerned people agreed to not only donate their lands but also to cut over 100 large trees for widening



Condition of the road during and after widening and repair

their road. The next challenge was mobilisation of resources for the construction of the road. They estimated the cost and started fund raising from all available sources. The sources included cash donation from community members, the local Malik, migrant labourers to the Middle East and free labour from those who could not contribute cash. Moreover, a contractor who was working in the area provided his bulldozer and blade for leveling uneven sites and fallen trees. This significantly saved their labour work. For the execution of the project, the LSO formed a Project Committee and a Finance and Audit Committee. They have so far raised around Rs. 500,000 in cash and another Rs. 300,000 in the shape of free labour to complete the 2 km road. Land is extremely expensive in the area as 1 *Kanal* of land costs between Rs. 1.5 million to 3 million depending upon the locations. With the minimum rate of Rs. 1.5 million per *Kanal* of land, the estimated cost of donated land comes to around Rs. 400 million.

POVERTY TARGETED INITIATIVES

The area had been severely affected due to heavy rains during 2010 and the houses of many people were fully and partially damaged. When the government launched the Watan Card Programme for flood affected people, their area was also notified under the affected areas. Therefore, the LSO quickly conducted a survey to identify the truly eligible people in its constituency and helped to support them to get registered with NADRA. They identified 20 widows, 2 divorced women and 35 special-needs persons whose houses were damaged in the rains and got them registered with NADRA. Due to their efforts, 6 families had already received the first tranche of their funds from the government.

