

LSO Initiatives

LSO Rhod Mullazai

Restoration of Karezes

Karez, an underground water channel system, is the most efficient canal system in Balochistan. There are numerous Karez channels in the union council of Rhod Mullazai. Traditionally, households benefiting from these water channels would conduct an annual cleaning of the Karezes, which is essential to maintain the natural flow of water. However, over time people lost interest in this practice, as a result of which the water discharge from the channels reduced by two-thirds within a few years. This has led to an acute shortage of water for irrigating farm fields and orchards.

The LSO discussed this matter with the villagers and provided management support to help them clean their Karezes. The Karezes are 2,000 to 3,500 feet long and they require people with special skills for their cleaning. The labour cost of cleaning an average sized Karez comes to around Rs. 60,000. The LSO leaders arranged skilled and un-skilled labour, monitored the cleaning process and made timely payment to the labourers. They then collected payment from the farmers according to their water rights ratio. As a result of this initiative, five Karezes have been fully restored and their water flow has increased to three inches from one inch. The LSO is planning to restore all Karezes of the union council in the near future.

Date of Formation:
22 May, 2013

District:
Pishin

Union Council:
Rhod Mullazai

Total Households in
Union Council:
1,268

Organised
Households:
630

Coverage:
50%

No of Community
Organisations (COs):
64
12 women's

No of Village
Organisations (VOs):
17
3 women's

No of General
Body Members:
40
3 women's

No of Executive
Committee Members:
11
1 women's

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 VO. 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.

Provision of Safe Drinking Water Using a Wind Powered Pumping System

Access to safe drinking water is a major issue in the area; women have to travel up to two kilometers to fetch drinking water on daily basis. The LSO contacted the Integrated Development Organisation of Balochistan and liaised with them to set up wind powered water supply systems in three villages. The donor organisation provided Rs. 0.7 million for each project while the local community contributed 20 percent of the project cost in the form of free unskilled labour. In addition, the LSO helped the concerned VOs and COs to form project committees to oversee the process.



Work in progress on the Wind Pumped Water Supply Project.

These three pumping systems are now providing safe drinking water to 225 families, and have tremendously reduced the work load of the women in these families. The operational cost of water pumping is negligible. The pumped water is stored in a water tank, and the villagers collect water from there.

Conservation of Natural Resources

1. Junipers are rare and precious trees. Rhod Mullazai is home to a natural Juniper forest, which was on the verge of extinction due to the unregulated cutting of trees for fuel wood. The LSO, therefore, formed a 6 member Conservation Committee for the protection and management of the Juniper forest. The Conservation Committee created awareness among local people and enforced a complete ban on cutting of green Junipers. To decrease the extraction of dead and fallen Juniper wood, the Committee also enforced a rule allowing Juniper wood from the forest only for domestic consumption and prohibiting its sale in the market. Additionally, the LSO has established a nursery of forest plants and arranges annual plantation campaigns in which the LSO provides around 7,000 forest plants to the local people from their nursery, and the people plant them on their own land.
2. Rhod Mullazai is home to a large number of Pheasants (Chakor). However, unrestricted hunting was causing the number of Pheasant to decrease at an alarming rate. The LSO Conservation Committee created awareness about the benefits of protecting and conserving Pheasants, and motivated the locals to implement a complete ban on hunting till the number of Pheasants in the area was sizably restored. Now the local people catch Pheasant hunters and release the live captured birds back to their natural habitat. The number of birds is increasing now, and the LSO is planning to arrange a hunting competition of Pheasants in the near future.



People extracting Juniper wood from forest.



Annual plantation campaign.