

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

Best Town Local Support Organisation

District:	Ghizer
Geographic Area:	Municipal Area Gahkuch
Date of formation:	05-08-2008
Total Households in the area:	2,360
Organised Households:	1,950
Coverage:	83%
Number of Village Organisations (VOs):	35 (19 Women)
Number of Youth Organisations:	4
Number of Other Civil Society Organisations:	3
No. of General Body Members:	84 (19 women)
No. of Board of Directors:	13 (4 women)

Distribution of awards among high performers

Using competition in the society is important because it goes a long way towards creating zest and zeal among its members for higher achievements. With the view of promoting healthy competition the LSO presented awards



to high performers in the fields of education, sports and civic engagement. The activity was sponsored by AKRSP. The LSO formed an evaluation committee. The Committee invited list of high performers from government, Aga Khan Education Service (AKES) and private schools, Aga Khan Youth and Sports Board and Aga Khan Regional Council Ghizer. The committee received 40 nominations. The Committee evaluated them and decided to award 6 prizes in education, 5 in sports and 16 in civic engagement.

Skills training to youth prisoners

Under the Enhance Employability and Leadership for Youth project (EELY), AKRSP was supporting youth development activities. A number of young people were imprisoned in the local jail. The LSO met with them and the Jail authorities and developed and submitted a proposal to AKRSP for providing skills training the imprisoned youths. On the suggestion of the prisoners, it was decided to train them on tile fixing and painting. Being a unique case, AKRSP readily accepted the proposal.



The local government administration took a deep interest in the project. A large number of local administration personnel including the Deputy Commissioner and Deputy Superintendent of Police attended the inaugural ceremony of the training. Two master trainers, one in tile fixing and the other in painting trained 26 young people over a period of one month training. Certificates were distributed among the trainees by the Deputy Commissioner. The Deputy Commissioner appreciated the unique activity and assured his full support to the LSO for such activities in future. Most of the imprisoned youth were illiterate and unskilled and they had committed minor crimes due to poverty. Therefore they were very happy that after releasing from the jail, they would be able to live an honorable life by earning their livelihood support through the newly learnt skills.

Community plantation

Fuel and timber wood is scarce and hence very expensive in the area. Due to long winters, people need to spend a large part of their income on purchase of fuel wood for cooking and heating purposes. The LSO decided to lounge a campaign for tree plantation at large scale. They had meetings with member VO/WOs and motivated them for this cause. The VO/WOs collected demand for planting material from individual households and submitted to the LSO. The LSO contacted WWF and arranged 50,000 planting material and distributed among the people. In addition to that, people cut planting material from their own forest trees and planted thousands of trees on their private lands. Now tree plantation has become an annual festivity and people regularly plant thousands of trees on both their private and common lands. This healthy tradition has resulted in not only making the area more green, but in building people's green assets i.e. trees which they can use both for household consumption and selling in the market whenever they need cash to meet other household consumption needs.

Sports activities for women

Despite very high literacy rate, there were no opportunities of healthy activities like sports for women in the area due to social and cultural barrier. Therefore, the LSO decided to arrange sports activities for the girl students of the area. During these events, school girls competed in lawn tennis, long jump, race and carom board games. A total of 36 girls in six teams took part in the sport competitions. The final of the tournament was arranged in Gahkuch Bala. A large number of guests form different walks of life attended the final tournament. Trophies and cash awards were distributed among the top scorers by the chief quest and other notables. The LSO is now implementing Reproductive Health Initiative Project funded by Plan Pakistan. Under this project, youth members play games on daily basis and annual sports competitions are also arranged for them. As a result of these efforts, two female youth members had qualified for the National Josh Games and contested at national level.

