

# LSO Initiatives: Mehran Local Support Organisation

## EDUCATION

Education is one of the key priority areas of the LSO. The issue of out-of-school children was discussed in the General Body meeting of the LSO and the member VOs were given the responsibility of preparing the list of those children who were out of school and to share it with the Executive Body of the LSO. The Executive Body launched an enrollment campaign and enrolled 654 children (242 girls and 412 boys) in schools. In addition to that, the office holders of the LSO are conducting regular meetings with the teachers of the schools to ensure their regular presence and effective delivery of education to all children.

## ENVIRONMENT

In collaboration with the Government's Forest Department, the LSO has planted 1,450 trees across the union council. The plantation initiative will help improve the environment conditions and will also enhance the natural beauty of their villages. The recent floods had created the sense of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) in the minds of the rural masses. They, therefore, are planning to plant trees at the banks of river and canals to reduce the breaches of water during the rainy and flood seasons. The LSO leaders also conducted sessions in member VOs and COs in order to sensitise them about the importance of health and hygiene. As a result of that, its member VOs are carrying out village cleaning campaigns before VO meetings every month.



EC Members During Plantation of Trees at the LSO Office

## HEALTH

Around the globe and in Asia especially, many countries have eradicated polio but Pakistan is still struggling to combat this issue. On the request of the District Officer (DO) Health Shikarpur, 14 LSOs of the area, including LSO Mehran, are providing their support in administering polio drops. They signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with the District Health department in this regard. During the recent polio campaign, 47 women from these 14 LSOs performed duties with the Health Department for three days in their respective union councils and the VO leaders provided monitoring reports on any leftover children in their respective villages. The District Health department paid remuneration of Rs. 1,200 to each one of these women. A total of 71,895 children benefited from the joint efforts of the District Health department and LSO members.

Date of Formation:  
**30 December, 2010**

District  
**Shikarpur**

Union Council  
**Bhirkan**

Total Households  
in Union Council  
**2,534**

Organised  
Households  
**2,453**

Coverage  
**97%**

No of Community  
Organisations (COs)  
**139**  
all women's

No of Village  
Organisations (VOs)  
**33**  
all women's

No of General  
Body Members  
**33**  
all women

No of Executive  
Committee  
Members  
**13**  
all women

## 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.

## EMPLOYMENT GENERATION AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Enterprise development is a key component of economic development. The women trained in vocational skills under the Union Council Based Poverty Reduction Project (UCBPRP), had been organised into village level Business Development Groups (BDG). Recently four women BDGs of the LSO had linked themselves with SABA Pakistan which has helped them to open new avenues for business. The LSO takes product orders from SABA Pakistan, and passes them on to its BDGs. The BDGs produce the orders which are then sent to SABA Pakistan. The LSO receives 10% commission for its services from the BDGs.

## INTERNAL RESOURCE MOBILISATION

The LSO is planning to construct its office building for which it has collected donations worth Rs. 124,500 from its member VOs. Some VOs preferred to pay wheat instead of cash, and therefore donated 48 mounds of wheat.



Women Receiving Training in Embroidery

## WOMEN'S RIGHTS

The LSO organised an event on International Women's day on 8th March 2011 with the technical and financial assistance of the Gender and Development section of the Sindh Rural Support Organisation (SRSO). Around 250 women from the union council participated in the event along with staff of SRSO. In this event, several issues were discussed through debates, speeches, role-plays and songs of which some were: the importance and role of the Anti-sexual Harassment Bill 2010 in women's development, importance of awareness raising about gender-based violence, providing a forum for dialogue and information sharing on gender based issues, lobbying with the public sector stakeholders regarding the national and international commitments on gender, expressing solidarity with survivors and victims of gender-based violence and celebrating the economic, political and social achievements of the women of rural Sindh.

As a result of the event, the LSO realised that a large number of women and men do not have Computerised National Identity Cards in the union council. The LSO conducted village wise surveys to identify women and men without CNICs and with expired CNICs and arranged mobile camps of NADRA. As a result, a total of 1,500 CNICs of their women and men members were made.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The LSO organised its Annual General Meeting on 31st December 2011, the date of its 1st anniversary. The meeting was attended by around 200 people from VOs and COs, along with the General Body members of the LSO. The participants discussed and approved progress reports of the previous year and planning for the next year. It provided an unprecedented opportunity for the general members to closely see the achievements and challenges of the LSO. This tremendously increased the transparency and accountability of the LSO towards its members as well as the members' confidence in the LSO.



Annual General Body Meeting of the LSO in Progress