



# LSO Initiatives LSO Rawali



An update on the work of Local Support Organisations

## Support for construction of houses of 2005 earthquake affectees

The massive earthquake of 2005 had damaged over 80 percent of the houses in district Bagh, Azad Jammu & Kashmir. In the aftermath of the earthquake, the influential families managed to get financial and technical support in reconstruction of the demolished houses from the Government and NGOs. However, some senior citizens, disable persons and destitute families could not avail any external support for the reconstruction of their houses.

LSO Society Development Foundation Rawali was formed on November 18, 2008. The LSO involved poorest community members to identify their issues. The LSO therefore carried out a survey of their UC and identified 24 such families who had not been able to reconstruct their houses due to lack of resources and access to relevant government departments.

Date of Formation:  
**November 18, 2008**

District:  
**Bagh**

Union Council:  
**Rawali**

Total Households in Union Council:  
**2614**

Organised Households:  
**2476**

Coverage:  
**94%**

No of Community Organisations (COs):  
**149**  
71 women

No of Village Organisations (VOs):  
**11**  
0 women

No of General Body Members:  
**60**  
28 women

No of Executive Committee Members:  
**15**  
7 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.

The LSO identified relevant stakeholders to advocate the case of these families. The LSO submitted their case to Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF). PPAF sent its staff for verification of the particulars of the poor households. Upon verification, PPAF provided Rs. 90,000 to each family for construction of their house. While the money was provided by PPAF, the LSO members assisted the vulnerable families in procurement of labour, construction materials and supervision. The LSO handed over the constructed houses to all 24 families.

### Reforestation of barren land

Communal land of 80 kanal became barren due to indiscriminate cutting of forest trees in Rawali region. Due to the removal of complete green cover, natural reforestation was not possible. Moreover, the barren areas became a hazard due to potential threat of land sliding in monsoon. Realising the danger, the LSO engaged the concerned VO for taking steps for reforestation of the affected area. The LSO also discussed the matter with the government Forest Department. Forest Department offered to provide planting material free of cost if the VO ensured protection of the area from grazing for a period of five years. The VO committed to protect the area.



Plantation was carried out by the VO members. Few years later, the entire area was fully covered with newly planted forest. This has not only helped the VO in reducing landslide hazards, increasing their assets but also restoring the local natural beauty of their area and habitat for local birds and animals.

### Books and uniforms for indigent students

Realising the increased financial cost of school books resulting in children drop out in the poor families, particularly families with four or five school going children, the LSO decided to come up with solution to provide free books to children and reduce drop out ratio. They started collecting old books from the students of well-to-do families and provided them to children from poor families. In addition, the LSO provided uniforms to the needy students with the help of a local garment business owner. So far, the LSO has provided books to 250 and uniforms to 60 students. As a result of these efforts, there is no more dropped out student in their UC.



### Educational assistance for orphan children

The LSO approached an affluent lady who was supporting charities in Bagh area. The LSO leaders invited her to their office and briefed her about LSO's mission, objectives and achievements. The lady was impressed and she offered to pay Rs. 2,000 per month to widows having school going children to pay for their educational needs. The LSO conducted a survey in the area and identified 30 widows for monetary assistance. The lady now pays Rs. 60,000 per month to the LSO. The LSO pays the money to these widows. The lady confirms timely receipt of the money from the individual widows through text messages or telephone calls. This scheme has been supporting orphan children for last one year and resulted in retaining orphan children at schools.