

LSO Initiatives:

Local Support Organisation SERMAN Gole-Sermik

HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES AT THE GIRLS AND BOYS MIDDLE SCHOOLS, GOLE

There are two Middle Schools in Gole village; one for girls and one for boys. The nearest High School for boys is in Keriss, at a distance of six kilometers. So only a few boys would dare to continue their higher education by going to Keriss on a daily basis. Some well-off families send their boys to Skardu for their higher education. However the majority of boys and almost all girls have to discontinue their education at the eighth level.

LSO SERMAN Gole-Sermik motivated the community and created awareness regarding the importance of education. The LSO organised meetings of the community with local teachers and the Government's Education Department and started classes for ninth and tenth grades at the Boys Middle School, Gole and at the Girls Middle School, Gole in 2008 and 2009. Due to this facility a large number of students (both girls and boys) from poor families have also been receiving higher education at their door step.



Ninth Class Students Studying at the School



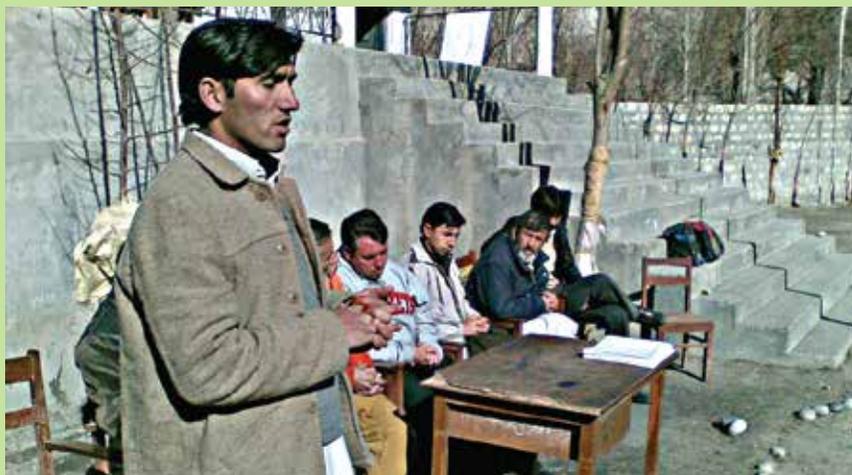
F.G. Boys High School, Gole

TRAINING IN FIRST AID AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Due to its fragile environment, the area of Sermik-Gole is prone to different types of natural and man-made disasters, including avalanches in winters and mud floods in summers due to snow melting in the surrounding high mountains. The LSO signed a Terms of Partnership (ToP) with the Pakistan Red Crescent Skardu (PRCS). PRCS organised a three day training workshop for 36 young girls and women activists from Gole at the Girls High School, Gole and provided them with training regarding first aid during disasters. Moreover, the LSO has registered 100 volunteers from across the union council. Their names and contact numbers are with the LSO so that in times of emergencies and disasters, they can be easily contacted.



Practical Exercise during First Aid Training



Certificate Distribution Ceremony

Date of Formation:
3 April, 2007

District
Baltistan

Union Council
Gole

Total Households
in Union Council
1,228

Organised
Households
918

Coverage
75%

No of Community
Organisations (COs)
34
25 men's COs,
9 women's COs

No of General
Body Members
60
44 men's and
14 women's

No of Executive
Committee Members
15
13 men and
2 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.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST HAIRY CATERpillARS

The area is rich in fruit trees (mainly apricot and apple) which are the main cash crops of the poor people. Over the last few years, a type of caterpillar called the Hairy Caterpillar has been eating the leaves of the fruit trees in the area; with the result that the affected trees have not been able to bear fruit. In extreme cases, the entire fruit tree can also die. Thus it brings heavy losses of income and assets to the local farmers.

The common practice of control for Hairy Caterpillars is the use of pesticides. However large scale spraying of pesticides has a disastrous environmental impact on the local people. Therefore the LSO used a traditional method of eradicating the Hairy Caterpillar.

The Hairy Caterpillar hibernates during winters in their nests, made at the top of the tree branches. Therefore, the LSO initiated a method of picking these nests and burning them before the spring season. This requires cooperation from each and every family so that they pick 100% of the nests of the Hairy Caterpillar well in time. Failure of cooperation from only a few families can spoil the efforts of others. The LSO activists led a campaign during March 2010 through which they ensured maximum coverage across the union council. As a result of this joint effort, the entire union council became a Hairy Caterpillar-free zone.



Director Agriculture Skardu Participating in the Meeting with the Community at Gole and Sermik Villages

TECHNICAL TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED YOUTH

Unemployment is the biggest problem of the youth in the Sermik-Gole area. With the help and cooperation of Marafie Foundation Skardu, the LSO managed to train 20 young boys in Islamabad in different employable disciplines, including building electrician, motor electrician and crane operator, etc. All of these young men are now employed, earning Rs. 10,000 to 15,000 per month.

ZUBEDA KHALIQ MEMORIAL HOSPITAL (ZKMH) SERMIK

A Doctor from Sermik village, who practices in Lahore, established a dispensary in his home village a few years ago. Looking at the local demands, he decided to expand it into a 70 bed hospital, well equipped with modern medical and laboratory equipment. He asked for support from the LSO. The LSO arranged 30 free labourers on a daily basis for six months to assist in the construction work. The Board of Director (BoD) members of the LSO are also members of the governing body of the hospital. The hospital is not only providing free medical facilities to the neighbouring villages, but also to the entire people of Baltistan.



ZKMH Sermik



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