



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 under BRACE, mobilise rural women and men 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, donor agencies and the private sector.

LSO INITIATIVES

Local Support Organisation Baghbana, Khuzdar

<p>District</p>  <p>Khuzdar</p>	<p>Union Council</p>  <p>Baghbana-2</p>	<p>Date of Formation</p>  <p>28-01-2019</p>	<p>Total Households in Union Council</p>  <p>2,850</p>	<p>Organised Households</p>  <p>1,705</p>	<p>Coverage</p>  <p>60%</p>
<p>Number of COs</p>  <p>98</p> <p>71 WOMEN</p>		<p>Number of VOs</p>  <p>18</p> <p>12 WOMEN</p>		<p># of General Body Members</p>  <p>39</p> <p>00 WOMEN</p>	<p># of Executive Committee Members</p>  <p>15</p> <p>01 WOMEN</p>

LSO Baghbana, from District Khuzdar, was revitalised on 28-01-2019, by 1,705 member households organised into 98 COs and 18 VOs. Men and women Leaders of LSO Baghbana are planning and implementing development activities both on a self-help basis as well as in collaboration with government agencies. The EU-funded BRACE programme is empowering rural men and women in Baluchistan through realising the power they gain from collective action. Organised men and women are now gaining awareness about their rights, making the service providers accountable, and also taking initiatives to improve their lives.

Conducted awareness sessions against COVID-19

With the onset and rapid spread of the COVID-19 pandemic across the country, the Federal Government of Pakistan established a National Command and Control Centre (NCOCC) to combat the disease by ensuring effective coordination among Federal and provincial governments and other stakeholders including community institutions (CIs) organised by the RSPs. BRSP District Team Khuzdar signed and MoU with the Government with the purpose of extending community support to



the concerned district administration to curb the rapid spread of COVID-19 effectively and efficiently. BRSP is taking a lead role in District Khuzdar, linking its own staff and leaders of CIs with the District Administration including the Deputy Commissioner, District Health Officer and World Health Organisation.

Under this collaborative programme, LSO Baghbana played a vital role of sensitising community members to take preventive measures against COVID-19. After receiving training from the Government Health staff on preventive methods, 32 Community Resource Persons (CRPs) working with the LSO started delivering awareness sessions on COVID-19 during their Community Awareness Toolkits (CATs) sessions in all COs under the LSO. Moreover, the LSO leaders are continuously engaged in conducting announcements on loud speaker in streets and in six Jami Masjid (large mosques); producing and distributing face masks, and distributing sanitisers, soap bars, informative brochures and pamphlets. On the request of the LSO leaders, the Government Health Department provided five safety kits, which they distributed among the LSO members for demonstration purpose. They also displayed twelve banners carrying precautionary messages on COVID-19 in as many villages.

Around 5,500 men and women in UC Baghbana-2 were sensitised and educated about taking precautionary measures against the pandemic.



A female CRP conducting awareness sessions on COVID-19 in CO meetings

Prepared CNICs for Men and Women Members of LSO

The office of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) is at the district Head Quarter of Khuzdar. Due to long distances, people have to spend a significant amount of time and money to travel to and from NADRA office for preparation of Computerised National Identity Card (CNIC). Women have to be accompanied by a male member, which means increased cost of travel and time. Before organising in COs, VOs and LSO under the EU funded BRACE Programme, they had not thought of an alternative method for preparing their CNIC to save their travel cost and time. However, after getting organised, the LSO leaders discussed this issue in their meeting and learnt that NADRA has a facility of mobile van which comes to the villages to prepare CNICs of men and women at their doorsteps. The LSO, therefore, decided to seek this facility. The LSO prepared a list of men and women of a village in need of CNICs, and submitted the list with an application to NADRA office to send their mobile van to the village. On their request, NADRA sent its mobile van to five villages. The LSO leaders helped the community members prepare their documents in advance so that the NADRA team could prepare CNICs of the people easily and efficiently. The LSO leaders motivated the NADRA team to take the van to each and every settlement in the village so that people do not have to travel to the centre of the village. They collected donations from within the community and paid PKR 500 per visit to NADRA staff to compensate their van fuel for the extra running. So far, 70 people, including 45 women and 25 men have had their CNICs generated at their doorsteps. The initiative especially helped Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) secure CNICs as they were previously unable to visit NADRA office because of mobility issues.

Repaired the Road Linking UC Baghbana-2 to Khuzdar City on Self-help Basis

A road plays an important role in socio-economic development of rural communities. It increases access to market centres,



The link road before repair

encouraging commercial farming activities. Improved road network leads to higher availability of farm inputs at a low price, increased employment opportunities and improved access to social amenities.

The 9 km main road from UC Baghbana-2 to Khuzdar City is single-lane and unpaved. This means it requires frequent repair and maintenance work by the Government, especially after rain. Unfortunately, no repair work has been carried out on the road for the past several years rendering a large portion of the road damaged and bumpy. This leads to doubled travel time and thus increased public transport charges; this expense weighed heavily on the residents of UC Baghbana-2.

The LSO leaders discussed the matter in their monthly meeting and decided to repair the road on self-help basis. They collected donations from all members within their VO and CO networks. They arranged for nine dumpers of stone, gravel and sand to fill the ditches and smoothen the surface of the road and paid PKR 13,500. On the motivation of the LSO leaders, fifteen to seventeen people from the adjacent area of the road volunteered to do the repair work. Now that the road is levelled, the travel time has decreased significantly. The road benefited 7,750 individuals residing in UC Baghbana-2. Below are the pictures of the road before and after repair.



The link road after repair

Conducted Enrolment Campaign for Out-of-School Girls and Boys

Unfortunately, Pakistan ranks as a country with the second highest number of out-of-school children in the world. It is estimated that 22.8 million children under the age of 5 to 16 are out of school in Pakistan, representing 44 per cent of the total population in this age group. There are many reasons why children may drop out of school, including difficulty affording fees, uniforms, and supplies; the problem requires creative solutions. The leaders of the LSO

Baghbana sought the technical support of American Refugee Committee (ARC) Pakistan, an NGO with rich experience in school enrolment. ARC provided technical support to the LSO leaders in developing two catchy slogans: “Our aim, each child in school” and “Balochistan will prosper if people of Balochistan study” and preparing the banners. The LSO collected funds to provide accommodation to the ARC staff and under their guidance launched enrolment campaigns in fourteen villages of the UC. After the awareness campaigns in the village, the VO leaders identified out-of-school children and motivated their parents to enrol them in schools. The VO leaders also met with the Head Teacher of the school and sought his support in enrolment of the children. As a result of these campaigns, 115 children (30 girls and 85 boys) were enrolled in schools.



Coordination with Government Health Department for Polio Vaccination

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government halted Polio immunisation efforts which led to some children missing their vaccine doses. Once the COVID-19 pandemic had settled down, the Government relaunched the Polio immunisation programme, however, soon after the Government Health staff went on strike. The Deputy Commissioner invited the LSO leaders in his office, explained the problem to them and asked for their support in delivering the Polio vaccination drops on time. The LSO leaders promised their full support to the Deputy Commissioner. With the cooperation of the LSO leaders, the Deputy Commissioner was able to continue the Polio vaccination campaign as per schedule. The team comprised one staff member with Polio vaccines from the Health Department and six volunteers from the LSO; the team delivered Polio vaccines in each and every village and settlement of their UC over the span of twelve days and covered almost 100% children.

Repair of Boys’ High School Building

The building of the Government High School of UC Baghbana-2 was in a very poor condition. The floor of the class rooms was broken, the main gate of the school was badly damaged and the boundary wall of the school was broken down in several places. Moreover, the school building needed a new coat of paint.

The LSO leaders discussed the matter in their meeting and met with the Head Master of the school. The Head Master said that since Government is not providing funds for school repair, he



The School building after repair.

cannot help them. The LSO leaders offered to do the repair work on their own, and sought the Head Master’s permission to go ahead. The Head Master said that since the school has been built for the local community, he has no objection on the repair work by the community. The LSO leaders estimated the cost of the repair work and collected funds from CO members through their VOs. Since this was the only High School in the UC, all relatively better off CO members contributed to the fund raising. Moreover, the local community volunteered their labour. Together, they repaired the main gate, re-constructed the broken portions of the boundary walls and white washed the entire school building. The total cost of the repair work was PKR 35,000. The repair work provided the students of the school with an improved, safe, clean and beautiful environment for their studies.

Repaired Water Supply Scheme

While preparing their Village and UC Development Plans, the LSO leaders invited the Chairman and other members of their Union Council to participate. This instilled a feeling of ownership of development plans in the UC Chairman and UC members. The Union Council authorities listened to the recommendation of the LSO leaders and invested in rural infrastructure schemes. For example, the pipelines of the water supply project in village Sabzalabad was damaged at several places and the residents were unable to access drinking water from the project due to water leakage. On the recommendation of the LSO leaders, the UC Authorities provided new PVC pipes for replacement while the villagers provided free labour for excavation and repairing the damaged pipes. This collaborative initiative provided portable water for 43 households of the village.

Registration of Men and Women in Voter List

In an effort to verify and update their voter list, the Election Commission established a display centre in the High School building in UC Baghbana-2. This was done twice, first for fifteen days and then again for one month. In the past, very few people used to come to the display centre to verify and correct their names in the voter list. Therefore, a large number of eligible men and women, with erroneous names would not be able to cast their votes. When the LSO leaders were made aware of the importance of voting, under the EU funded BRACE Programme, they educated and motivated their community men and women to go to the Election Commission desk and verify and make necessary corrections to their voter list. In addition to that, the LSO leaders

ensured that all those men and women in the community, above the age of 18 years prepare their CNICs to get their names recorded in the voter list. Through the dedicated efforts of the LSO leaders, 900 community members verified and registered their names in the voter list. Now, they are eligible to cast their votes in the upcoming elections.

Vaccinated Domestic Animals through Government Livestock Department



Vaccination of animals by Government Livestock Department

Livestock plays an important role in the lives of the people of the UC. A majority of the households of UC Baghbana-2 keep some domestic animals, mainly goat and sheep. Some families keep 300 to 400 animals in herds and graze them in the mountain pasture areas. But due to frequent spread of communicable diseases, the animals lose their weight, give less milk and even die; this causes heavy economic loss to the people of the UC. Before the formation of LSO Baghbana, the local people had never thought about getting support from the Government Livestock Department to vaccinate their animals. However once the LSO leaders learnt about the facilities and services available with the Livestock Department through the EU supported BRACE Programme, they decided to work towards improving their situation. The LSO leaders went to the Livestock Department and requested support in vaccination of their animals, which the latter agreed to provide. On the advice of the LSO leaders, the VO leaders of the respective villages provided full support to the Livestock Department team

and hence they successfully vaccinated 100% animals within a short time. The LSO leaders facilitated the Livestock Department in a few villages where they vaccinated 233 animals owned by 53 families. After that, the Livestock Department conducted vaccination of domestic animals in each and every village of the UC on their own. They even went to the herders in the mountain pastures, camped there for three to four days and vaccinated each and every animal in the herd. Due to the regular vaccination campaigns, the incidence of communicable diseases has reduced to a minimal in the livestock across the UC.

Provision of Solar Plates for Poor Households through UC Authorities

Electricity supply is a serious issue for the residents of the UC. A large number of households do not have electricity supply from Government. Solar energy is an alternative source of electricity. But the installation cost of the solar plates is expensive, therefore, poor families cannot afford it. The LSO held a meeting with the UC Chairman and asked for his support for provision of solar energy to the poorest families. The UC Chairman agreed to provide solar energy to poor families. The LSO identified these families with the help of the respective VOs and COs and provided the list to the UC Chairman. The UC Chairman provided solar panels and batteries to these families. Now these poor families enjoy uninterrupted supply of electricity.



Distribution of solar panels among poor families



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