



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 Ittefaq

 District Killa Abdullah	 Union Council Abdul Rehmanzai 1	 Date of Formation 04-05-2019	 Total Households in Union Council 2,208	 Organised Households 1,446	 Coverage 64%
Number of COs  169 77 WOMEN		Number of VOs  19 05 WOMEN		# of General Body Members  60 00 WOMEN	# of Executive Committee Members  11 00 WOMEN

as of 31st July 2021

LSO Ittefaq, from Killa Abdullah, was formed on May 4, 2019 by 1,446 member households organised into 169 COs and 19 VOs. The leaders of LSO Ittefaq are planning and implementing development activities both on a self-help basis as well as in collaboration with government agencies and other development partners in donor agencies. The EU-funded BRACE Programme is empowering rural men and women in Balochistan 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.

Activities to Fight against COVID-19 Pandemic

The leaders of LSO Ittefaq and its member VOs performed a very active role in fighting against the spread of COVID-19 disease in their union council. The LSO leaders took self-help initiatives at the initial stage and provided food items to vulnerable families affected adversely during the nation-wide lockdown imposed by the Government. Later on, when BRSP signed an MoU with the District Government Authorities to launch a collaborative effort to control the spread of the pandemic in close coordination with local organised communities, the leaders of LSO Ittefaq and its member VOs extended all possible support at their disposal to BRSP and Government Authorities. BRSP with the technical support of Government Health Department organised a training session for the LSO leaders and the Community Resource Persons (CRPs) on awareness raising about the threat of the pandemic and to educate the masses on taking preventive measures to safeguard themselves, their family members and neighbours from getting infected by the virus and Trace,

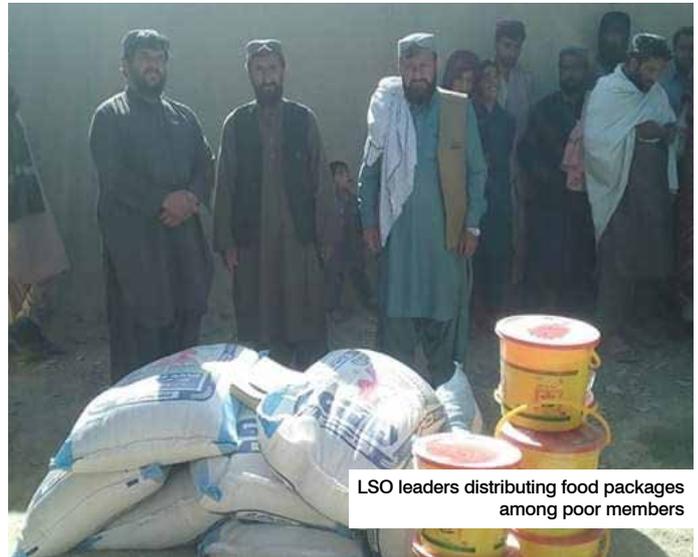
Test and Quarantine (TTQ) the suspected cases. The LSO leaders conducted the following activities:

- Made the Government SOPs on COVID-19 part of the Community Awareness Toolkits (CATs) developed under the EU funded BRACE Programme and asked the CRPs to deliver awareness sessions on COVID-19 in the CO meetings as part of their routine sessions. So far, the CRPs have delivered 83 sessions in as many CO's. The awareness sessions are ongoing and will continue till the threat of the pandemic is over in future.
- The LSO leaders demonstrated hand washing technique with soap for its members and asked them to teach the technique to their other family members.
- Both the LSO and VO leaders made announcement frequently from local mosques on following COVID-19 SOPs. This significantly raised the awareness of the general masses and they observed the SOPs.

4. They traced nine suspected cases and referred them to Tehsil Health Office for COVID-19 test. Only one case was proved positive and the others were proved negative. The positive case was provided proper care and medication while keeping in isolation, therefore, he was fully recovered soon.

5. The District Health Office was distributing sanitizers and face masks among poor people. The LSO leaders approached them and received 160 sanitizers and 700 face masks from the District Health Office and distributed them among poor members of their communities.

6. When the Federal Government launched EHSAAAS Cash Grant Programme, poor eligible people were facing difficulties in getting themselves registered with the programme. The LSO leaders identified 400 poor families and helped them get registered via online. As a result of this timely support, 162 eligible families received PKR 1.94 million from EHSAAAS Cash Grant Programme.



the LSO leaders decided to meet the concerned officials at their office at Quetta city. The LSO leaders briefed the CM COVID-19 officials that daily wages is the only source of income of the poor families, and they are facing critical times due to shortage of food.

The Relief Fund officials promised them to provide 300 bags of food packages consisting flour, ghee and other required things for distribution among the poor families. Leaders of LSO Ittefaq called a general meeting and invited all VO leaders to attend it. In this meeting, they discussed and decided the distribution plan and prepared a list of poor, eligible members across their UC. They then submitted the list to CM Relief Fund officials and organised a distribution ceremony at a central place of their UC. They invited the eligible families as well as the CM Relief Fund representatives in the distribution ceremony and distributed the food bags among the deserving families in a transparent manner in their presence. The beneficiary members were quite happy and they thanked the CM Relief Fund officials and the LSO leaders for assisting them in such a critical time. The representatives of CM Relief Fund appreciated the LSO leaders for conducting such a fair and transparent distribution. They assured their future support to the LSO.



Arrangement of Food Packages for Poor Families from Chief Minister's COVID-19 Fund Balochistan

Like other parts of the country, due to the repeated waves of COVID-19, the economic activities remained disturbed in Balochistan. The daily wagers and other poorest segment of the society have been suffering a lot from the economic stagnation. This has been negatively affecting the nutrition status of the family members of these poor households because they do not have enough money to buy essential food items. To make ends meet, they are forced to sell out their domestic animals, and as a result of that, both their household assets and income are declining at an alarming rate.

Before getting organised under COs, VOs and LSO under the EU funded BRACE Programme, they had no idea where to go to get support for these poor people. However, the LSO provided an enabling forum to them where they can discuss such communal issues among themselves and seek their solutions. The LSO leaders discussed the issue of the COVID-19 affected families in their UC and to seek support from the Chief Minister COVID-19 Relief Fund. So



Plantation Campaign

Educated and inspired by the Community Awareness Raising Tool Kit sessions by CRPs in the CO meetings, the organised community under the EU funded BRACE Programme decided to launch plantation campaigns. They first developed a plantation plan and decided to plant trees in the free spaces at their courtyards and in the government buildings in their UC, including schools, rural health centres and BHUs. They then met with the Forestry Department and briefed them about their plantation plan. On their request, the Forestry Department provided 1,500 rooted forest plants.

The LSO leaders procured the plants and organised a distribution ceremony in their office and invited the Forest Officer in the ceremony. The plants were then distributed among the interested people and VO leaders for planting them at their homes and in the government buildings. The LSO leaders appreciated the support of the Forest Department and ensured that the community members will take care of these plants. The LSO leaders said that they expect similar support from the Forest Department in the next plantation season. The Forest Officer was quite happy and satisfied with the fair distribution of plants and he assured the LSO leaders that they will allocate more plants to the LSO next time so that the entire UC is covered with new plants.



LSO President distributing rooted plants among community members

Provision of Missing Facilities in Govt. High School

During their discussion on how to improve the quality of education in their UC area, the LSO leaders realised that the Govt. High School lacks a number of basic facilities. They therefore, convinced Haji Muhammad Nawaz Khan Kakar, the MPA to join them on their visit to the Govt. High School with a view of assessing the missing facilities there. During this visit, they held a meeting with the school staff and discussed the missing facilities in the school. The LSO leaders then visited classrooms along with the MPA and identified missing facilities. As a result of this exercise, they found out that the positions of five teachers were vacant in the Government High School. The supply of books and furniture from the Education Department is insufficient to meet the requirements of the students. Therefore, the parents of these children had to buy books from market which was a financial burden on the poor families. There was no lab equipment for student in the school, which was

badly affecting the quality of education of the students. There was no library in the school, therefore, students were not able to access supplementing books to enrich their knowledge.

After this meeting, LSO leaders visited the District Education Officer (EDO). They held a meeting with him in the presence of the School Cluster Head and briefed them about the missing facilities in their Government High School and requested them to provide them. The EDO and the Cluster Head listened to them patiently and promised to fulfil their demands. The EDO posted two teachers and provided lab equipment for school. The EDO increased the quota of books and stationary for the school and promised to establish a library in the school very soon

Thus, with the productive linkages of the LSO leaders with Government Education Department, they successfully arranged almost all important missing facilities in their school. As a result of that, the quality of services of this education facility has increased significantly for the 723 students and staff of UC Abdul Rehmanzai 1. Due to their positive role in improving the education facilities, the school staff is also happy with the LSO leaders.



LSO President and MPA Muhammad Nawaz Khan Kakar meeting with GHS staff

Support to Government in Vaccination Campaigns in the UC

Pakistan has been encountering many problems in immunisation. This includes logistical obstacles, inefficient health worker attitudes, parental and female awareness about immunisation, and the influence of religious community leaders. Therefore, the immunisation coverage ratio is low. The immunisation coverage of children in Balochistan is only 16.4% as compared to 65.6% in Punjab. Therefore, the District Health Officer (DHO) Killa Abdullah asked for support of LSO leaders for maximising the coverage of immunisation in the UC area. The LSO leaders are now providing their full support to the vaccination teams. They convince refusal cases for vaccination of mothers and children and ensure 100% coverage of the intended population in each vaccination campaign. Due to these collaborative efforts, the local people are now enjoying door step vaccination services to their children and pregnant women and the immunisation coverage ratio is steadily

increasing. The DHO and his team appreciate effective facilitation role of the LSO leaders for increasing the coverage of vaccination.



LSO leaders meeting with Health Department staff

Improvement in Peace and Security with the Support of the Sqout Commander, Killa Abdullah

Peace and security of the citizens are essential conditions for economic growth, social harmony and well-being of common people. The people of UC Abdul Rehmanzai 1 were facing security and law and order issues since long. Cases of theft and robbery were taking place on and off in

the UC area. The LSO leaders, therefore, went to the office of the Security Forces and held a meeting with Col Muhammad Saleem Khattak, the Sqout Commander (SC) and brought the poor security situation in his notice and requested him to increase the number as well as patrolling of FC in their UC area to support Levies Force. The SC welcomed the LSO leaders and appreciated their initiative and promised to fulfil their demands. He also asked the LSO leaders to keep a vigilant eye on the suspected criminals and inform him on time, so that he can take timely actions. Since then, the staff of FC are supporting the Levies and their patrolling has increased in the UC area, resulting a marked decrease in criminal cases in the area.



LSO leaders meeting the Sqout Commander FC

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