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.

Local Support Organisation Omza Viala from District Zhob was formed on 29th October 2014 by 1,190 member households organised into 82 COs and 18 VOs. The leaders of LSO Omza Viala 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 women and men in Balochistan by realising the power they gain from collective action. Organised rural communities are now gaining awareness about their rights, making the service providers accountable, and also taking initiatives to improve their lives.

### Activities to Combat COVID-19 Pandemic

When the Government imposed a country-wise lockdown in March 2020 to control the spread of the Coronavirus disease, the poor people of UC Omza Viala, mostly living on daily wage labour, lost their only income source. This created serious economic and nutrition crises in these families because on one hand they lost their daily income and on the other, the food items at first disappeared from the market and then become very expensive.

Realising the plight of these families, the LSO representatives came forward to support them on an emergency basis. When the LSO representatives carried out a situation analysis in consultation with their VOs, the provision of food items to the poorest families was ranked as a top priority. Since the number of vulnerable families was quite large, the LSO representatives realised that they cannot meet their demand through local resource mobilisation. Therefore, they decided to approach elected representatives, NGOs, and local well-off people. They first conducted a survey and identified vulnerable families across their UC. Then they held meetings with the potential philanthropists and requested them for the provision of ration to the needy ones. As a result of their efforts, MPA and HDF provided ration bags to the LSO representatives, who distributed them among the 85 poorest households, identified by the LSO representatives.

![Distribution of rations by MPA, HDF Zhob](image)
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Later, the District Administration asked the LSO representatives to cooperate with them in the distribution of ration among poor families. The LSO representatives shared the list of poorest families in their UC and also helped them in the distribution of ration bags. As a result of this coordinated work, the LSO representatives were successful in providing ration bags to 85 poor households. The monetary value of these ration bags goes over PKR 6 million.

Rahmat Khan, President of LSO Omza Viala said that it was the platform of the LSO and its member VOs, organised under the EU-Funded BRACE Programme that facilitated the identification of all eligible households so quickly and accurately. Without such a network of well-connected community institutions, they would never have reached all needy families so quickly to help them in this critical time. In addition, on the instruction of the LSO representatives, the Community Resource Persons (CRPs) are delivering awareness sessions in COs on the signs and symptoms of the Coronavirus disease, precautionary measures to be taken to remain safe from getting infected by this dangerous virus, like wearing face masks, washing hands frequently with soap, avoiding crowded places etc.

Boring for Drinking Water in Collaboration with the Local Government

The villagers of Omza called a meeting with their LSO and requested the representatives to resolve their problem by constructing a Water Supply Scheme for their village. The LSO representatives checked the proposed site area and estimated that it would cost 1.2 million PKR. Therefore, they decided to go for resource mobilisation for boring of the drinking water scheme. They first held meetings with the Local Government representative of district Zhob and Secretary of their Union Council (UC) and requested them to allocate some funds for boring the drinking water. After a series of several meetings, they were able to convince the Local Government to allocate PKR 1.2 million of boring for the drinking water scheme. The construction work has started in June 2019 and was completed in September 2019. The water scheme provided the resource of water to all villagers of Omza including 210 poorest Households.

LSO Representative Meeting with District Zhob NADRA Official

The Village Organisations representatives requested the LSO to resolve the issue of CNICs. Till date, a lot of villagers don’t have a CNIC. The LSO representative visited the different villages of the Union Council and surveyed for CNICs registration. They met with the NADRA Officer district Zhob and requested him to provide the NADRA Van to facilitate in making CNICs for the people of distant Union Councils. He ensured and promised to provide the van for the registration of CNICs in UC Omza Viala. 296 CNICs were registered with NADRA, of which 130 are males and 166 females.
Construction of Water Supply Scheme in Collaboration with Irrigation Department

The villagers of Viala called a meeting with LSO and requested the LSO representatives to resolve their problem by constructing a Water Supply Scheme for drinking water. The LSO representatives checked the proposed site of the area and estimated that it would cost PKR 4.0 million. Therefore, they decided to do resource mobilisation for the construction of the water supply scheme. They held meetings with the Irrigation Department, BRSP district officials, and the Secretary of their Union Council (UC) and requested them to allocate some funds for the construction. After a series of several meetings, they were able to convince the Irrigation Department to allocate PKR 3.5 million. The construction work was started in July 2020 and completed by end of November 2020. The Water Supply Scheme now provides water to all villages in UC Omza Viala.

Construction of Protection Wall in Collaboration with the Irrigation Department

The villagers requested the LSO representatives to resolve their problem by constructing a protection wall for the safety of agriculture which covers the river from agricultural land. The LSO representatives checked the proposed site of the river and estimated that it would cost millions. Therefore, they decided to go for resource mobilisation for this purpose. They were able to convince the local representatives after a few meetings and received PKR 2.2 million for the construction of a Protection Wall. The construction work was started in October 2017 and was completed in May 2018. 110 households of Viala village are benefitting from this scheme.