LSO Ittehad, from Killa Abdullah, was formed on February 20, 2020, by 1,617 member households organised into 228 COs and 24 VOs. The leader of LSO, Shaista Gullistan 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, holding the service providers accountable, and taking initiatives to improve their lives.

LSO Initiatives

Local Support Organisation Gulistan Karaiz 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Union Council</th>
<th>Date of Formation</th>
<th>Total Households in Union Council</th>
<th>Organised Households</th>
<th>Coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Killa Abdullah</td>
<td>Gulistan Karaiz 2</td>
<td>20-Feb-2020</td>
<td>2,051</td>
<td>1,617</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Activities to Fight against COVID-19 Pandemic

The leaders of LSO Shaista Gulistan and its member VOs performed very active role in combating 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 adversely affected during the nation-wide lockdown imposed by the Government. Later, BRSP signed an MoU (memorandum of understanding) with the District Government Authorities to launch a collaborative effort to control the spread of the pandemic in close coordination with the local organised communities, the leaders of LSO Ittehad and its member VOs extended their support to BRSP and the 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:

1. SOPs on COVID-19 were included in Community Awareness Toolkits (CATs). Tasks were assigned to CRPs to deliver awareness sessions on COVID-19 in the CO meetings as part of their routine sessions. So far, the CRPs have delivered 76 sessions among organised community members. The awareness sessions are continued.
2. LSO leaders demonstrated hand washing technique with soap for its members and asked them to teach the technique to their family members as well.
3. Both the LSO and VO leaders made announcement frequently from local mosques on following COVID-19 SOPs. This significantly raised awareness among community members and they observed the SOPs.
4. The organised community members traced six suspected cases and referred them to Tehsil Health Office for COVID-19 tests. Only one case was tested positive and the others were tested negative. The positive case was provided proper care and medication while keeping in isolation, and was fully recovered soon.

5. The Tehsil Health Office distributed sanitizers and face masks among poor people. The LSO leaders approached them and received 200 sanitizers and 900 face masks from the Tehsil Health Office and distributed them among poor members of their LSO.

6. When the Federal Government launched Ehsaas Cash Grant Programme, poor eligible people were facing difficulties in getting themselves registered with the programme. LSO leaders identified such families and helped them get registered online. As a result of this timely support, 150 eligible families received PKR 1.8 million from Ehsaas Cash Grant Programme.

Provision of Solar Energy to Poor Families from Local Government

Another development issue which was voiced by the community to the LSO leaders was the frequent load shedding of electricity in their UC. An alternative and safer solution is solar energy. However, the initial cost of installation of solar panels for solar powered energy is beyond the reach of poor families.

The LSO leaders decided to approach the UC Government to seek their financial support in providing solar energy for the poorest families. The government allocated funds for buying solar panels and batteries for 85 poor families. The LSO leaders held a meeting of its General Body members and prioritised 85 most deserving families to receive the solar panels in order to address the issue.

Arrangement of Livestock Feed for Poor Families from NDMA with Financial Support of FAO

Due to the persistent, long spell of drought in Balochistan, livestock owners of UC Gulistan Karaiz 2 are facing multiple challenges. The main issue is the fact that due to minimal precipitation ratio; the quality of their pastures has been degraded. Therefore, they need to provide supplementary feed to their domestic animals. This has added a huge burden on them. Most of these herders belong to poor families, and they cannot afford to buy supplementary feed for their animals, therefore, they are forced to sell out their animals to minimize their herd size. As a result of which, both their household assets and income are declining at an alarming rate.

LSO leaders discussed the issue of the livestock owners in their UC and found that the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) can help them out. The LSO leaders decided to meet the concerned officials of NDMA at Quetta city. LSO leaders briefed the NDMA officials that livestock is the only source of income of the poor families in their UC.

NDMA official promised to provide them 1,500 bags of supplementary feeds for distribution among the poor families. Leaders of LSO Shaista Gulistan 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.
Distribution of Food Packages among Poor Families from Jan Japan Foundation

The Executive Body members of the LSO arranged a meeting with the CEO of Jan Japan Foundation at his office. In this meeting, the LSO leaders briefed the CEO about the miserable economic condition of the poor, orphan and widowed families in their UC and asked him for support.

Jan Japan Foundation provided 300 ration bags to the LSO leaders at their UC office. The LSO leaders prepared a list of poor families in a general meeting with the help of their VO leaders. The ration bags were distributed among the nominated community members in the presence of Jan Japan Foundation team.

Distribution of Food Packages among Poor Families from Jan Japan Foundation

DHO asked for support of LSO leaders for maximum coverage of vaccination campaigns in the UC area. The LSO leaders are now providing their support to the vaccination teams, they convince refusal cases for vaccination of their mothers and children and ensure 100% coverage of the intended population in each vaccination campaign.

Improvement in Security Situation of the UC Area with the Support of The Deputy Commissioner, Killa Abdullah

Safety and peace are essential conditions for economic growth, social harmony, and well-being of common people. The UC area is quite vulnerable in terms of security. Frequent cases of theft and robbery take place in the UC area. LSO leaders, therefore, went to the office of the Local Government and held a meeting with Mr. Bashir Ahmed Barech, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) and brought the poor security situation to his attention and requested him to increase the number as well as patrolling of Levies in their UC area. The DC welcomed and appreciated their initiative and promised to fulfil their demands.

Providing Facilities in Local BHU through the DHO and PPHI

The Basic Health Unit (BHU) is the sole health facility available for the UC members. However, the BHU needed lot of improvement to increase its services to the common people. The LSO leaders visited the BHU and assessed the missing facilities in it. They found out that the positions of two health workers were vacant in the BHU. The supply of medicine from the Health Department and People's Primary Healthcare Initiative (PPHI) to the BHU was not sufficient to meet the demand, hence people had to buy medicines from market which was a heavy financial burden on the poor people.

LSO leaders noted these points and visited the District Health Officer (DHO). They held a meeting with him in the presence of the local team leader of PPHI and briefed them about the missing facilities in their BHU. As a result of this meeting, The DHO posted two staff members to the BHU and provided a medical lab for blood testing of Malaria suspected patients. The PPHI team leader increased the quota of medicine for the BHU and promised to establish a gynaecology ward in the BHU as well.