Rural Support Programmes Network

Mobilizing Communities: Creating Accountability

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Mobilizing Communities: Creating Accountability
About RSPN

• RSPN is the largest civil society network of Pakistan, representing twelve member Rural Support Programmes (RSPs), covering over 32 million people across Pakistan.

• The RSPs’ aim is to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of the rural poor by harnessing the potential of people to manage their own development, through their own institutions.

..... using ‘social mobilization’ as a tool ....
RSPs
Approach to Social Mobilization

Local Support Organisation - LSO
- Federation of Village Organisations
- LSO Leaders, Executive Committee and General Body.
- Exec Comt: all VO leaders
- General Body: All CO leaders
- All village represented in LSO

Village Organization - VO
- Federation of Community Organisations
- Leaders adn General Body
- (all CO Presidents and Managers)
- All mohallas / settlements represented in VO
- 100% inclusion of poorest households through COs

Community Organisations- CO
- Participatory body (leaders and members)
- Separate COs for men and women
- Each CO to have 15-25 members
- 50% of all COs are women's COs
Accountability through Social Mobilization

- Social Mobilization centers on the belief that poor people have the potential to help themselves, that they can better manage their limited resources if they organize and are provided technical and financial support. The RSPs provide this critical support.

- Citizen involvement through social mobilization is critical for enhancing democratic governance, improving service delivery, and fostering empowerment.

- RSPN envisages accountability within a governance framework that emphasizes the empowerment of poor and marginalized people, so that they can fully engage with and influence governance and accountability systems.

- Better accountability improves service delivery performance.
Examples from the RSPs
Generating Accountability for Education

• “Community Mobilization to Demand Education (Article 25-A) and Local Accountability” was a 9-month project funded by Alif Aliaan. It was undertaken by RSPN, NRSP and SRSP in 7 districts of Punjab and KPK.

• The project’s objects were to:
  • Mobilize communities to demand that local politicians and influencers implement Article 25-A and increase enrolment
  • Establish a mechanism of local accountability through the Local Support Organizations fostered by the RSPs, for improvement in school conditions
Making Education a Priority for Communities

• Local Support Organizations have taken a lead role in lobbying for education reform, and holding local politicians and the Department of Education accountable

• 56 LSOs have been oriented on Article 25-A and the state of education in their area

• Education has been made a priority development agenda in the LSO monthly meetings.
Community Mobilization to Demand Education

- An important component of the project is creating awareness for education and Article 25-A at the community level.

- 258 female and 296 male Community Resource Persons (CRPs) were trained by the RSPs and supervised by the LSOs. Collectively these CRPs conducted awareness raising sessions with **196,080 people** (96,039 men and 100,041 women).

- As a result of community sensitization, the level of enrollment increased by 26 percent in the target districts since the project began.
Engagement with Politicians

• The LSOs developed linkages with local political workers, and held meetings with them before and after the May 2013 general elections. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the state of education in their UC/district, and lobby for the resolution of their education-related issues in light of Article 25-A.

• Due to their efforts, the LSOs have met with 679 politicians, all of whom have signed a pledge to fulfil their responsibility in their constituency with respect to Article 25-A and education reform.
Mechanisms of Accountability: District Education Network

- District Education Networks (DENs) comprising of LSOs and local NGOs/CBOs working on education, and local media, were set up to advocate with the department of education and other stakeholders for allocation and proper utilization of resources to improve school conditions and to ensure teachers attendance.

- Feedback gained from COs/VOs on the situation of schools in their villages was shared directly with the Department of Education at these meetings.

- As a result:
  - SMCs are being re-structured in some districts
  - Teachers attendance is improved
  - Schools are provided with books and furniture timely
Mechanisms of Accountability: Parent Itehad

- LSOs have formed UC and district level Parent Itehads to get feedback from parents on issues faced by their children to access quality education.

- Politicians and DoE were invited to district level conventions where communities raised their voice to resolve education related issues and demanded constitutional right of education for their children.

- As a result of these consultations
  - MPAs took notice of teacher absenteeism and directives are given to Education Department to send show cause notices to all those teachers.
  - Education Department also hired new teachers where there was shortage of teachers.
Engagement with Education Department and SMCs

- LSO coordinate with Education Department and SMCs on monthly basis to improve school conditions. As a result of these meetings;
  - Communities have enrolled more than 13,213 out of school children in all 7 districts
  - They also got support from education department and politicians for construction of boundary walls and appointments of teachers in the schools.
Success Stories

- LSO Noorsar secured Rs. 925,000 to construct the boundary wall of a school in Bahawalpur. This LSO also mobilized SMC members to donate 4 canals of land for a school building in village Khazan Singh, where 111 children are currently enrolled in a school that is housed in a one-room building.

- An MPA in Bahawalnagar has commissioned the construction of a boundary wall of a school (estimated to cost Rs.20,000) after meeting with the LSO.

- EDO Education assured the LSO that he would appoint one female teacher and provide books and uniforms for girls in Bahawalnagar.

- On the complaint and follow up of LSO Kohsar, EDO Education sent a teacher to a school in Shogran Valley of Mansehra which had been closed due to teacher absenteeism since the 2008 earthquake.

- LSO Kot Qaisrani ensured regularity of two teachers in the remote UC of Kot Qaisrani in district DG Khan.

- With support from the SMC, Village Organization Nalian Zulman resolved their teacher absenteeism issues in Mansehra.
Health Systems Strengthening

- RSPN is a partner in this JSI-led consortium

- With its partner RSPs, RSPN is implementing the USAID funded HSS project in 10 districts of Sindh.

- LSOs and Union Council Health Committees (UCHCs) are fostering local accountability and transparency in the health sector, focusing on both financial and managerial accountability.
Engagement with Public and Private Sector Providers

- LSOs and UCHCs coordinate with Basic Health Units (BHU)s, Rural Health Centers (RHC)s and Family Welfare Centers in their UCs to ensure regularity of services, and transparent utilization of funds allocated to these facilities.

- LSOs and UCHCs interact with the Department of Health, the Population Welfare Department and other stakeholders in order to influence their budgets, their protocols for service delivery and negotiate with them for the provision of regular quality services through health facilities.

- At the village level, Village Organizations (VOs)/ Village Health Committees (VHCs) meet on a monthly basis and provide communities information about functional facilities located in their village or union council and services available at these facilities. During these meetings the feedback of community members about the availability of trained providers, the attitude of the providers, availability of the supplies, waiting time and cost related issues will also be discussed.

- The feedback and issues faced by the community is shared in the monthly meeting of LSOs and UCHCs and relevant action is taken.
Accountability through District Health Networks

- At the District level LSOs/ UCHCs are federated to form District Health Networks (DHNs)

- Other NGOs/CBOs working on reproductive health issues in the district are also part of the DHN. They are trained on reproductive health issues, health systems management and advocacy with public and private sectors for delivery of quality services in rural areas

- These networks will advocate with District Health and Population Management Teams to influence the decisions regarding resource allocation, to ensure regular supply of services their areas

- The representatives from DHNs attend monthly meetings of the District Technical Committee and share issues faced by local communities.
Conclusion

• Three tiered social mobilization at the grassroots level can empower communities to hold civil society organizations and the state accountable.

• Communities can contribute to the improved quality of service delivery when they are organized and share feedback and problems faced with government representatives in a streamlined manner.

• **Information is key** - Communities can successfully demand their rights when they are giving knowledge and some technical support in putting their knowledge to use.
Thank You!