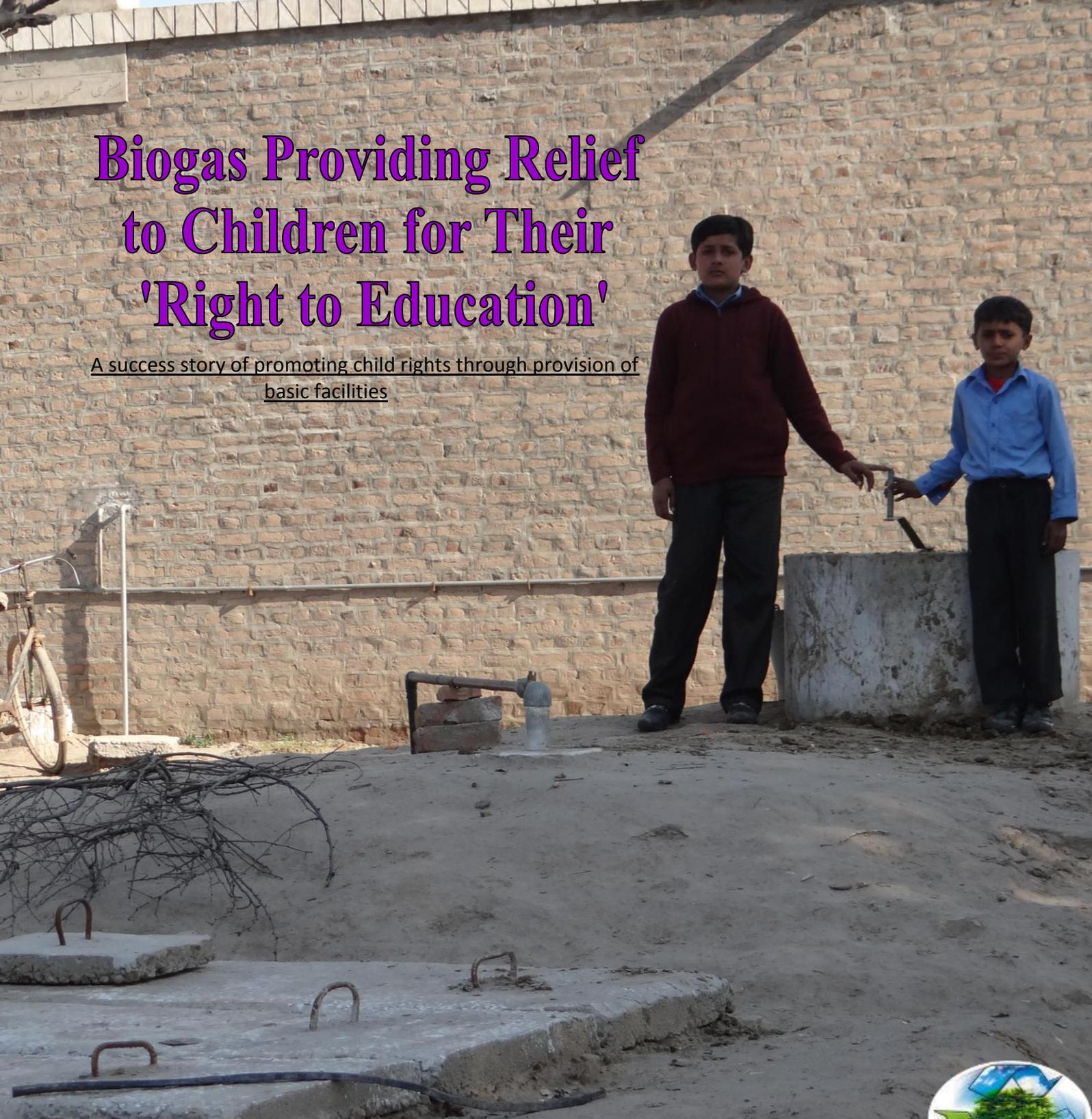


Biogas Providing Relief to Children for Their 'Right to Education'

A success story of promoting child rights through provision of basic facilities



Narrated By:
Javed Salik
Monitoring Officer
PDBP-RSPN





Beneficiary's Profile

District Wise Map of Punjab (Pakistan)

General Info*

Beneficiaries Hasnat Atta & Hammad Atta

Ages 12 & 7years

Occupation Students (Class 6th & 2nd)

Village 137/138-NB

Tehsil Silanwali

District Sargodha

Province Punjab, Pakistan



Biogas Plant Info*

Sr.	Type	Size	Date of Construction	Plant I.D
1	GGC	20m ³	20-10-2013	SGD-P000750

*: As on 13-02-2014

Pakistan has signed many declarations of human development and rights. One of them is 'Convention on the Rights of the Children' (CRC) that commits to make provision of child rights including child survival, protection, development and participation at its best possible level. Similarly the other conventions include Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that target to ensure Universal Primary Education (UPE), and Education for All (EFA) that commits to provide children with rights to education.

Although Pakistan is doing its best to provide children with their desired rights especially their education as promised in the said conventions, but the studies revealed that there are a lot of violations and hurdles that slower the service delivery in provision and promotion of child rights as committed. The violations and hurdles are categorized as child abuse, child slavery, illiteracy of children, malnutrition, poor health and protection facilities and child labor.

The global commitments for promoting child rights define that the primary duty bearer in provision of the child rights is the family, then the surrounding people, then the state. But the facts reveal that sometimes the violations and hurdles start from children's own home. For instance the tasks performed by children at home to help their family do not include in child labor, but if their engagement in these tasks hinders their education, playing, and physical or social development then these definitely include in child labor which International Labor Organization has also recognized.

Most of this situation is observed in the rural family setups. Children are engaged in agricultural, dairy and other household activities and given hard responsibilities that kill their development time and they miss the chance to develop cognitively, morally, socially, and in other aspects of holistic development. These issues can be resolved through both tangible and intangible provisions. Awareness raising as intangible solution, may bring a revolution in this concern. But providing basic facilities to ease rural life are some tangible provision to reduce workload over children so that they can get enough time to get their Right to Education.

Hasnat Atta aged 12 years and his younger brother Hammad Atta who is just 7 years old, are two of the privileged children of Chak 137/138 NB, Sargodha. Their father Atta Ullah Sobhi made this possible with constructing a biogas plant in his house to get rid of firewood collecting and cutting for kitchen and heating needs. He constructed a 20m³ biogas plant in the front area of his house in September 2013 with technical and financial support from Pakistan Domestic Biogas Programme (PDBP) under Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN).



Biogas Plant constructed outside Hasnat's home



The place where Hasnat used to go for cutting firewood before biogas plant

Hasnat shared that his family consists of 18 members so they need enough fuel for their kitchen and heating needs. Before construction of the biogas plant he used to go for cutting and collecting firewood along with his younger brother. They used to wander here and there, go into shrubberies, climb over trees, cut trees and make logs and pieces, tighten them and put the heavy logs and bundles on head or back and bring home. He told that it was a very hard and hectic work. Showing wounds on his hands

Hasnat exposed that they often hit and harmed their hands, arms, head, back and foot while doing all said to provide their home with firewood. He expressed his worries saying that he used to get sad thinking that if the cut of trees wouldn't be stopped then a time would come when there will be no tree in his village. He added that he was worried for his studies too because his learning time was getting ruined in fulfilling the firewood responsibility of his house. He told that he wanted to become a doctor in future, but the situations were not in favor of his studies, his environment and his development.

He added that the entire work took up to 3 hours a day so we got no time for study at home that eventually effected our education and our academic progress remained very low. Then a smile reflected on his face and he said *"Ab hamari jaan chhut gai hai, ab parhny or khailny k liey time hi time hai"* (now we have got rid of that, now we have a lot of time to study and play). Hasnat told that since the biogas plant has been constructed they had concentrated on their studies and scored best



marks in the last examination term. Showing his extreme hope he shared that he would be in class 7th and his younger brother in class 3rd after passing the final term exams.

Hasnat and his younger brother telling their happy story

He shared that he had been inviting his friends and classmates to visit his biogas plant. His friends used to visit his plant, congratulate him and wish to have such plant at their own home. He added that 4 of his friends had motivated their families, and their parents were planning to construct same plant in their homes. Hasnat wished that he wanted his all friends, classmates and other dwellers in the village have such plants. He envisioned that this opportunity will provide all children in his village to get well educated and developed.

Verifying the above opportunities for his children to study and play, Atta Ullah Sobhi added that his family has got other financial and social benefits as well. He told that he got PKRs.6000/- as subsidy from PDBP on construction of the plant. He expressed his happiness telling that the inner and outer environment of his house has improved after construction of the plant. The kitchen was neat and clean because there was no soot and the surroundings of his house were green because of abolishing cut of trees. He added that thus all members of his family had benefited from the programme. He told that his family had been telling other people to avail the opportunity and had motivated 3 families how had started constructing plants as well. He shared his intention for constructing another biogas plant at his farm house to run his peter-engine-tubewell with biogas to save the money that's being used for diesel.



Hasnat and his younger brother sitting happy with his relatives