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Site visit conducted by: Padmanava Sen

I met Aparna , one of the founders of FOC and we had a chat for 2 hrs.....

My overall impression: It is a good project run by volunteers and one dedicated staff. All volunteers involved are techies who envision sustainable progress and over 10 years, developed their scholarship program. They not only give financial assistance after Class 10 till colleges (amount varying in range of 5000 to 15000 /year depending on their streams). The numbers match well with Govt college fees and some other programs I am aware of in the same lines. They not only give financial assistance but they give them rigorous career consulting and period residential training to make them ready for jobs. Many of their previous scholars are employed in good positions in IT industry.

In short, it seemed to me a good sustainable and scaleable that focuses on employability more than just giving assistance.

Scholarships : Given to mostly rural students. Look at their annual report. The gender ratio is around 1:1 but it changes over years. They do not believe completely on meritocracy as smartness, intelligence, and many other qualities are weighed in during selection.

The growth of the program happened organically. They started it and one day a teacher near Alifata (~50 km from Pune) contacted them and then they expanded to students between that region and Pune

Financial Plans: So far they depend 50% on corporate donations and 50% on individual donations. They are looking for sustainable funding from an NGO like Asha to avoid the fluctuations among individual donation pool.
