AKSHAR

ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN 2019-20

A Problem We Can't Afford to Ignore:
Failing schools keep most Indians trapped in the cycle of intergenerational poverty

60% Dropout before Secondary school

Only 8% attain College Graduation

Low retention: average person in school for 5 years

Poor performing schools

Upward Social Mobility towards Middle-class

< 10%

> 90%

Poor Families

Dropout, Unemployment & Child Brides

20% Below Poverty Line

27,00,00,000 Poor

50-75% in "Low Income" Category

37% Illiterate

10% Youth Unemployment

> 80% self-employed or unskilled labour

43% of Women were child brides

51% of Girls drop out before 10th grade

The Costs of Poverty are immeasurable vis-à-vis unemployment (loss of GDP), mass migration, crime, civil strife, pollution, healthcare, uninformed voters, and a populace ill-equipped to face future challenges.

Akshar Forum disrupts the cycle of poverty by employing at-risk teens and dropouts as teachers for younger children.
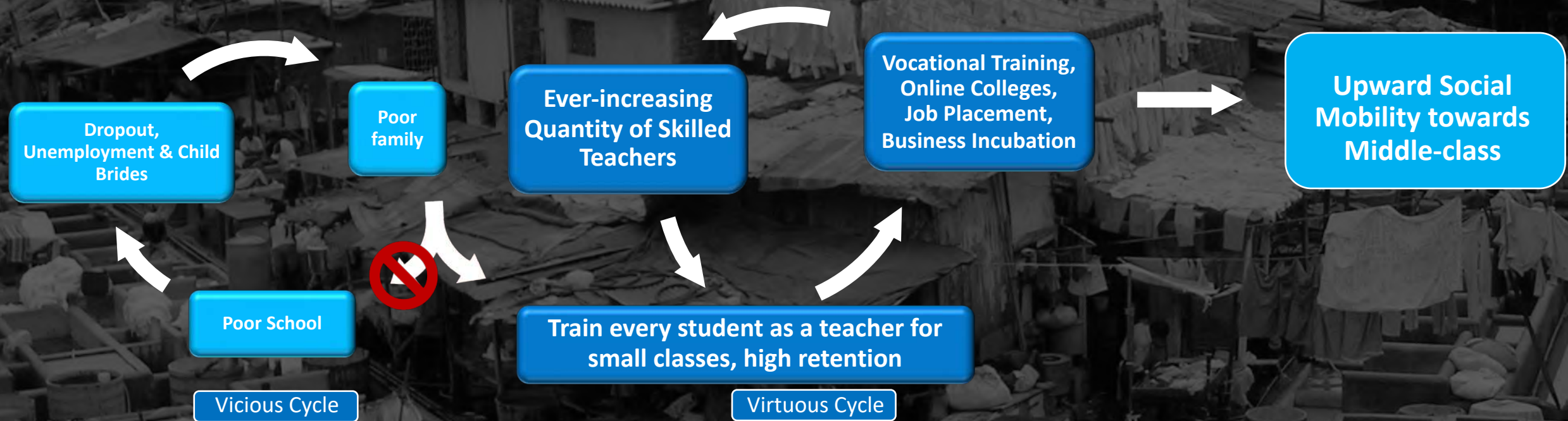
Benefits of employing teens:
- Retention of at-risk teens who stay in school to earn
- Individual coaching for young children at low cost
- Vocational training and leadership skills for teens

The Solution: A benign pyramid scheme with an exponential growth model. Training and employing at-risk teens and dropouts as teachers for younger children.

Dropout, Unemployment & Child Brides

Poor family

Poor School

Vicious Cycle

Ever-increasing Quantity of Skilled Teachers

Vocational Training, Online Colleges, Job Placement, Business Incubation

Upward Social Mobility towards Middle-class

Train every student as a teacher for small classes, high retention

Virtuous Cycle

Methodology: The entire school is a teacher training facility where every student is a part-time teacher. A military hierarchy incentivizes each student to "learn more to earn more" with wages based on academic level and teaching performance.

Typical Class Seven Student Schedule

Time	Activity
7:30-8:00	Geography X
8:00-8:30	Teaching: Class 3 Students
8:30-9:00	English V
9:00-9:30	English V
9:30-10:00	Teaching: One-on-one mentoring session
10:30-11:00	Teaching: One-on-one mentoring session
11:00-11:30	Lunch/ Online Tablet Free-time
11:30-12:00	Math
1200-12:30	Math (Khan Academy on Nalanda tablet)
12:30-1:10	Laptop video: Planet Earth documentary
1:10-1:50	Science: Biology VII
2:00-6:00	Vocational training: Recycling and Construction

One Qualified Teacher vs. 30 Disengaged Students
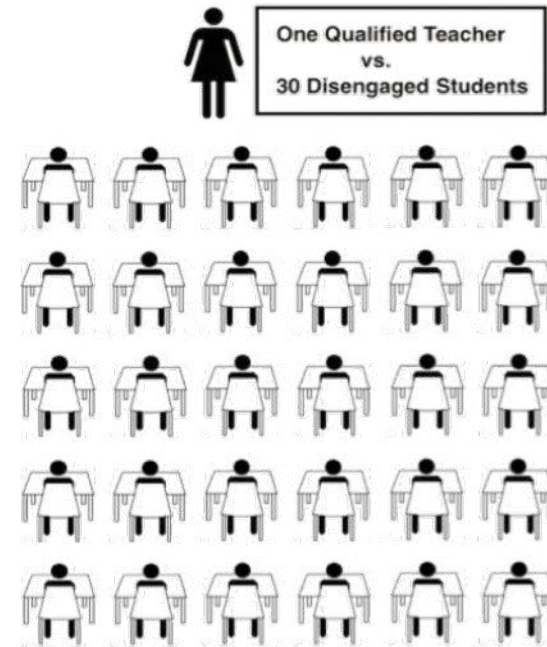
Traditional Classroom Structure

One qualified, senior teacher overseeing junior teachers
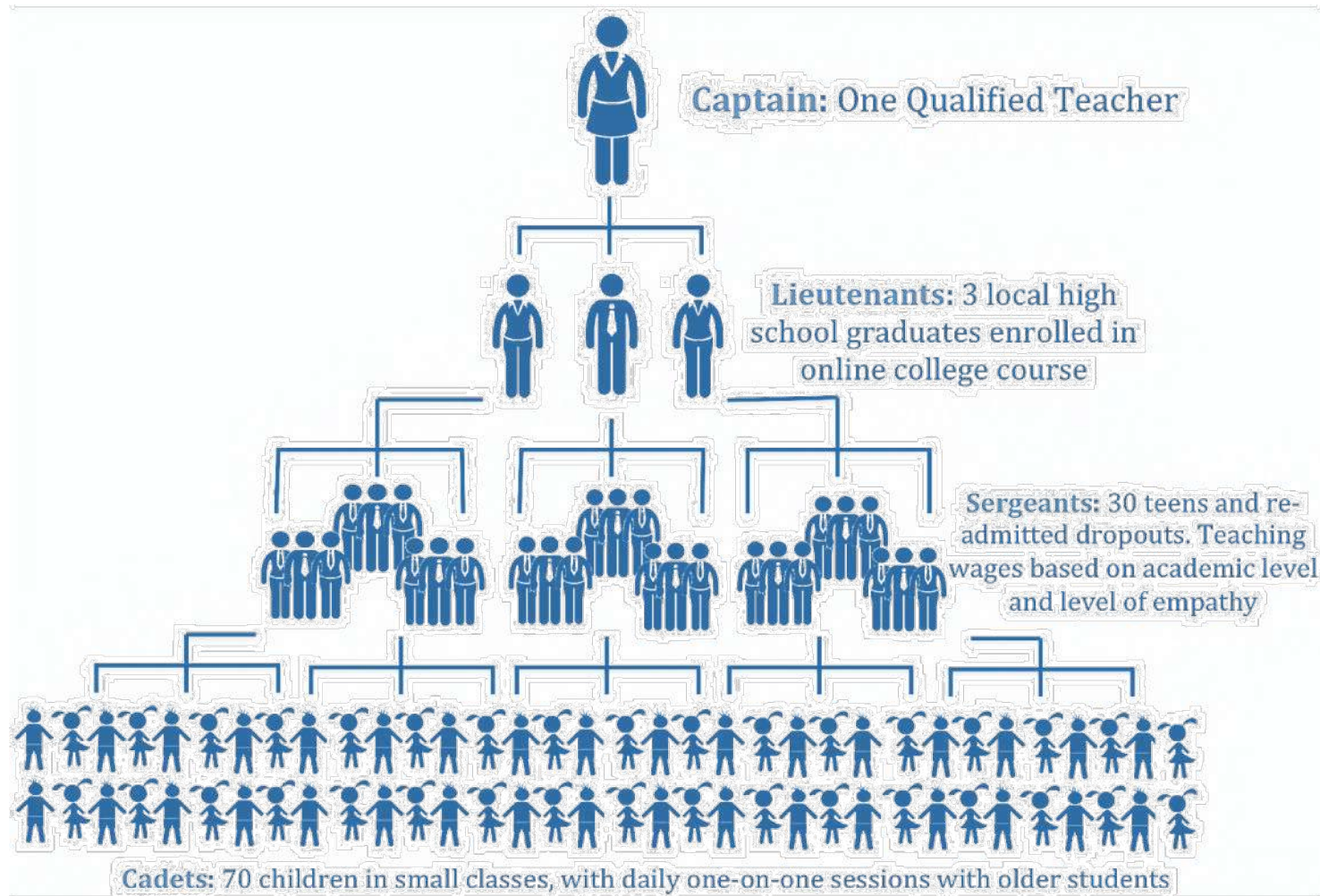
New Classroom Structure

Teenaged teachers gain:
- **Self-esteem**
- **Respect for adult teachers**
- **Improved learning outcomes**
- **Leadership skills**
- **Work experience**
- **Financial skills**
- **Spending money for basic needs**
- **Enough earnings to stay in school**

Exponential Growth: With Government Partnership, Akshar has growth potential

Akshar Forum's teaching model is essentially a pyramid scheme with potential for exponential growth as beneficiaries climb the hierarchy and are transformed into team members

Captain: One Qualified Teacher

Lieutenants: 3 local high school graduates enrolled in online college course

Sergeants: 30 teens and re-admitted dropouts. Teaching wages based on academic level and level of empathy

Cadets: 70 children in small classes, with daily one-on-one sessions with older students

Akshar Fellowship: Akshar is working with the Education Alliance to implement Akshar's model in a failing government school.

This pilot intervention will serve as a model for reforming many more government schools. The Akshar Fellowship: training and deploying talented graduates to transforms schools.

Akshar School Reform Fellowship - Six Month Progress

Sponsored by Motivation for Excellence and the Bhansali Trust, in partnership with the South Delhi Municipal Corporation and the Education Alliance, and under the leadership of Principal Seema Sharma, the Akshar School Reform Fellowship has made major strides in transforming an under-performing government school in only six months. The half of the school that were in the program for the full six months made significantly more progress than the half that were only in the program for 2 months. We have successfully implemented our Meta-teaching peer model, transforming behaviour and olearningutcomes of entire student body, despite notorious reputation of the school in the system. Children only behave well for Akshar staff, and gov't teachers are starting to adopt the method voluntarily.

Results:

- Total behavioural transformation of notorious students, who were previously showing strong signs of ASPD (dishonesty, defiance, violence, self-harm).
- Students are strongly motivated to behave well, be compassionate and study hard, or risk losing points.

Enrolment	
Beginning of Year (1st April '19)	86
Target (March 2020)	200
Student Attendance	
October – November	71%
February – March	92%
NGO Teacher Attendance	
Oct – Mar Average	98%
Student Retention	
(Excluding graduates to 6th)	96%

S: With the promise of "wages", even anti-social students are quickly incentivized to become model students. Students are progressing rapidly, and parents and other stakeholders have already noticed.
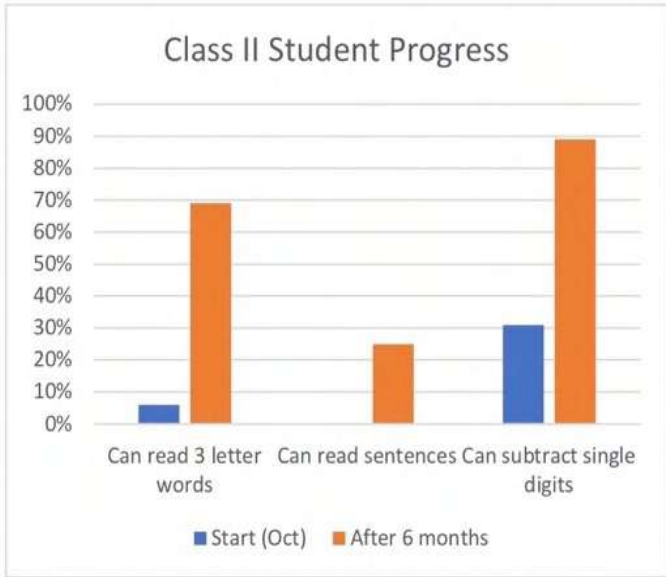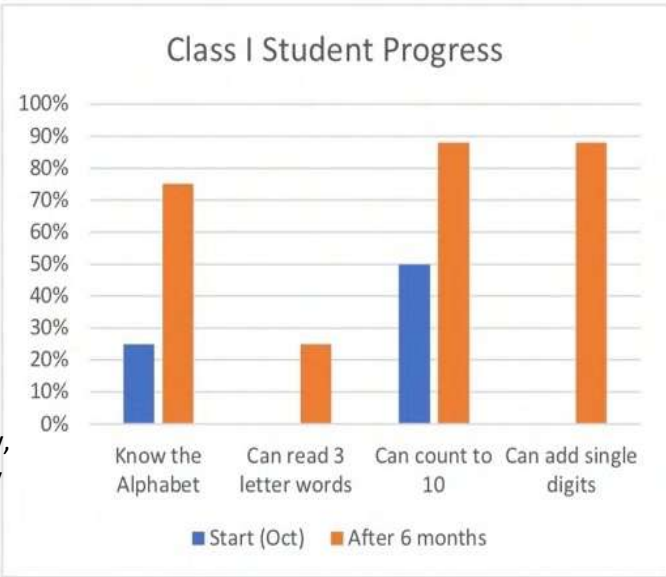
W: Model is new and unproven in this context, so we face scepticism from government teachers. Also, the area is affluent, so recruitment will be a challenge.

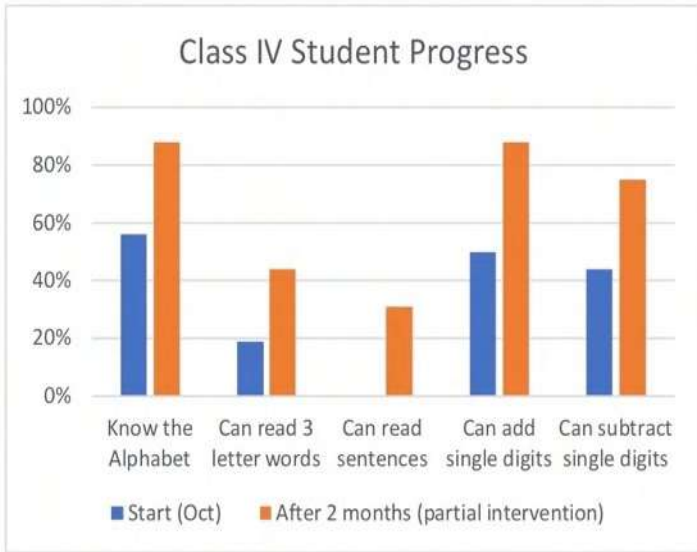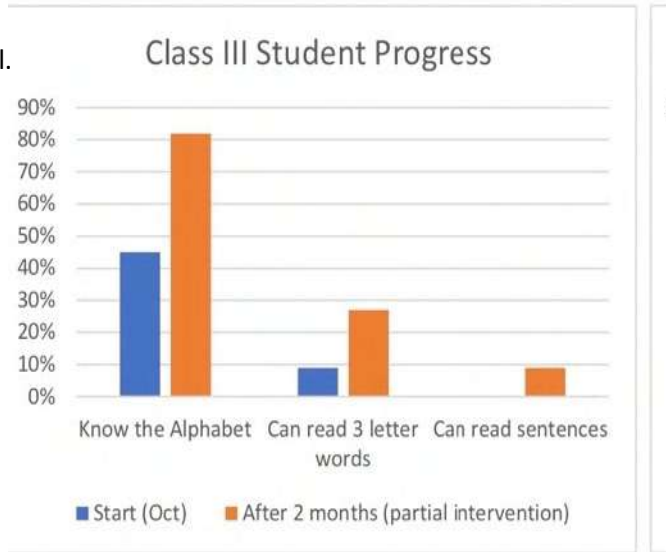**O:** Parents will start to transfer their children from low-cost private schools, as in Assam model.

T: If there is too much pressure placed on teachers to adopt the model, they will want us removed. School inspector and principal are supportive, however.

AKSHAR

THE EDUCATION ALLIANCE
enabling partnerships for quality education

6 Months Full time Intervention

Class I Student Progress
Start (Oct) / After 6 months
Know the Alphabet, Can read 3 letter words, Can count to 10, Can add single digits

Class II Student Progress
Start (Oct) / After 6 months
Can read 3 letter words, Can read sentences, Can subtract single digits

2 Months Part-time Intervention

Class III Student Progress
Start (Oct) / After 2 months (partial intervention)
Know the Alphabet, Can read 3 letter words, Can read sentences

Class IV Student Progress
Start (Oct) / After 2 months (partial intervention)
Know the Alphabet, Can read 3 letter words, Can read sentences, Can add single digits, Can subtract single digits

Theory of Change: Every student is a teacher and extra-curricular activities include vocational training, apprenticeships, and business training

Children (0-12)

Training and employing teens to teach younger children with high quality, low cost, 1:100 model

High Graduation and College Admission Rates

Teens (13-17)

Addressing basic needs of students with self-improvement and NGO partnerships

Access to nutrition, clean water, sanitation, healthcare

Providing vocational training and job placement services to teens and young adults.

Employment providing income levels above poverty line

Young Adults (18-30)

Incubating local business and supporting gentrification

Thriving local businesses

Self-sustained Growth toward middle class metrics

Young students—many abandoned, orphaned, or from broken homes—receive daily individual mentoring from an older student.

Results: A single qualified teacher leading instruction for 100 students

Teens earn their own basic needs, gaining confidence, self-respect, leadership skills, strong work ethic, financial and life skills, and compassion for younger children

Maximum performance, maximum retention, at the same cost or lower than government schools

90% of Remedial students attain 2nd grade reading level within one year, through individual coaching and learning apps
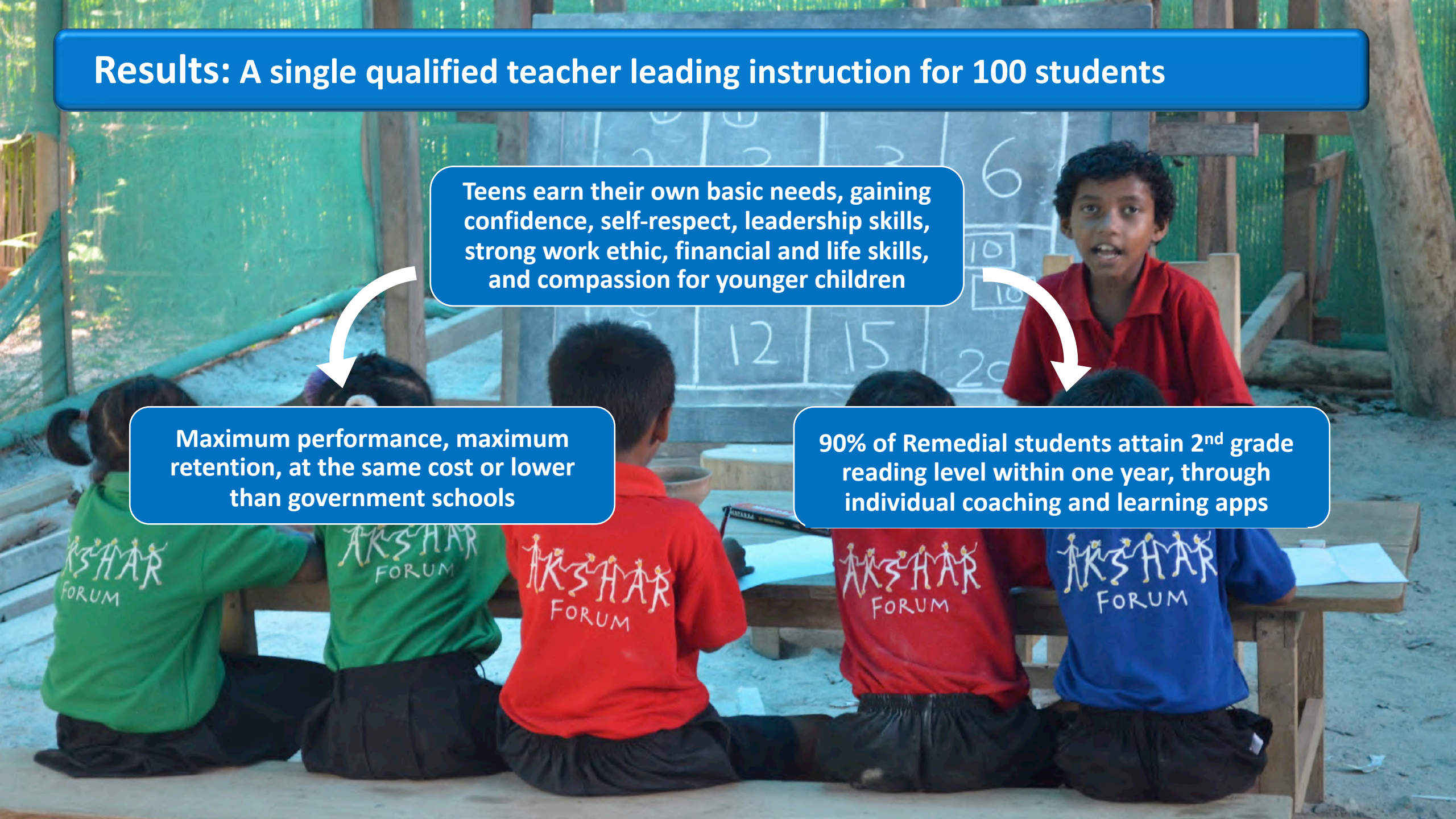
Results: A single qualified teacher leading instruction for 100 students

Ridip was a 10-year-old dropout recruited back into school at Akshar Forum. He would often miss days of school to work full days breaking rocks in the local stone quarry. Like many, his mother suffered from mental illness, and his father was an alcoholic. He was thin, had no shoes, and was hungry in school. It was no surprise that he was angry, unfocused, mistrustful, and a bully to younger children. He was trapped firmly in the vicious Cycle of Poverty.

After he became a student-teacher, earning toy money which he could trade for sandals, food, soap and other basic needs, he was completely transformed. By teaching younger children, he has become more patient and compassionate; he's now one of our top teachers. He has also become a better learner, completing four years of mathematics in one year, and on track to being recognized as a genius. How many more geniuses lay hidden in the slums and villages of India?
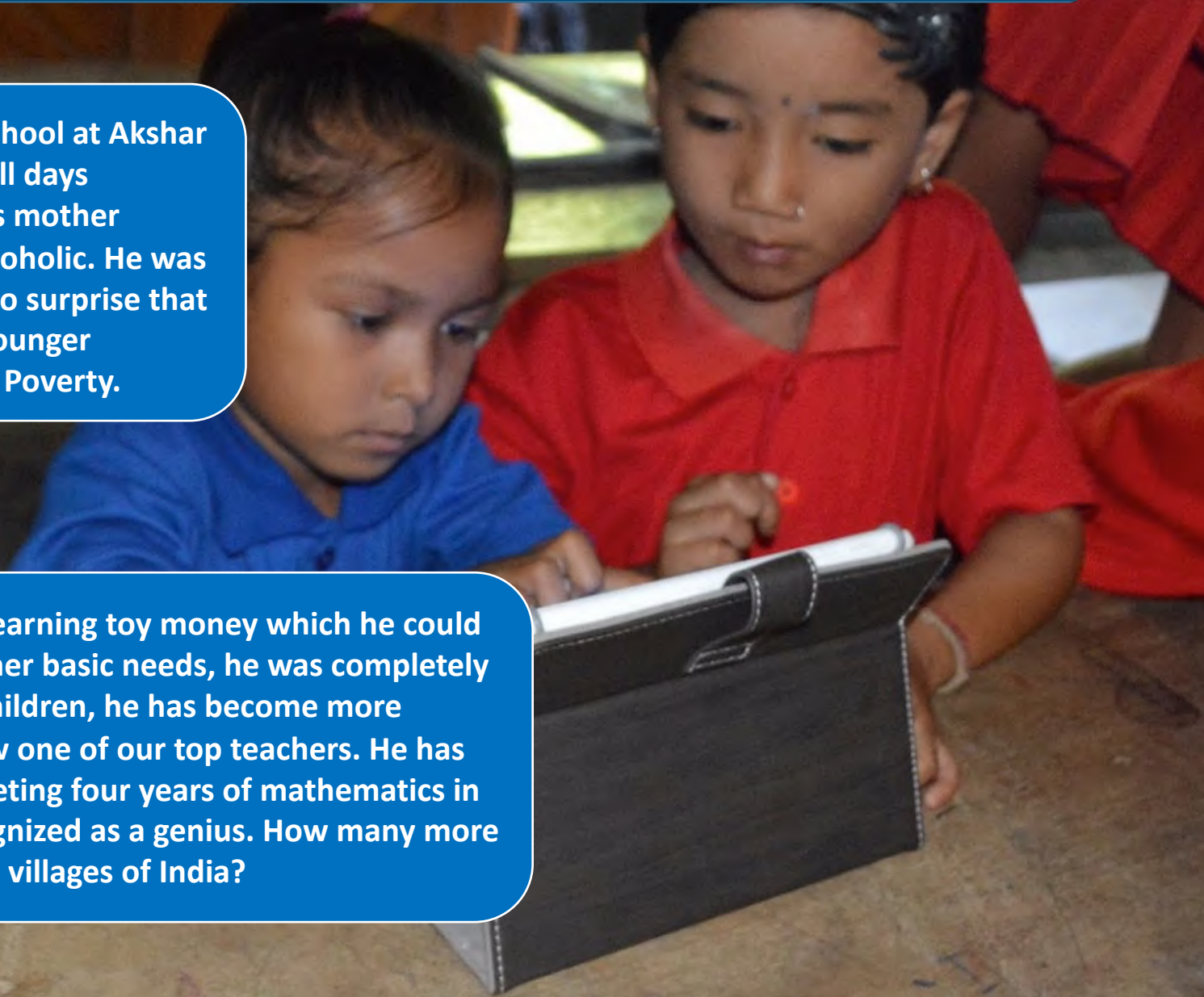
School to Career Pipeline: Akshar is partnering with local firms in the private sector to provide training and opportunities for teens

Our goal is to establish a direct pipeline from school to a fulfilling job in a trade, apprenticeship, or college. Some students will be recruited into the organization itself to work as school reformers.

Collection of clean plastic waste from homes in the village

Teens are trained and employed in mixing cement and basic construction

Dozens of plastic packets are compressed into a plastic bottle to create a strong Eco-brick

Teens gain vocational skills, earn enough money to stay in school, and build tree planters, toilets, classrooms

Many students have absolutely no documentation. Akshar strives to enfranchise these students, first by securing their birth certificates.
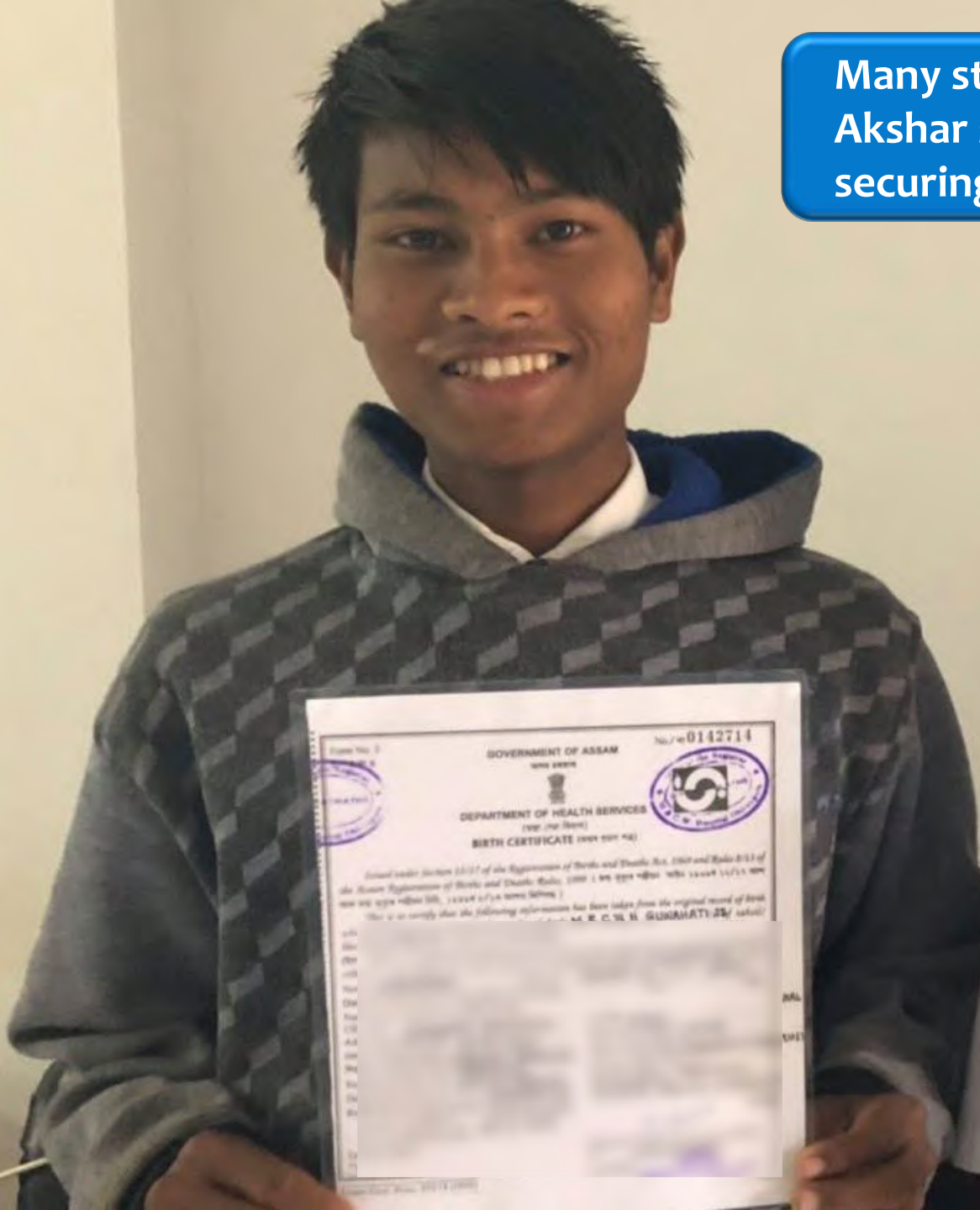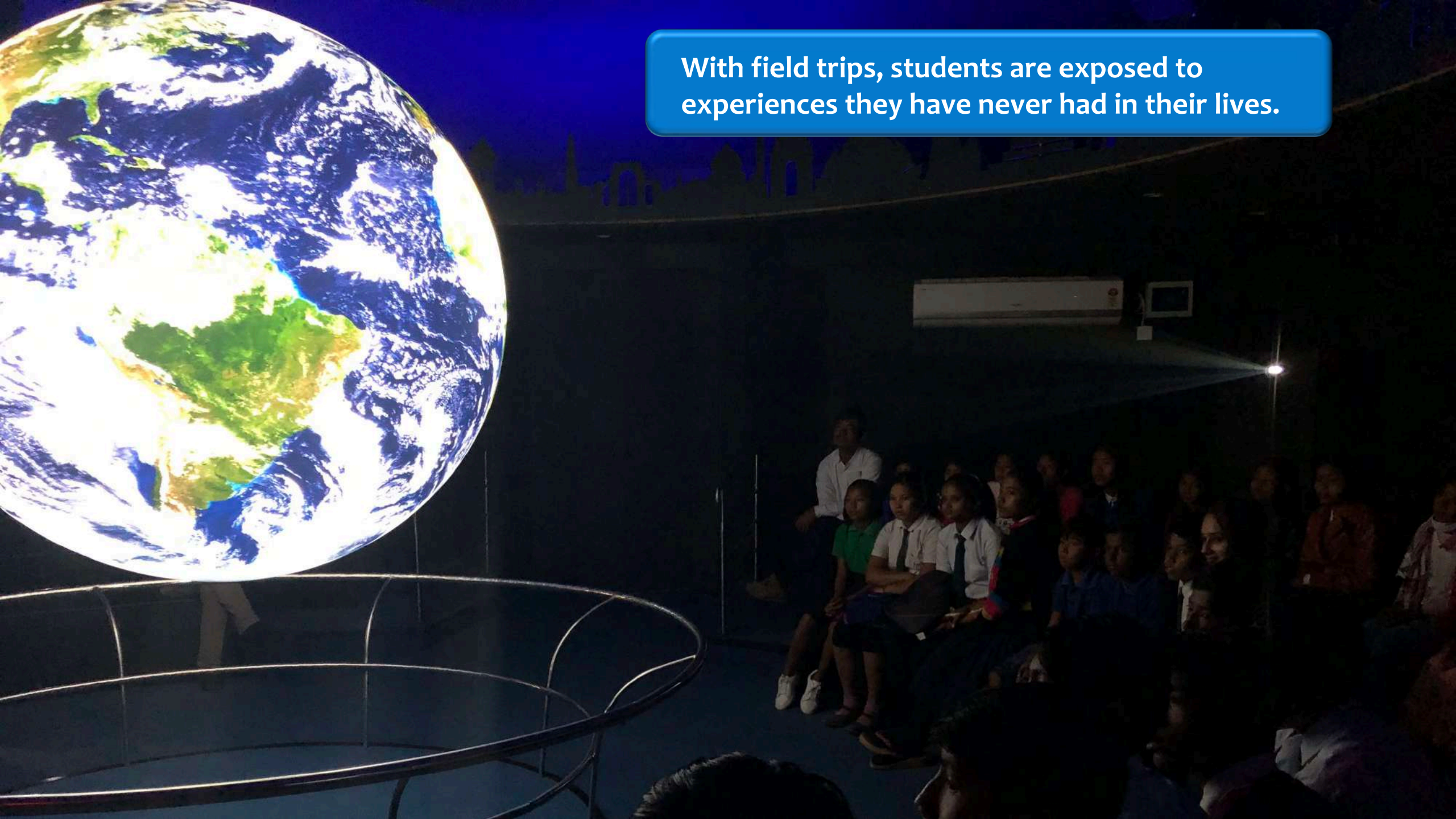
Akshar Animal Shelter enables students to learn compassion and veterinary science while helping their community. Students become development workers.

With field trips, students are exposed to experiences they have never had in their lives.

Founders / Board of Directors

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Former MLA from Nalbari

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Banaras Hindu University

Akshar Consultants: Young professionals who donate their time and expertise to serve in vital roles for Akshar

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MOTIVATION FOR EXCELLENCE

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Oil India Limited

THE EDUCATION ALLIANCE
enabling partnerships for quality education

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book a smile
a BookMyShow initiative

Action Research In Community Health And Development
ARCH
DHARAMPUR
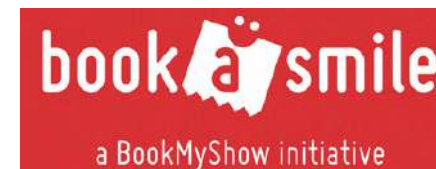
Akshar Football Club keeps at-risk teenage girls and boys engaged in school, developing discipline and teamwork.

Achievements

MOTIVATION FOR EXCELLENCE

Implemented tablet education program with the Nalanda Project

UN

Akshar granted "Special Consultative Status" by the United Nations

South Delhi Municipal Corporation
दक्षिणी दिल्ली नगर निगम

Commenced intervention in failing government school in Lajpat Nagar

SPO INDIA

"Emerging NGO of the Year" at SPO India CSR Awards and Summit 2017, New Delhi

UN NGO Committee on Mental Health
Presented Akshar at parallel event of United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, New York City

N/CORE

Selected for first cohort of incubator from more than 1000 applicants

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Published peer-reviewed study: "Experiment on Holistic Rural Development in Northeast India"

S.M.ZADE FOUNDATION

Girish Gandhi National Award for Social Work

MHRD Department of Higher Education
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Government of India

Nominated for UNESCO Hamdan Prize for Outstanding Practice and Performance in Enhancing the Effectiveness of Teachers

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