

Leadership 3

Volunteering with LEEDO: School Under the Sky

During my first year at university, I had the privilege of volunteering with the “Local Education and Economic Development Organization (LEEDO)”, a non-governmental organization dedicated to improving access to education for underprivileged communities. The organization runs a distinctive school initiative called “School Under the Sky,” which aims to provide free, basic education to children in rural areas who do not have the opportunity to attend formal schools due to various socio-economic challenges. This experience profoundly impacted my perspective on education, community development, and my role in contributing to social change.

At LEEDO, I had the opportunity to teach elementary school children who were eager to learn despite the limited resources available to them. The school operated outdoors, and our classroom was set up in open fields, under the sky, symbolizing a sense of freedom and opportunity that the children rarely had. The informal, open-air environment brought a unique dynamic to the learning process. Children who had previously struggled to access education were now learning math, language, science, and general knowledge in a nontraditional classroom setting that felt less constrained by the typical classroom structure.

As a volunteer tutor, I was responsible for helping students understand the basics of their subjects, guiding them through lessons, and offering additional support for those who needed it. I remember how these children were so eager to learn, despite not having the conveniences of a formal classroom—no desks, no chairs, and often limited educational materials. What they lacked in physical resources, they made up for with enthusiasm and curiosity. The joy on their faces as they grasped new concepts was an incredibly rewarding experience for me, and it fueled my passion for teaching and community service.

Through my time with LEEDO, I gained valuable insights into the educational challenges faced by marginalized communities. The experience taught me the power of grassroots efforts and how important it is to make education accessible to those who need it most. While I was able to offer academic support, the children taught me far more about resilience, perseverance, and the value of community.

In addition to the academic learning, the experience also showed me the importance of adaptability and empathy as a teacher. Many of these students had never been in a traditional classroom, and my role required me to meet them where they were—adjusting my teaching methods and providing the necessary emotional and academic support to make learning more engaging and effective.

Volunteering with “LEEDO” reinforced my belief in the transformative power of education and the need to create inclusive educational opportunities. It was a humbling and enriching experience, one that deepened my commitment to contributing to the educational and social development of underprivileged communities. I left each day with a renewed sense of purpose and a strong desire to continue working toward creating equal opportunities for all children, regardless of their background or circumstances.