

POwEdA  
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Newsletter  
July 2025  
(for private circulation only)

The promise of hope that this year began with in June continues in July. Although it has been a long month, the month passed by in a jiffy.

We commenced work in 9 schools in July.

With great joy and deep gratitude I also announce our first scholarship in higher education, to a girl student who aspires to become a doctor. This is indeed a big deal!

We had the immense privilege and joy of gifts in the form of Silvia and Paula, 2 volunteers from Spain with us at Poveda for an entire month. Silvia and Paula joined in Monday to Sunday across all our projects, observing, implementing and improvising everything we do with great enthusiasm and accuracy.

-Reeves



# My Birthday Gift!

In October of last year, my daughter gave me the best gift I could have ever imagined: the dream of my life... a trip to India!

Everything began on July 3rd, and now it's about to come to an end. On July 7th, we arrived in Pune. Two Spanish women in Pune! We had no idea what was waiting for us. Now, at the end of this first experience, I honestly don't know how to explain just how incredible this month has been.



From the moment we landed at the Pune airport, Reeves Rodrigues was waiting for us with open arms and an open heart. He took us to a house and made us feel completely at home.

Throughout this month, we've had the privilege of joining him in his humanitarian work and sharing unforgettable moments together. Through his association, Poveda, he works to bring education to children in rural schools in the mountains of Pune.

Everyday he picks us up in his car and drives between two and three hours every day, depending on the traffic, to reach the schools. And then all the way back again. But this isn't a job. It's a calling. It's something you have to live and feel, it's not easy to put into words.

Every morning, arriving at the schools feels like the sun is rising. Just one look at the children and teachers and you can feel what they're experiencing.

Some teachers even go house to house to make sure the children come to school.

They're dedicated, they care deeply about the children's needs, and they know exactly what each school requires.

The Poveda Foundation sees it all first hand, sometimes it's a pencil, a notebook, shoes, backpacks, uniforms...

And there's Reeves, accompanied by Dipali and Sholy, two amazing volunteers who work alongside him in this educational mission.

When the children arrive, they run from one classroom to another, eventually settling into two groups, one for the younger kids and one for the older ones.

All of them ready, notebooks and pencils in hand, prepared for a new experience in English.

But it's not traditional English. It's not just a grammar class. It's something truly dynamic, engaging, and exciting for them, full of movement, interaction, learning vocabulary, grammar, expressions... in a way that inspires them. They use gestures, group work, and peer learning. They soak up the language like sponges. They learn respect, order, how to behave and how to express themselves.

The classes are fun, rich in content, and full of energy. They're given homework, which most of them do and come back the next week ready to build on what they've learned and move on to the next great topic.

You have to feel it. You have to see their eagerness to learn, how they absorb the concepts and gradually start to express themselves, stay organized, work hard, respect one another, and grow, not just academically, but as human beings.

I can only say thank you for this gift my daughter gave me. Everything I've learned, everything I've felt, how I've grown as a person. It's been short, it's gone by so fast, and I know I've given so little compared to everything I've received.

There's also another wonderful project in Pune: a day care center where they do incredible educational work with very limited resources, and a group of older children who meet every Sunday, young people learning to become great individuals and fight for their dreams through effort and perseverance.

From the bottom of my heart:  
Thank you. Thank you for everything.  
Thank you for letting me live this.  
And most of all: I wish you strength to  
keep going with this incredible  
educational mission.

Keep going!

Silvia



Over the past month, we have had the incredible opportunity to work closely with Reeves, Sholy and Dipali by accompany them in their classes at several different schools from Monday to Friday. Each day, we observed and absorbed their unique teaching approach, where children are truly at the center of everything, and where games and active participation are the key to learning.

During our first week, our main goal was to observe and learn about the most effective ways to teach and keep children engaged, especially how to encourage them to speak English and gain confidence in doing so. I have witnessed first-hand how this dynamic and inclusive teaching style helps students improve and feel comfortable enough to reach out, speak to us, and even tell us about their day. This method prioritizes removing the fear of making mistakes, as they know there is always someone there to guide and support them.

One of the most inspiring things I'll take with me is the way teamwork is fostered in the classroom. At the beginning of the school year, Reeves selects captains, usually the strongest students in the subject, who are then responsible for helping three classmates who may lack confidence or struggle with writing or speaking. These captains take responsibility for their group's improvement, creating a strong sense of commitment and collaboration. The results are incredible; within just one month, we saw significant progress in all the students.

It quickly became clear how powerful Reeves' methods are: the students are enthusiastic, focused, and learn at an impressive pace. Every day, in every school, we dedicated the last five minutes to teaching at least five new words or sentences in Spanish and the children absorbed everything with enthusiasm and curiosity.

After that first week of observation, we chose two schools where we began teaching Spanish as an extra class, in addition to their regular English lessons. The children's motivation to learn was so inspiring that we wanted to contribute even more. So, we decided to buy 30 English books and launch a small reading program. The idea is that the children will read a chapter each week, summarize it, and define any new words they learn. If the students stay committed and engaged, we hope to expand the program by providing more books and opportunities to grow their vocabulary and reading comprehension.



Beyond the weekday school visits, we also took part in various weekend activities organized by the Poveda Foundation. One Saturday, we visited a school in Tilaknagar to deliver much-needed supplies. Every Sunday, we distributed 30 meals to people living on the streets and taught a group of children from the Leadership Program. These sessions helped them build practical life and academic skills, including math games, staying informed with national news, and preparing presentations on topics that matter to them personally.



Everything I've learned during this month has made a lasting impact on me. I'll carry this experience with me always and apply it whenever I can. It's been truly incredible to witness how much children can learn when they are taught with joy, creativity, and respect. A heartfelt thank you to Reeves for welcoming us so warmly and sharing with us the incredible work he does every day across all these schools. His passion, dedication, and love for teaching have been a true inspiration.

Paula



# Child Development Centre

After 2 weeks of initiation and setting routines in place for the new students, the teachers dived deep into the academics, integrating art, craft, song and drama into the daily lesson plans.

Ashadi Ekadashi and Parents' Day were celebrated.



The children prepared special tokens of love for their parents and presented the same to them.



# Spoken English Project in Schools

We are working in 9 schools this year.

July has been a special month for the project, with Silvia and Paula, 2 volunteers from Spain in school everyday, teaching and assisting our teachers.

The older levels were exposed to different aspects of Spain such as culture, festivals, sports, animals etc.

2 schools were selected for extra classes in Spanish.



Some schools received from the volunteers, story books to initiate a love for reading, increasing vocabulary and strengthening grammar.



# School Support:

Poveda helped a preschool by donating to them school bags that were shared with us by SROAT.



# School Support:

The foundation also helped 25 children from another rural school with school uniforms and notebooks. It initiated an art competition in the same school for all students and provided them art material.



## Scholarship:

In the last 2 years, Poveda has supported a student in her education through grades 9 and 10.

Now, with the generosity of a silent donor, we have got her college tuition and travel covered for junior college.

And, Leap to Shine has taken responsibility for covering the NEET fees for this child.

The opportunity for a child from a humble background to become a doctor is filled with indescribable joy and is empowering. More children can now dare to dream big and make their dreams come true.



# Changemakers

Changemakers has moved up a notch this year with the sessions beginning with a game and discussion around latest news conducted by the leaders themselves.

They are also inching closer to the completion of their project presentations on themes close to their heart and sensibility.



## Gratitude

I wish to acknowledge the contribution of the following among many who helped make Silvia and Paula's volunteering with us special for them:

- Rozanna Rodricks, for allowing your house to become their home for a month
- Sholy Rejimon, Irene Menezes, Veronica Nair, Manasi Pise, Pramila Shetty and Shobha Gawli, Dipali Jagtap, Sakshi Sonigara, ZP Schools Karandi and Kondhanpur and all my Changemakers and their parents for inviting us over to a wholesome fellowship meal.
- The schools that in one way or another welcomed them, thanked them, offered them tokens of love.

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