Problem

In the poorest, most remote villages in the High Atlas region of Morocco, teenage girls are absent from school due to poverty, living far away from local schools and not having access to reliable transport.

This has led to generations of illiteracy amongst girls and women in rural Morocco, as high as 70%. Girls are then locked into early marriage, which results in a lack of skills (particularly with regard to managing climate change), poor physical and mental health, and contributes towards keeping their community in poverty.

An uneducated girl cannot realise her potential in life, contribute fully to her community and country and will be less able to prioritise education for the next generation. There is also evidence to suggest she will have less skills to manage climate change and mental health challenges.
Since 2007, Education For All Morocco has responded to this problem by building and running safe, well-equipped and expertly staffed girls’ boarding houses close to the schools. Despite starting with only 10 girls, the project has been so successful that there is a growing demand for places. We now have 6 houses for 250 girls.

Each girl has a cosy bed, hot showers, 3 nutritious meals a day, access to books and computers and support from a dedicated house mother. Girls are now completing their education, enrolling in University, marrying when older and stepping into professional careers.

- EFA runs six boarding houses for girls in the High Atlas region of Morocco.
- EFA has on average 250 girls in our boarding houses every year, from 12-18 years old (college/lycée).
- All the houses are staffed by three–four local women, who are outstanding role models for the girls.
- Each house has between 30–50 girls (depending on the size of the houses).
- An EFA girl comes from a village on average 37 km away from a school.
- At EFA a girl receives three nutritious meals a day, access to computers, language and IT assistance from volunteers, academic/well-being support.
EFA STATISTICS—2022

450
Total girls through EFA’s 6 year programme since 2007

170
Girls Enrolled at University since 2013

96%
EFA BAC pass-rate in 2022

60%
National average BAC pass-rate in 2022

6
Number of boarding houses

21
Local staff employed

9
Number of girls on full university scholarships

0
Total master’s degrees

CAREERS

Travel industry
Teaching
Business
Law
KABIRA, LAWYER & MASTER'S GRADUATE

Kabira got her BAC in 2017. She went to university to study Engineering and Land Law and was invited to do her masters in 2020. She completed he master's in September 2022 and is now considering doing a PhD whilst also applying for jobs as a lawyer. She is passionate about bringing change to her valley and spends a lot of time visiting villages and speaking to families about the importance of allowing their daughters to go to school. She has also been supporting an award-winning Moroccan filmmaker with research for an upcoming documentary about the life and challenges of girls from the High Atlas. Watch her interview on Instagram here.

KHADIJA, SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER

‘Being a teacher is an amazing experience and I am glad that I have this chance, because being educated was always a dream for me that came true but teaching was just impossible—even in the dream! I grew up seeing the teachers as the most wonderful, amazing people on the world. I was raised to respect them in all situations. I wasn’t sure if I can handle the responsibility! But here I am already, correcting 120 pages of diagnostic tests of my students. I feel that they really need me. I feel exactly where I should be because these young people need to believe in themselves and I think I can help them with that. I can tell them that education is the key to anything you want in the world!’

ZAHRA, TRAVEL OFFICER, INTREPID

‘I have spent three Years in Marrakech working with Intrepid Travel, which I got to know through EFA, since it’s one of the companies that raises funds for EFA houses. I have realised how important it is to be independent, confident, open-minded and have a better understanding of life. Now, I have become more conscious that education plays a significant role to plan my future as a successful person. It molds me into a useful citizen in society, puts me on the path of self-discovery, leads me to self-belief, adds meaning to my life, and provides me with the means to achieve lasting success. All of that was thanks to EFA, which gave me the chance to discover more about life. Right now, I am excited for my future and I will keep my belief that the best is yet to come.’
LOUBNA, CURRENT LYCEE STUDENT

Loubna is 17 years old and the eldest of 3 sisters. She is a self-confessed bookworm and keeps a torch by her bed in her EFA dorm so she can read into the night! She loves to learn and loves speaking English. She is ambitious and wants to be the best success she can be and to hopefully get a scholarship for university in Casablanca. She is also determined to be a great role model to her sisters and community and to prove to her family that ‘whatever a boy can do, I can do!’ Her mother told her “when I was younger, like you, I was married and I was pregnant with you. But you have the chance to have a bigger life”. She wants us to be better than her. For Loubna, education means a life very different from those of the women before her. ‘I will be free, I can travel anywhere, I can do whatever I want and whenever I want. That’s what I mean about being free with education.’ Learn more about her in the Evening Standard article and video.

GHITA, UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP STUDENT, CASABLANCA

Ghita is 21 years old and in her final year of a Business Management degree at SIST in Casablanca where she was awarded a full scholarship after passing her baccalaureat with excellence. She comes from Rakte village, a four hour walk from the local school in Asni. Her parents are both illiterate; her mother works as a cleaner and her father has a small barbecue stall in the local market. Ghita almost didn’t go to school due to her family not being able to afford the transport. Her mother heard about EFA in the local market and spoke to her father about letting her study. She joined EFA, completed her BAC with flying colours and will graduate next year with a Business degree. She wants to become a businesswoman with social impact. Ghita is also passionate about encouraging girls in her village to complete their studies. Ghita is featured in the Changing Lives in the High Atlas short film.