

February
2011

Education For All Newsletter



WE WANT TO GIVE GIRLS
THE CHANCE OF A COLLEGE
EDUCATION IN MOROCCO
BECAUSE WE BELIEVE THAT
IF YOU EDUCATE A GIRL,
YOU EDUCATE THE NEXT
GENERATION AS WELL

Highlights

- ◆ Dar Ouirgane
- ◆ New school year
- ◆ Moroccan press
- ◆ Volunteers

The new house is ready!



We talked about it in the last newsletter and we are happy to announce that Dar Ouirgane is now finished.

Ouirgane-60 km from Marrakech-is a village in the middle of a beautiful landscape. Unfortunately, as in Asni and Talat N'Yacoub, there are too many children in the surrounding villages who don't have the opportunity to study. That's why EFA chose this area to build a new house to give 36 girls the opportunity to further their education.

The house has been built to be as convenient as possible, with the help of John Bothamley, an English architect.

All the more, the school is just in front of the house! No need to walk a long way to go to school.

As we mentioned in the last newsletter, the aim was to start educating more girls since September 2010. And so we have. The girls have been living in another house whilst the purpose built house is built. And on February 7th the girls discovered their new house...

See on page 3 for more information and to know when will be the official opening.

The new school year

Let's see what has happened since September, the beginning of the new academic year.

Find who have the best scores for this first semester. (See page 4)

EFA is becoming well-known by the media

Maryk and the girls have been interviewed a lot since September.

See on **page 8** who has been interested in EFA.

The house-mothers visit their own country

The volunteers have decided to urge the house mothers Latifa and Khadija, to visit Morocco. It's a pity to live in such a beautiful country without visiting it!

Follow their adventures on **page 9**.

Dar Ouirgane

◆ The construction, step by step



May—June 2010



August—September 2010



December 2010 —January 2011



February 2011

◆ Shopping



As we wanted the girls to enter the house on February 7th, we had to buy everything necessary to furnish the house.

And thanks to the three house-mothers (Latifa, Khadija and Mina) and the volunteer Karima, Dar Ouirgane was ready to welcome the girls as it was planned.

They worked hard all around Marrakech to buy everything necessary for the bedrooms, the kitchen, study room...Now you can call them if you need to furnish your house as they know the best shops in Marrakech :)

And thanks to Aniko (new committee member), the house has the chance to be decorated with “haiks” curtains from Essaouira. They are really nice and useful as they keep the house warm during the winter (see pictures p.2).

◆ The girls



Here are the girls from Dar Ouirgane with Dee Toth Jones, the new volunteer who only arrived last week (we will introduce her in the next newsletter).

“Before discovering their new house on February 7th, I talked to the girls about it a lot. I told them that it will be their home. They felt very happy and enthusiastic to go there and to live in better conditions. They followed the construction with a lot of impatience and today they are all happy to be here, and so am I!”

Mina– the house mother of Dar Ouirgane.

◆ Official opening

The official opening will be during the **open day on May 1st** (see page 10 for more information)

HUGE THANKS to everyone who has been involved with us and made this happen.

New school year, new girls

The new academic year 2010-2011 began in late September.

The girls were so happy to come back to their houses to see their house-mothers and the other girls. Each girl was excited to tell her friends what happened during the summer.

They were also curious to see the new girls and see if some of them came from their village.

Welcome to all the new girls, 13 for Dar Asni, 11 more girls for Dar Tinmel and 10 for Dar Ouirgane!

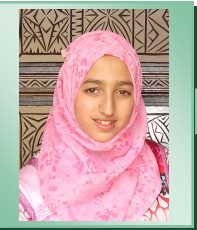
The EFA girls team is becoming bigger and bigger!

The beginning of the year was a little difficult for most of the girls, it's not easy to live far from home when you are young. But now they feel like it's home and everything is going well. The girls are familiar with the houses, the other girls and the staff.

As usual «the older» girls show the house to «the newer» girls with a big welcome and if you walked into the house you could hear something like "you'll see, it's so good to be here...they take care of us...we work but we also have a lot of fun...we have big parties and if we have good marks we can have presents!"

Best results of the semester

Dar Asni



1st year of college: Good results for almost all of the girls. **Khadija Ait Hamou** is the best one with **14,29**.



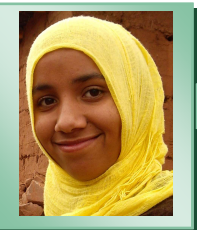
2nd year of college: results acceptable for all the girls, **Zahra Ait Rami** is still the best with **14,55**.



3rd year of college: The girls are studying hard as they will have big exams at the end of the year. And **Fatima Boustia** had the best score with **14,80**.

For the rest of the girls, they are studying in the lycee, which is a new challenge for them. They don't have results yet as they still have exams. So we wish them good luck!

Dar Tinmel



1st year of college: Most of the girls succeed, they worked hard and the results are really good. **Sara Benhamou** has the best score with **17,64**.



2nd year of college: It was a hard semester for the girls but they don't give up. **Loubna Ait Bouihia** keeps the first place with **11,65**.

Dar Ouirgane



1st year of college: The girls had good results and the best one is **Soukaina Ait Taleb** with **17,23**.

We wish them all a huge success in their studies.

◆ Activities with the volunteers



Painting on the wall



Party!



Walk



Let's do the limbo!



Hoola hoop



Origami

◆ Girl guides visit Dar Asni



We had the opportunity to welcome the 27th and the 28th of October 2010 the girl guides UK for their annual visit. Those two days were full of activities, motivation and enjoyment. The first day, we split into two groups, one in charge of

painting jars in the garden with flashy colours and the other one was explaining to the girls of Dar Asni how to sew and decorate a bag, make key rings with pearls and realize plastic decorative objects which reflect the light. The second day was dedicated to Halloween. The girls found it interesting to discover what Halloween is all about. We started emptying the pumpkins and making a cake with the flesh. It was really funny because nobody had ever made this recipe! Then we put candles inside the pumpkins and placed them in front of the door. When the girls came back from the school late in the afternoon, we all took photos all around the pumpkins.

Fairouze Jebli

◆ First aid in Dar Asni



Last November Dar Asni was lucky enough to have a Virgin paramedic visit the house in order to teach them some basic first aid skills. The girls, enthusiastic as always, learnt how to react to a burn (not the commonly believed method of toothpaste!), how to respond to a cut, how to wash out your eye, the Heimlich manoeuvre, the recovery position and resuscitation.

With an attempt at "franglais" and vivid hand movements, the determined paramedic managed to translate his point across, using dummies and a couple of volunteers to demonstrate on. Then the girls went on to have a go themselves, taking turns to put each other in the recovery position.

A very amusing and fun session for all, a big thank to the paramedic for so generously giving up his time to teach the girls, I am sure it will be very useful for them in the future, they are skills that everybody needs to know.

Eily Craig

◆ Eve Branson visit Dar Asni



On September 28th, Eve Branson, Richard Branson's mother, came to visit Dar Asni.

She was interested in our project and she came to visit the girls and the house as a neighbour (Kasbah Tamadot in Asni). We hope to keep in touch and work together to improve the lives of the local population.

Volunteers—thank you and goodbye

◆ Goodbye

Eily CRAIG



My name is Eily Craig, I am an 18 year old gap year student from Scotland who volunteered in Dar Tinmel from September to November.

I really loved my time in Morocco, and although at time it was challenging and I missed home, looking back on my experience, I am so happy I did it and grateful for the opportunity.

I miss all the girls, each lovely in their own way, always wanting to do some sort of activity; whether it be learning English, going on long walks to the river after school, playing games (like hopscotch and skipping) on the terrace, arts and crafts or singing. They craved to learn, to develop

their English, and by the

hope they continue to teach themselves with the booklets we made, "English with Eily."

I must say a huge thank you to both Khadija the House Mother and Khadija the wonderful cook for being so hospitable and welcoming, my leaving party with all the dancing and singing, and all the delicious cakes, is a night I will never forget. I must also thank all the girls, they are all so affectionate and kind, always wanting to include you in their plans, they make you feel like part of a family. Education for All is a wonderful project that really strives to help those that need it most.

Fairouze JEBLI



After three months of voluntary service I finished my mission at Dar Asni. I was a volunteer from 04th October 2010 to early January 2011. This period was so dense that I did not see the time passing. During this period I have done my best to improve the girls French level. It was an everyday work, during homeworks, during the games and also in the everyday life.

The first weeks in Morocco were the most difficult as I had to hold the 30 girls' name (really not an easy task!), to organize my daily program and to accustom myself to this life. After that, the program began to work correctly, I was able to adapt myself to every school level, suggesting

consequently lessons according to every group : I really was like a French teacher and I enjoyed it!

Being a volunteer at Dar Asni was gratifying for me, some of the girls even asked me if I could not replace their own professor of French! I think that they appreciated my work and they estimated the fact that I take the time necessary to make them understand things sometimes simple but nevertheless difficult for them. It was a pleasure for me to bring my personal skills in mathematics, French and computing. It is a big satisfaction when a girl understands an exercise thanks to my explanations. Well, this was not only a professional but also a human experience for me. Even if I am Moroccan of origin, I learnt so much about my country thanks to EFA. It also opened my eyes on the gaps of Morocco and this strengthened my envy to create a project with Morocco because there is so much to make! I thank so much all the persons that worked with me and that I met. Thanks to both Latifas, both Khadijas, Karima and the girls of Dar Asni and Dar Tinmel : I will miss you so much! I also want to thank all the committee members for helping Morocco to improve the social disparities via the education. See you very soon at the Dar Ouirgane open day incha'allah!

Karima TARGAOUI



I began volunteering with EFA on November 2009. (It seems like it was yesterday!)

When I arrived in Dar Asni I was surprised, the house is so pretty and the organisation directed by Latifa is really good. The girls and both Latifa were so nice. One week after it was so hard to leave them and go to Talat N'Yacoub.

The first days were really hard. I was in the middle of nowhere, the girls didn't know yet each other, EFA wasn't well-known by the locals so they were suspicious, the house wasn't started...I really felt like I couldn't do it. But I began to build relationship with the girls and I realized how much they needed somebody to help them...that motivates me to succeed.

Then Khadija the gorgeous house-mother arrived and I felt immediately comfortable with her. Together we made a huge work ; first with the girls who feel now like sisters and have changed (in many ways), secondly in the house which became really nice and warm, and finally with the community around Talat N'Yacoub who knows us, respects us, encourages us and helps us with our project. And all this with the help of the committee of course, who is always present and helpful despite the distance. And I thank them for this and for the trust they gave me.

I'm really proud to be a part of this project when I see how the girls have evolved. They didn't only improve their marks at school, they became more open-minded, independent and have a better understanding of life. They are conscious that education is the key to their individual and collective future. They are becoming real women, the women who will change Morocco.

◆ Its 'au revoir' to Karima, a star volunteer!

All EFA volunteers are special people, giving up their time to help the girls and house mothers, each bringing with them their own skills. They all deserve a big thank you and anyone who has visited the girls in the houses will know how they have been taken into the girls' hearts. Karima deserves a particular thank you, she came with special skills and a very special personality and has devoted over a year to helping EFA. It is often said that the right person will turn up at the right time and this seems very much the case as far as EFA and Karima were concerned.

She came when EFA had taken a big step to open its second house 'Dar Tinmel' in the very rural setting of Talat-n-Yacoub and all the challenges that this represented. Karima's accomplishments are many but to name a few: She was able to help put the operation of Dar Tinmel on a firm footing and it is already a home away from home for 20 girls. Karima has also helped put in place along with Khadija, the house mother at Talat-N-Yacoub, a solid process for the intake and selection of girls in the this very rural area of the Moroccan High Atlas.

So Karima, a huge thank you, good luck for the future and thank you for staying involved in helping EFA with its volunteer program.

All committee members of EFA



I would like to thank Karima for all of her hard work. She has been a great asset from the very beginning of her time with us. Last year, we opened the house in Talat-N-Yacoub and Karima was very helpful, organizing things quickly and efficiently!

She has encouraged me to travel which has made me more motivated. She has also helped to build my sense of responsibility towards the girls.

We would like to thank Karima for our french lessons, also for organizing the school visits for us, the house and even the volunteers!

THANK YOU KARIMA!

Latifa, housemother of Dar Asni

A big thanks to you Karima for all that you have done for the girls in Talat-N-Yacoub. Even though everything was so different for you, I congratulate you for your patience, your kindness and your encouragement.

Together we managed to handle all challenges and we did succeed to help the girls with the new changes in their life with regard to living away from home and to continue their education at College in Talat-N-Yacoub.

I will never forget our little trips with the girls and our visits to their villages, the new recipes and the big cake you made for the farewell party.

And last but not least: I will forever cherish the memory of our visit to Merzouga and Ouarzazate.

A BIG THANKS KARIMA

Khadija, housemother of Dar Tinmel

They talked about us



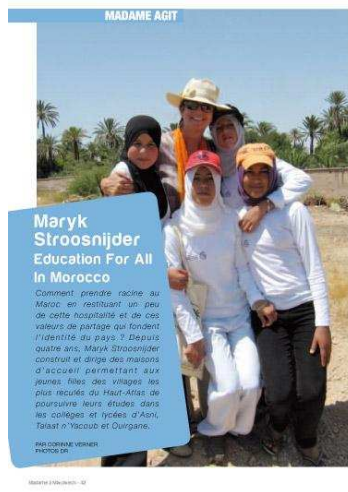
◆ Education For All on the national TV news on RTM

The Moroccan channel came in December to Dar Asni to shoot a documentary about EFA and the boarding house for the TV news.

The girls were impressed to see them in their house ! They interviewed the girls, Fairouze, Aniko and Mike who were in the house too.

It was the first time for the girls to speak in front of a camera. But it went well and they had a lot of fun that day.

And on December 31st, the TV news showed the reportage. The girls came back from their week end and they were so excited « we saw us on TV!! ».



◆ Education For All on “Madame à Marrakech”

The famous magazine Madame à Marrakech (www.madameamarrakech.com) has been interested in Education For All project and met Maryk Stroosnijder (EFA vice president) for an interview on November 7th 2010.

The article, issued in January 2011, is in French and explains brilliantly our goal and how we are organised. It talks about EFA as a serious and efficient NGO.

« More than offering a house to the girls coming from rural villages, Education For All gives them a future.... »

«Education For All is known for its seriousness and efficiency...it's locally well known»



◆ Education For All on “Made In Marrakech”

Made in Marrakech (www.madein-marrakech.com) is a famous website which allows the internet user to have a lot of useful information about Marrakech.

An article about Education For All came out in late September. It describes the project and our evolution since the beginning. : <http://www.madein-marrakech.com/culture/un-don-celui-d-aider-les-autres.-article5954.html> (The article is in French)



◆ Education For All filmed by Mishmashme

On December 14, a group from Germany came to Dar Tinnel to shoot a documentary about the house and the girls.

MishMashMe, the project's name (www.mishmashme.de), wants to show how people are connected all over the world and what is the role of computers/internet in this connection.

When they heard about EFA they were really interested to go through the mountains and meet us to know more about our project. The aim is to know how different is the education in the rural areas and how people who live in these villages far away from the cities are connected to the rest of the world.

The girls have been shot in the house, during the lunch, the computer lesson and some of them have been interviewed. They were so shy and at the same time so excited to see the camera! They won't forget this day and are now ready for future interviews :)



◆ Education For All, chosen by the Anima Young Singers from Chicago

The ANIMA - YOUNG SINGERS who raised money for EFA and came last July in Dar Asni, declared in an interview in late September: "We used our music to make a difference in others' lives in a concert and site visit benefiting "Education for All Morocco" – an organization enabling young girls from the Atlas mountains to stay in school and dream bigger dreams."

The house-mothers visiting Morocco



Toubkal—30 & 31 October 2010

We (Latifa, Karima and Faïrouze) started the hike at 10 o'clock from the « Kasbah du Toubkal » with all the necessary equipment and a guide. The first stage was the ascent to go to Sidi Chamharouch : at this moment (as it was difficult) we doubted on our capacities in climbing the Toubkal...Then, after half an hour of walking, we had a delicious lunch in the middle of nowhere...

Then it was a long exhausting road, sometimes Latifa was in the lead, sometimes it was Karima or me and sometimes we were quite lagging behind...sweet memories. And our tireless guide was not stopping saying with his derisive smile " yalah " (go ahead!). Well, we finally arrived at the refuge at 4

pm. I remember our reaction when we saw it : it was as if we had discovered an oasis after several hours of walking in the desert...phew!

The refuge was full and with a cosmopolitan population, everybody was speaking, laughing and so on. It was a sleepless night for Karima and me and snores for Latifa : what an injustice!

Well, the "awakening" at 5 a.m was hard but we had to begin the ascent at 6 a.m. Outside it was cold...we were at the head of the group and half an hour later we were the last ones... we believed to have made the most difficult the day before...poor girls!

The ascent was really difficult for us and I think that it was our biggest sports challenge!

Finally the summit, arrived at 10 a.m, nobody spoke, pondering over the landscape... We did it ! After this we had to go down to the Kaskah in Imlil after a lunch break in the refuge. We arrived at 8 p.m and spent the night in Dar Imlil.

The Toubkal ascent really was an experience which taught us the overtaking of oneself!



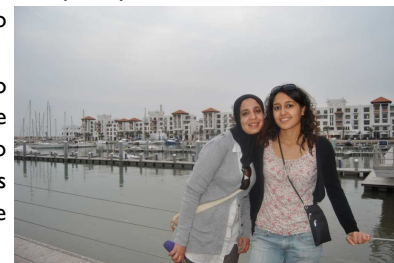
Agadir—12 & 13 December 2010

Agadir is only 3 hours by bus from Marrakech thanks to the highway constructed recently. We first of all visited the birds park of Agadir, it was restful, fresh (because it was warm in Agadir), we saw kangaroos, unusual thing in Morocco! Some even loved the plastic animals for the park decoration, isn't it Latifa?

Then we went to lunch towards the marina : sardines, white fish, gambas, a delight! After the lunch, we went to Oufella ("at the top" in Berber), it is a place to see Agadir in height. We were able to see the former ruins of the city dating the earthquake of 1960, from this place you can also see all the new

city and its marina, Agadir seems to be a new and a very modern city. Small photography session to Oufella then hitch-hiking to come down again in the marina.

The next day we took the taxi to Taghazout, an attractive small village near Agadir. Taghazout was so quiet, there were some surfers on the horizon, young people playing football on the beach and the weather was lovely. Then we had lunch in town and we returned at the edge of the beach to contemplate the sunset. In the evening the beach front becomes alive with passers-by. On the heights of "Oufella" we can see igniting the slogan of the country " Allah, El watan, El malik " written there roughly in Arabic. It was a lovely week end. Agadir, we will come back again!



Ouarzazate—Merzouga 1 & 2 January 2011

Last but not least, the travel to Merzouga. First of all we passed through the Ouarzazate city lake, beautiful landscape! Then, the village of Skoura and Kelaâ M'gouna, a town specialised in the production of rose water.

Then we passed through Boulmène, palm grove of the Dades valley and after some kilometres on the straight and infinite road we arrived at Tineghir where we had a rest.

We past Erfoud where there were many objects with fossilized stones, and then Rissani and finally, Merzouga and its magnificent dunes!

We arrived exactly for the sunset, we hurried to go on the closest dune, in head Latifa, Karima and me, Saadia the aunt of Karima lagging behind and even more lagging behind, Khadija, yes, yes Khadija... I even had to hoist her so that she reached the summit of the dune.

We returned to the hotel where we took place in our rooms with a typically Berber decoration. We had an excellent dinner before Latifa, Khadija and Saadia went to sleep as babies... Karima and I prolonged the evening on the terrace which is on the sand and even if it was cold it was pleasant.

The following morning we woke up at 6 a.m to attend the sunrise on dromedaries. There was a "dimming" silence in the desert, the landscape was magnificent and it was a pleasant and funny night-stroll. Khadija made us laugh because she was afraid falling from the dromedary! Then the sun made its entrance, nobody was speaking, there was nothing to add.

We took the road after the breakfast and we passed Tineghir where are "Les gorges du Todra" with cliffs furthermore of 200m. Then we went straight back to Ouarzazate and finally Marrakech.



Faïrouze Jebli—volunteer from October to January

Get involved!

Want to get involved? Here are some ideas:

- Are you participating in an event and looking for a charity to donate your funds to? Visit <http://www.justgiving.com/efam/> to make a page where your funds go directly to the girls.
- Financially adopt a girl to ensure that she has the opportunity to complete three years of college education.
- Visit our website at <http://www.educationforallmorocco.org/donate/index.html> for tips on how to donate.
- Are you a company looking to support us? Join our corporate sponsors.

Cycle ride for the charity



Last September, Mike McHugo made a cycle ride from Lands End to John O'Groat's to raise money for Education For All. Congratulations!

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Things to look forward to...

- ◆ The **Annual Charity Bike Ride** takes place for one week. This year it will take place from **26th March to the 2nd April 2011**, based in and around Marrakech and the High Atlas Mountains.

Click here for further details: [EFA Charity Bike Ride](#)

- ◆ **EFA Open Day** will take place on **Sunday 1st May 2011**. Visit the **house in Asni** and the **new house in Ouirgane** and join us and the girls for a Mechoui lunch at the **Kasbah du Toubkal**. The lunch is 500 DH per person and **all proceeds go to EFA**.

For more details and to reserve your place, contact Mike McHugo at:

info@efamorocco.org

- ◆ Thought you'd never **climb to the top of Jebel Toubkal**, North Africa's highest peak? Well, now's your chance! Whilst not a walk in the park, the ascent of Toubkal is achievable by people who are reasonably fit and determined. Many have reached the summit of Toubkal who never thought they would! So, do something you always wanted to do, or something you never thought you would be able to do. Go on see what you're made of and climb Toubkal in aid of EFA!

This year it will be on June 4th and 5th and it costs 250 euros per person.

Click here for further details: [Toubkal Ascent](#)

If you would like to organise an annual fundraising event for Education for All Morocco, we'd love to hear from you!



Do you have at least 3 months to give to help girls in rural Morocco?

If you educate a girl, you educate the next generation

Volunteers Required

Education for All have three boarding houses for girls in Asni (45km from Marrakech), Ouirgane (60 km from Marrakech) and Talat n'Yacoub (100km from Marrakech).

We are seeking volunteers who would be willing to live and work in each of our houses to support the house mothers and administrative duties.

- Your work in the house will involve cooking, sharing cultural experiences and teaching basic English, French and computer skills.
- You should be open to trying new things and willing to share your own customs and recipes.
- Your working conditions will be flexible to accommodate the aspects you would like to focus on during your stay.



Recruiting now for **2011 and 2012**.

If you are interested in volunteering to assist the girls in Morocco, please contact

info@efamorocco.org