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To guarantee the right of education to young and teenagers girls in the Khénifra Province of Morocco

Title	To guarantee the right of education to young and teenagers girls in the Khénifra Province of Morocco
Country	Morocco- Khénifra Province
Target groups	70 young girls that come from rural villages and attend secondary schools within the Khénifra Province
Partnership	Association Oued Srou - AOS N° 245, Rue 2 , Quartier Metchefsan Khénifra, Morocco Ph. / Fax : 00212 055 38 23 71 - E-mail: Aosmck@iam.net.ma AMALOU IGHRIBEN - HUMAN GROWTH IN KHENIFRA Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs - General Directorate for Development Co-ordination

The context

The territory of the Khénifra Province extends over 1.341.000 hectares and is mainly mountainous with chains reaching the Middle and High Atlas Mountains.

The population amounts to 465.000 inhabitants mainly from Berber origins. 53% live in the rural areas. The town of Khénifra, chief town of the Province, has around 90.000 inhabitants.

Agriculture, despite its low income, is the main economic activity. Other sources of income for the population include: traditional handicrafts, petty trade, and rural micro-enterprises. Remittances from migrants abroad or in larger Moroccan cities represent an important source of income for the region.

The problem:

- ❑ *Negated education: Young and teenage girls from villages are exploited and segregated*

In the Khénifra Province, 60% of young girls are forced to live in conditions of illiteracy.

In an area that, due to scarce agricultural resources and precarious family economic conditions, seems destined to have a perpetual underdeveloped economy. Moreover, the geographical isolation of many villages contributes in a decisive manner to determine the education rate of young and teenage girls.

In order to attend secondary schools, young girls living in rural villages must travel far from their homes (often on foot) to reach the towns within the Province. Furthermore, many families do not wish to let their daughters travel alone across such distances without the protection of an adult, therefore, when this safeguard cannot be guaranteed, girls are forced to leave the school.

The only possibility to gain access to education is to obtain accommodation for the girls with other families, but this solution, in practice, originates the phenomenon of the “*petites bonnes*”, young girls who are segregated in their hosts homes and exploited as juvenile servants, leading to school drop-outs due to the heavy domestic workload.

A dramatic consequence of this phenomenon is the denial of the right to education, adding to the humiliation of the exploitation.

There is therefore an urgent need to create hosting structures which allow the young girls to live in a safe environment and attend secondary schools after completing primary courses in their home villages. For this purpose we have already created two school hostels adapted to the young girls' requirements - places where extra-curricular activities can also be organised - to favour a creative and relational development for the girls of the villages.

Our Objective:

- ❑ *To guarantee the right to education for the young and teenage girls preventing the phenomenon of “petites bonnes”*

The project foresees the restoration and equipping of a third school hostel to host 25 young and teenage girls that come from rural villages located near the city of Boumia and are enrolled in secondary schools. This will safeguard these girls from becoming “petites bonnes”.

The premises will be restored and the new hostel will be equipped with beds, mattresses, bedding, blankets, small lockers, furniture for the dining and study rooms, and all of the supplies and equipment for the kitchen.

The choice for the premises of the hostel will be made with the agreement of local authorities, who will free them up for the project.

In order that these assigned spaces are places where the students can also carry out educational extra-curricular activities, we intend to endow all three hostels with didactic materials and other small equipment (books, colours, colouring books, musical instruments, etc).

COSPE in Khénifra:

- ❑ *To offer realistic answers to improving the conditions of life for the weaker segments of the population in the area and to contribute to the promotion of the fundamental rights of childhood.*

Within the framework of the broader programme “*Promotion of Human Development in the Khénifra Province*” realised by COSPE, an Italian Non-Government Organisation, in partnership with the Moroccan association AOS, with the co-financing of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, two hostels have already been restored and equipped in the localities of Kaf’n’Sour and El Kebab, to host 45 young girls enrolled in the secondary schools.

AOS collaborates with the “*National Committee to Support the Schooling of Young Rural Girls*” which provides for scholarships that cover schools fees and the costs of living and food for the young girls. The association is also in charge of finding teachers to provide support for the young girls in their studies, and specialised staff to assist with their daily educational extra-curricular activities.

Project’s costs:

- Restoration and equipment of 1 hostel to host 25 young girls enrolled in secondary schools in the town of Boumia: 16.500 Euro according to the following break-down:
 - Restoration materials: 8.000 Euro
 - Cost of labour: 3.000 Euro
 - Equipment: 6.500 Euro
- Funds for the acquisition of didactic and educational materials, books and small equipment for the extra-curricular activities of the three hostels (70 beneficiaries): 6.000 Euro

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All deposits can be made to the following bank account, in the name of COSPE:
Monte dei Paschi di Siena - c/c 8583155 - ABI 01030 - CAB 02800
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