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Morocco, Education Gap

Morocco: Securing A Future For All Students No Matter Their Background

Many students in Morocco are receiving low quality education just because of things out of their control such as where they live, having parents that aren't able to help them due to their lack of education, and not having proper material at school. Many students in Morocco have to walk miles just to go to school. Morocco is a country located in Northern Africa, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, separating Algeria and Western Sahara. Morocco has a population of "33.9 million people as of July 2017 (Cia.gov)."The Moroccan government has a mixed legal system based on both French and Islamic laws. In Morocco, urban and rural schools are different because urban school students are often wealthier which causes them to be offered more classes, have a shorter commute than students in rural areas, and be able to keep up with modern technology which all results in urban students having higher rank jobs.

From Northwest to South and East Morocco, there are a range of crops exported to other countries. In the Northwest, some of the major crops exported include grains, olives, red meat, and dairy. The majority of crops exported from South and East Morocco are grains(export.gov). Overall, grain crops account for up to 60 percent of crop production in Morocco. More than 70 percent of land owned by farms internationally is smaller than 5 hectares, while the average size of land owned by farmers in Morocco is 1.6 hectares.(land-links.org). The average size of a family in Morocco is 4.6 people, and the average wage of families is 400 to 500 dollars each month (Morocco World News). Many of the people in Morocco depend on agriculture produced in Morocco and products imported into Morocco. Agriculture contributes roughly 15 percent of employment in Morocco. The diet of many Moroccans is centered around religious beliefs. It is common for Moroccans to eat Khela for breakfast, which is a dried meat that is eaten with fried eggs, and bread on the side. For lunch, hard boiled eggs, bread, lamb,or chicken are often served. Dinner, also known as Asha, mainly consist of leftovers from lunch. Most families in Morocco shop at local supermarkets for food.

While 62.5 percent of Morocco land is urban, and on the other hand 37.5% of Morocco's land is rural (Yieldgap.org/Morocco). In Morocco, urban and rural schools are different because urban school students are often wealthier, allowing them opportunities such as which causes them to be offered more classes, a have a shorter commute than students in rural areas, and the ability to keep up with be able to keep up with modern technology. This which all results in urban students obtaining having higher- ranking jobs.

Today, technology is taking over and students in rural areas aren't able to keep up with modern technology due to the education quality gap of students in urban and rural areas. In an interview Ms. Houria, who has been a teacher in Morocco, stated: "The school where I work now is situated in a poor neighborhood. It lacks many facilities such as a library. We have one smart board but we have not used it for a couple years because there is something wrong with it and they do not do anything to fix it". In lower income neighborhoods students aren't exposed to technology at all in their school environment which is a huge issue since many teenagers will have technology involved in their future jobs. Similar to Ms. Houria, many teachers have complained about students not having access to books and technology. Students should at least have access to things like smart boards and computers. Being offered will be both fun for students and a learning experience.

There have been many organizations and people who have attempted to close education gaps in Morocco, including the "U.S. Agency for International Development Administration (USAID) and Michelle Obama. The goal of USAID is to make sure people all over the world (specifically those in developing countries) have the same access to resources like education, clean water, and food no matter who they are. Specifically for education the USAID goal is to make sure that every student that can attend school is enrolled no matter their race, gender, or family background. The USAID has funded Africa as a whole continent with money for other things. In the USAID 2017 budget it was stated "This will increase access to reliable, clean power for economic growth, as part of the Administration's \$300 million annual commitment". Morocco's government can take advantage of Africa's budget cut from the USAID and propose some money is given to fund the education system.

Morocco's Ministry of Education or board of education has worked with USAID and created a "reform program to increase access to education and improve the performance of the education system.". This "reform program", which includes deaf software, more girls having having access to a proper education, and an increase in job offers, has been successful enough to reach 12,000 students. Unfortunately however; students like Ms. Houria Kherdi have not been reached yet. Programs like this often reach communities in which the students attending school are very low, and other communities are left out. Similar to USAID Michelle Obama launched a "Let Girls Learn" program. In this program, Michelle Obama created a goal to send 62 million girls to school, provide them with mentorship, internships, and after school programs. Although both solutions have been successful in helping further the education of many Moroccans, there are still many things that need to be fixed.

There were many things I had to take into consideration in creating a solution; like the culture of Moroccans and money availability. First, everyone in Morocco needs to be seen as a human with ambition no matter their gender or economic status. There also needs to be a support system from both home and school administration, as without motivation many students do not want to pursue an education. Parents

need to know the importance of an education or it will turn into students not understanding nor knowing the importance of a education. Similar to the idea Michelle Obama had when she funded dormitories for students, the Moroccan government needs to create dormitories for students who travel long distances due to transportation as a common barrier. With the dormitories rural area students need to be able to look forward to going to school, and having a library that they can go to when they are bored or even if they enjoy reading. In the libraries, there should be computers that students in rural areas have access to.

From the government, the rights of women need to be implemented, a woman is just as capable of being successful as a man. There political life of women in Morocco has improved as many women are beginning to take more leadership roles. According to “borgenproject.org”, “The percentage of women holding Parliamentary seats was only 1 percent” while today “Currently, 30 percent of women in Morocco are holding parliamentary seats”. Women in government are moving up but many families still have to realize the importance of young women being educated, and all kids attending school. There are many education grants that exists for Morocco to ensure all students are reaching their highest potential.

The USAID as well as other organizations that fight for education rights should reach out to the government and attempt to reach all communities. Especially since the Moroccan government hasn't been able to make sure students have access to things like libraries and modern day technology. The Global Partnership For Education provides countries with funding to help put their education plans to work, countries can be provided with up to 400,000 US dollars. The same way that students in urban areas receive a solid foundation in sciences, religion, and all subjects students in rural areas deserve the same. Once students complete high schools there are many grants that are offered to international students that want to attend college whether it is in the United States or Canada. Many colleges including Tuskegee University allow international students to attend their schools and study things like Agriculture, Food Science, etc. Ordinary citizens have the role of making sure they are given the best education possible, and take advantage of education programs that they might already have access too. Ordinary citizens also have the role of making sure school attendance is as high after age 13 as it is before students turn 13. While the government has the role of ensuring all people have access to the same things and making sure all education grants that they have access to are taken advantage of.

There are local organizations like that the “Education For All Morocco” that are dedicated to making sure students in rural areas receive a high quality education specifically girls. Education for all is was founded in 2007 and was first was started with the mission to educate 36 young girls. In September of 2009 Education for all opened its second educational campus this time with a boarding school. Another organization by the name of “Care” has the mission of youth empowerment, ensuring social justice, and education equality. Similar to Education for all Care has a goal of making sure everyone has access to a proper education. Care addresses the barriers of education like workload, violence, language, and conflict.

The Moroccan government has the Ministry of Education in place to supervise the Moroccan school system. One of the things the Ministry of Education has promised is access to Forensic activities (source:kingdom of Morocco National Human Rights Council). Both the government and ordinary citizens have a role in making sure all Moroccans are granted the promises made by the Ministry of education. The Ministry of Education can get help from both the Global Partnership of Education and the USAID. The Global Partnership of Education already has ideas on their website of ways in which education systems can be improved. One being setting standards and making sure first simple standards are set and governments work their way up from there. They also recommend “fixing the mess at early ages”, this goes back to making sure students still attend school even after the age of 13. School has to be enjoyable from a young age in order for students to want to keep going, often students get bored with school. This would include students being introduced to computers at a young age, and being able to take books home. Students should also have access to libraries both in school and outside of school. Teachers also have to reach out to both local and global organizations.

In conclusion, it is 2018 and students no matter who they are should have access to education. It is up to us as a world to ensure that people all over the world are learning and progressing. The Moroccan government as well as Moroccan families need to let go of the culture that it will be easier for a boy to find a job. In both urban and rural areas the Moroccan government needs to make sure students are set up to live their best life and be successful no matter the route they choose. Students should be able to work in agriculture later on in life and understand the production of the crops and manage their own farms instead of settling for jobs as a picker. Many people have benefited like the Moroccan government financially from the education gap between urban and rural areas, while Moroccans have suffered. As well as companies that hire urban Moroccans that might not be as educated as rural Moroccans. Education can be a way out of poverty for many Moroccans and their families. As well as a better life in general.

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