



## Learning Journey to Morocco: Program Outline

Morocco is a diverse and vibrant country situated in a location that allowed the Berber, Arab, African, Spanish, and French cultures to mix and create the fascinating and unique cultural mosaic that exists today. Tourism, agriculture, and mining provide the backbone of the nation's economy which continues to grow at a variable rate. In the recent decades strides have been made in the expansion of its economy, the development of its infrastructure, and in the recognition of women's rights and equality.

However, great inequity remains between different groups of the population. While Morocco is classified as a middle-income country, the United Nations Development Programme ranks it as 126<sup>th</sup> of 177 countries on its human development index. It is estimated that 15% of the population lives below the poverty line.

The Global Philanthropists Circle Learning Journey will include the most salient issues in Morocco today: Education, Interfaith Dialogue, Human Rights, Gender Equality, Employment & Livelihoods, Health and Water & Rural development. The site visits will include project by GPC members Othman and Leila Benjelloun and Ron Bruder.

### *Tentative schedule of the learning journey:*

#### *Monday, October 20 (Casablanca)*

- Afternoon: Welcome & Morocco Overview Panel Discussion

#### *Tuesday, October 21 (Casablanca)*

- Visit to the Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca
- Issue: Education (site visits to BMCE Foundation\*)
- Issue: Interfaith dialogue

#### *Wednesday, October 22 (Casablanca)*

- Issue: Gender Equality (Site visit: Near East Foundation Women's cooperative\*)
- Issue: Human rights
- Issue: Employment and livelihoods (Reception with the graduates of the Education for Employment Foundation\* Program)



*Thursday, October 23 (Casablanca/Marrakech)*

- Issue: Education (site visits with AlJisr)
- Travel to Marrakech and tour of the city

*Friday, October 24 (Marrakech)*

- Issue: Health (site visit)
- Retreat & reflection

*Saturday, October 25 (Marrakech)*

- Issue: Water and rural development (site visit)
- Retreat & reflection



### ***The projects we will visit include:***

**BMCE Foundation/ Medersat.com** - the rural community schools program – is a response, both ambitious and realistic, to a major problem, which weighs heavily on development prospects in Morocco and on its social cohesion. 55% of Moroccans are illiterate and the percentage is significantly higher in rural areas. BMCE Bank Foundation – with the knowledge and approval of the Moroccan authorities and in partnership with public and private national and international institutions – is working to provide a model (1000 schools) for education integrated into a program for sustainable development.

**Al Jisr**, which is run by Mr. Mohammed Abbad Andaloussi, the only Ashoka fellow in the country, works to improve infrastructure and education quality in disadvantaged schools recognized by the Ministry of National Education. The program accomplishes its mission through innovative partnerships with the private sector.

**The Near East Foundation (NEF)** works in urban and pre-urban shantytowns in Morocco to empower communities to advocate to local government and invest in community well-being. In the Ennakhil slum on the outskirts of Casablanca, NEF works with hundreds of women to build their capacity to organize and actively participate in public life. NEF has conducted various rights-based and capacity building trainings, supports women’s literacy classes, and helped women establish a women’s cooperative, which has over 75 members.

The mission of the **Education for Employment Foundation** mission is to create job opportunities for unemployed youth in Muslim-majority countries by providing world-class professional and technical training that leads directly to career-building jobs. The EFE Foundation believes that giving young people jobs lays the foundation for secure and peaceful societies and breaks the cycle of frustration, despair and anger caused by chronic unemployment.

## ***Logistics:***

### *Additional cultural visits and tourist attractions*

We can recommend a couple of travel agencies which offer visits to the parts of Morocco not included in our journey. Please let us know if you would like to take advantage of these excursions. Also, please let us know if you are interested in the visit to the Persian Gulf immediately following this trip.

### *Arriving and departing*

You should arrive in Casablanca at the latest in the morning of Monday, October 20. Our busy agenda starts on Monday afternoon. You can depart on Sunday, October 27.

### *Learning Journey Costs*

\$6,500 (single occupancy)

\$6,000 (double occupancy)

These payments are not tax-deductible.

### *Signing up*

To sign up for this trip and other Synergos events [please go to our website](#) or contact Ken Nero ([knero@synergos.org](mailto:knero@synergos.org))

Please sign up by September 8. Full payment is requested by September 15. Payment details will be sent to you upon registration.

### *Payment refund policy*

50% before October 10, no refund thereafter.

Synergos reserves the right to cancel the trip and refund the payments due to group size or in case of events beyond our control.