



Morocco RPCVs Continue to Serve

Former Peace Corps Volunteers who had worked on environmental issues in Morocco got together in 2000 to see how they could apply their professional relationships and the knowledge from their years of service to continue to benefit the Moroccan people. They formed the nonprofit High Atlas Foundation. Its mission is to establish projects in rural Moroccan villages that local people design and manage, and that are in partnership with government and nongovernmental agencies. Now, five years later, projects are underway to plant fruit trees and implement potable water and irrigation projects that benefit thousands of people.

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The High Atlas Foundation staff attribute their success to their ability to develop understanding, communication, and positive relationships between rural villages and Moroccan government and nongovernmental organizations. They require that rural villages be included in determining and designing projects. Their Peace Corps service taught them that people are more invested in projects in which they feel ownership. The goal of the foundation is to empower people in a way that benefits families as well as the economic prosperity and natural resources of the region.

The board of the High Atlas Foundation focuses on the third goal of the Peace Corps by serving as a bridge between the United States and Morocco—the country they became so attached to as Volunteers. They work to mobilize broad-based support from across the United States, including RPCVs, Moroccan expatriots, and others committed to Morocco's future.

For more information about the High Atlas Foundation, visit www.hihatlasfoundation.org or call 646.285.7444. 

Books for Africa

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Pat Plonski, BFA executive director, reports that he also recently filled a request by a Peace Corps Volunteer's family to ship 5,000 textbooks and library books to a Volunteer in Tanzania who had received a grant from the Peace Corps to build a library in her town.

The Ethiopia team raised more than \$4,500 and secured the necessary tax letters from the Ethiopian government to qualify for a matching USAID grant to cover BFA's \$9,000 shipping costs. Then, last February, the Ethiopia RPCVs raised an additional \$3,500 for teacher supplies, reference books, medical books, and learning charts that they took with them on a visit to Debre Marcos. The RPCVs, accompanied by several of their former students, also presented the town's development committee with \$1,000 for school improvements.

"All the funds were used wisely," says Ethiopia RPCV Clare Shea (1965–1967), "and went a long way to assisting the educational needs of Ethiopian students." 

Books for Africa, which has RPCVs on its board and on its administrative staff, can be contacted at 253 E. 4th St., St. Paul, MN 55101.

Tel: 651.602.9844

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www.booksforafrica.org

For more information on the Ethiopia project, contact Clare Shea, at ppy154@aol.com, or Arthur Andersen, at nancyandarthur@msn.com.