

Report

Taroudannt 3rd July- 27th August 2007

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Just over a week after finishing my A' levels I found myself boarding an aeroplane bound for Agadir. When I think about how nervous I was about leaving and how little I knew about where I was going, it really sinks in just how much I have learnt.

After the two week settling in period, I already felt at ease with so many things that had at first seemed so alien to me. The plan was to separate the work between the "colonie de vacances" and the Lalla Amina orphanage. However, unfortunately the colonie de vacances fell through. This said, both myself and Shafiq (the other English volunteer) felt that actually our time was better spent in one place rather than adjusting twice.



Over the eight weeks of our visit, our work at the orphanage evolved. During the first few days we spent very little time with the disabled children, as at first it demanded not only a lot of physical energy but was quite emotionally draining. By the end we were splitting our time equally between the disabled house and the nursery. I'd say that of all the work that we did, the work with the disabled children was most appreciated by the nannies and the children alike. Our roles were shaped mainly by our own initiative, helping out with the usual routine and adding in some much needed playtime. Spending time with the babies – all 31 of them! – was so much fun.



I wanted to visit Morocco as a volunteer with an organisation like GMH, rather than a tourist partly to improve my French and partly to use my summer productively but mainly to allow me a greater insight into the rich culture. GMH and the people of Taroudannt invited me to have this insight in more ways than I could ever have imagined. Shafiqa and I were honoured to attend four weddings, something which allowed us to experience the many different traditions unique to the families of the surrounding regions and also to dance a lot... not quite like the locals, but a sterling effort with a lot of enthusiasm.



When I left Taroudannt I was leaving behind a whole host of new friends and a very special family. As Hannah said in her report, in real terms our impact must have been tiny, however, GMH and Africa Trust are working hard to maintain a sustainable project, and I am very happy to have been a small part of it.



