

Break Borders - Morocco For All

One Land, Many Stories –
Together We Thrive

A project led by ESP MAster student at Moulay Ismail University promoting intercultural dialogue and dismantling harmful narratives surrounding Sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco. Through storytelling, community action, and inclusive engagement, we aim to break borders and build solidarity.



2025



Manara Allies Program Spring 2025



Who we are

Morocco For All (MFA) is a youth-led initiative based in Morocco, dedicated to promoting social inclusion and challenging discriminatory narratives against Sub-Saharan migrants. Our team is a diverse group of passionate individuals committed to intercultural dialogue, human dignity, and justice for all, regardless of race, origin, or background.

We believe that storytelling, creative expression, and community connection are powerful tools to reshape public perception and foster unity.



Our mission

To break borders—both real and imagined—by creating safe spaces where Sub-Saharan migrants and Moroccans can connect, share, and learn from each other. We aim to shift the narrative from fear and division to empathy and shared humanity.

Meet our team

**Jdia Mohamed -
Team Leader**



Serves as youth analyst with Friedrich Naumann Foundation for freedom

**Toufiq Jaafar -
Communication and Finance Manager**



Educator, passionate about youth, education equity, community work, and migrant advocacy.

**Zineb Ninou -
Media Manager**



High School English language teacher, Communication Specialist for Students with Autism

**Abdelaziz Fahmi -
Logistics Manager**



English Literature graduate and dedicated volunteer passionate about youth, social impact, and intercultural exchange.

Why This Project Matters

01 Unequal Experiences



Morocco is home to about 700,000 Sub-Saharan migrants — nearly 2% of the population (Migration Policy Institute, 2023). Many face daily barriers to housing, jobs, and acceptance, with Human Rights Watch (2023) noting frequent bias. Behind each number is a person with hopes and dreams, simply seeking a place to belong.



02 Misunderstanding & Stereotypes

A 2020 Arab Barometer survey found that over 50% of Moroccans hold negative views of Sub-Saharan migrants — attitudes often shaped by stereotypes, limited interaction, and media narratives. Without opportunities for real, human connection, misunderstandings persist and divisions deepen. Our project creates those rare, transformative encounters where people meet not as “groups,” but as individuals with stories, dreams, and talents.



03 Storytelling Changes Minds

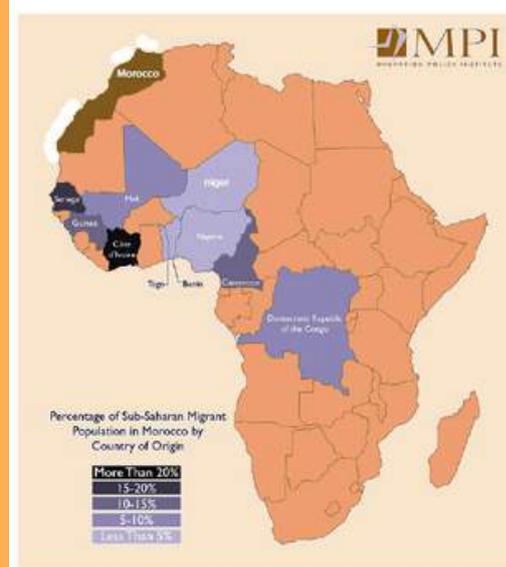
Storytelling can increase empathy by 60% (Journal of Peace Education, 2019). Art, music, and shared creativity open a space where emotions speak louder than words, and where walls of prejudice can be replaced by bridges of understanding.

04 Youth Can Lead Change



With 35% of Morocco’s population under 25 (UNESCO, 2021), young people hold incredible potential to drive social change. Sports, especially football, are proven tools for fostering trust, teamwork, and cross-cultural friendships without the need for a common language. Youth-led initiatives are particularly powerful because they inspire peers to challenge stereotypes and model inclusive behavior. By empowering youth as both participants and leaders, we invest in a generation that can shape a more connected, understanding Morocco.

Figure 2. Top Origin Countries of Sub-Saharan Migrants in Morocco, 2017



Morocco is home to an estimated 700,000 sub-Saharan African migrants —nearly 2% of its 34 million population.



Who are we reaching

01 Sub-Saharan Migrants in Morocco

- Age: 16–35
- Artists, athletes, students, and youth seeking expression and connection
- Often excluded from mainstream cultural or recreational spaces

02 Moroccan Youth

- Age: 15–25
- Active in creative and athletic spaces (sports clubs, art groups, university life)
- Curious and open, but often lack meaningful contact with migrant peers

03 Community Leaders & Cultural Spaces

- Coaches, artists, teachers, youth center staff
- Act as facilitators for safe spaces where inclusive interaction can grow

Where Dialogue Happens

- Street football, community matches
- Art workshops, murals, music jam sessions
- Cultural events, youth clubs, school projects

“Our art workshop brought together more 20 youth from 5 countries.”



Why It Works

Art and sports are universal languages. They break down barriers, spark emotion, and create moments where real connection happens—without the need for translation.

“You don’t need the same language to play or create together.”

Participant Reflection

“I haven’t been to events that explicitly try to bring people from different foreign origins” Helen Heston

Our goals



The Project's Aim

At the heart of Morocco For All is a simple idea: connection through creation and play. Our project uses art and sports as bridges, bringing together Sub-Saharan migrants and Moroccan youth in shared spaces where dialogue naturally happens. Every painting or football match is a step toward breaking down bias and building a more inclusive community.

We designed our goals and activities to reflect this spirit of collaboration, creativity, and mutual respect.



Project Goals & Activities

Goals

1. Foster Human Connection

Create spaces where Sub-Saharan migrants and Moroccan youth can interact, express, and connect beyond stereotypes.

2. Shift Public Perception

Use storytelling, creative expression, and personal interaction to challenge negative narratives about migrants.

3. Build Inclusive Communities

Encourage shared ownership of cultural spaces through collaboration in art and sports.



Key Activities

Art for Dialogue

Street murals co-created by migrants and local youth

Collaborative music jam sessions and art exhibitions

Story circles and visual storytelling workshops

Sports for Inclusion

Community football matches that mix local and migrant players

Mixed-team tournaments to encourage interaction and shared goals

Post-game dialogue sessions or shared meals

Social Media & Outreach

Visual storytelling via Instagram reels and photo stories

Testimonials and quotes from participants

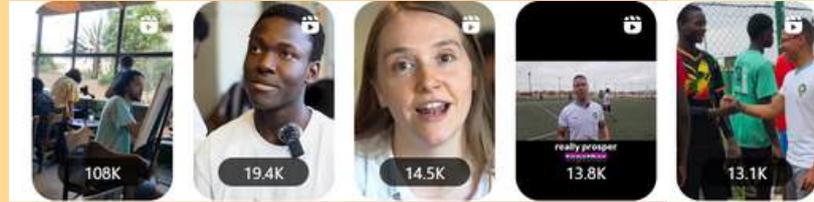
Highlighting success stories from events



Outcomes & Impact

50+ Social Media Content Shared

Creative content, including posts, reels, and stories on Instagram, reaches hundreds of viewers and sparks conversation.



20+ Community Interviews Conducted

Including both migrants and Moroccan youth sharing personal stories of identity and coexistence.

Over 100 Youth Reached Directly

Through workshops, football games, street interviews, and open events.

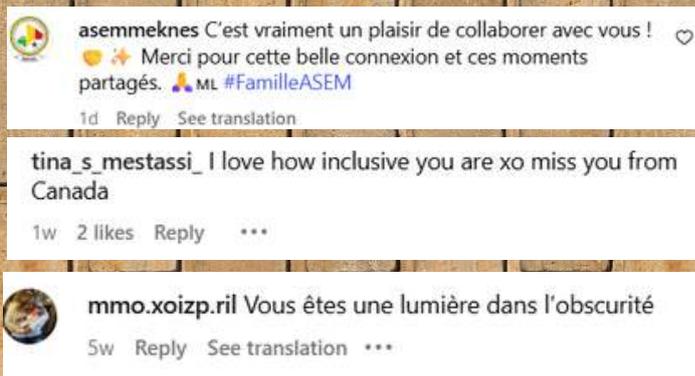


Views	↗ 452.1K >
Interactions	↗ 7.2K >
New followers	1501 >
Content you shared	59 >

Over 450K Reached Through Instagram

Participants reported shifts in perspective and deeper understanding of migrant experience

TESTIMONIALS





Barriers & Limitations

- Reaching Offline or Rural Audiences
- Participant Hesitation
- Difficult to Measure Mindset Shifts
- Dependence on Active Participation
- Facing Negative or Hostile Feedback.
- Compressed Timeline
- Resource Constraints



Strenghts

- Youth-led and relatable
- Backed by field research and real experiences
- Creative methods: storytelling and dialogue
- Strong visual identity and clear message
- Builds empathy between communities



Partnerships

We collaborated with Mr. Yattara Amadou, Secretary General of ASEM-Meknes (Association of Malian Interns, Students, and Pupils in Meknes), to organize formal meetings with the Malian community residing in Meknes.

The event was made possible through valuable partnerships with the American Language Center of Meknes, the Manara Center for Coexistence, Gili Kitchen, and the Moulay Ismail University Art Club, whose contributions greatly enriched the experience and impact of the gathering.

These partnerships supported our project by strengthening intercultural ties, fostering dialogue, and exploring opportunities for mutual support and collaboration.



Tactics: The Power of Arts

Recognizing the importance of art as a universal language, we aimed to create a safe and inclusive space where individuals could share their stories, traditions, and emotions through various artistic forms.

Over 40 participants from 5 nationalities created art that sparked connection, conversation, and collaboration.

Highlights

- Artistic workshops (painting, drawing, music, embroidery)
- 30+ participants from diverse backgrounds
- Co-created artworks reflecting personal stories and shared struggles
- Facilitated intercultural exchange and mutual learning

"I didn't expect art to connect us like this. It was powerful." Jerod Ilyas

what we observed

We observed that participants were more open to sharing personal stories after engaging in group art-making. Creative expression helped reduce anxiety and created a safe, non-verbal entry point to deeper dialogue.





Kicks and Customs

The football match created a shared space where participants from different backgrounds could connect through teamwork, break down barriers, and promote coexistence through the universal language of sport.

Football fosters coexistence in Morocco by creating shared spaces where people from diverse cultural, ethnic, and social backgrounds come together. It promotes teamwork, mutual respect, and a sense of national identity that transcends differences.

During the interviews, participants repeatedly emphasized that football plays a more effective role in promoting community coexistence than formal policies. They noted that the sport naturally brings individuals together across cultural and social divides, fostering mutual understanding, collective identity, and cooperation

What Football Helped Us Achieve

- Built trust through shared physical effort.
- Gave all participants an equal role.
- Created a playful, low-pressure space for connection.
- Opened the door to conversation without the need for language.
- Encouraged community members to see each other differently.





Sustainability & Future Vision

Keeping the momentum alive beyond the pilot phase.

The end of the pilot phase is just the beginning for Morocco For All. What started as a small initiative to bridge cultural gaps through storytelling has evolved into a model we believe can spark long-term, systemic change. As we reflect on what we've achieved, we are also looking forward — toward growth, replication, and deeper community impact. This page outlines how we intend to sustain our momentum and expand our vision.

What We're Continuing

Community Partnerships

- We're building ongoing relationships with youth centers, teachers, and NGOs. These allies help us localize workshops, identify new storytellers, and adapt our methods to different community needs.

Digital Presence

- Our Instagram (@morocco.forall) will stay active, continuing to post personal stories, educational reels, and youth-led campaigns. We aim to expand to TikTok and launch a bilingual YouTube mini-series in 2026.

Replicable Toolkit

- We're finalizing a simple, open-source resource kit that includes workshop plans, facilitator scripts, and tips for inclusive community storytelling. This toolkit will be offered in English, French, and Arabic.

Where We're Going

We are planning to :

- Expand to new cities
- Finalize "Storytelling for Inclusion" resource kit
- Launch an online anonymous form for story telling.



Our Long-Term Vision

Developing the first youth-led transcontinental cross-continental Youth Forum dedicated to amplifying the voices of Sub-Saharan and Caucasian youth across the MENA region. It promotes intercultural dialogue, social inclusion, and collective advocacy, fostering a new generation of leaders committed to equality and unity.



Future Partners



Thank You

For believing in stories, connection, and change.



We sincerely thank everyone who made Morocco For All possible. Your support turned ideas into action. This is just the beginning—together, we can do more.



With special thanks to:



- Our Sub-Saharan, Caucasian and Moroccan participants
- Local partners, youth centers, and volunteers
- Mentors and program facilitators
- Everyone who supported us behind the scenes

With gratitude to our partners and supporters who made this possible



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