

THE
EVE BRANSON
FOUNDATION



A NOTE FROM EVE BRANSON



My Foundation was established over 10 years ago now, with the aim of supporting education, employment and healthcare initiatives in the rural villages of Morocco's High Atlas Mountains.

Since the beginning, we have been dedicated to enhancing living standards in some of the most impoverished communities; very often these villages lack basic amenities, illiteracy can be as high as 98% and girls often leave school at 13 with little prospects for their futures. We create positive opportunities, working in partnership with each village, to bring about transformations both economically and socially and have learned with patience and determination, how to successfully combine our entrepreneurial spirit with the Berber culture. Projects have included the provision of community crafthouses and vocational training programmes.

This all takes money and 3 years ago, to help raise the funds needed, I put on a great Polo Match in the Moroccan desert. With funds from our 2015 event and thanks to the incredible generosity of individual donors, we were able to construct a new weaving centre and carpentry workshop in Tansghart, one of the first villages that I took on.

Today, I'm thrilled to see how far the young people in our centres have advanced, creating many beautiful items which they can now sell. I'm always encouraged by their enthusiasm and happiness and with your support, we can continue to offer more young people in rural Morocco a creative and more independent life for their future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eve Branson". Below the signature is a horizontal line.

EVE BRANSON,
Founder





WHAT WE AIM FOR

- ✿ To empower young women and support their path to an education.
- ✿ To increase economic self-sufficiency and self-esteem of young people living in local Berber communities, by equipping them with vocational and artisanal skills.
- ✿ To open new centres in the community, using sustainable models which provide education, training and healthcare.
- ✿ To provide teachers and materials that will lead to the production of high quality, marketable items, giving an income to young people.



ABOUT OUR WORK

The Eve Branson Foundation focuses on helping the villages closest to Kasbah Tamadot. These include Asni, Tansghart and Tamgounssi with the support of Kasbah Tamadot and Virgin Unite, Virgin Group's charitable arm.

The Berbers of the Atlas Mountains of Morocco, or 'Imazighen' meaning 'free people', have a deep-rooted sense of community, and their traditions have endured through their rich history. The Eve Branson Foundation's ethos is to work hand in hand with these unique communities to help them thrive, preserving Berber heritage and developing opportunities for educational enrichment and enterprise.

Today, families in these communities live in often remote and rural villages where

drought prevails during the dry summer months and winters can be harsh and isolating. Many young girls leave education after primary school and teenage boys will often drop out of high school without any opportunity for vocational training.

The Eve Branson Foundation develops centres in these villages where young people can attend skills-training programmes such as embroidery, fabric weaving, carpet-making and woodworking, each with a strong focus on empowerment. We provide teaching, workspaces, materials and tools so that young people can learn new skills that in turn generate an income to support themselves and their families.



THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE EVE BRANSON FOUNDATION IS TO TEACH THE LOCAL GIRLS LIFELONG SKILLS, REMOVING THE NEED TO BEG OR ASK FOR CHARITY, FOR THE BERBERS ARE PROUD, HAPPY PEOPLE."

– EVE BRANSON





“

WHEN I STARTED LEARNING IN THE CRAFT HOUSE, I FOUND MYSELF AND WHEN MY ITEMS ARE SOLD AND STARTED GENERATING MONEY, I BECAME INDEPENDENT. NOW I CAN BUY CERTAIN THINGS I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE. MOREOVER, I CAN NOW MAKE SOME OF MY OWN CLOTHES AND I WOULD NOT WORRY ABOUT THE FUTURE”

- FATIMA IMNI, SALES ASSISTANT AT THE BERBER BOUTIQUE



HOW IT ALL BEGAN...

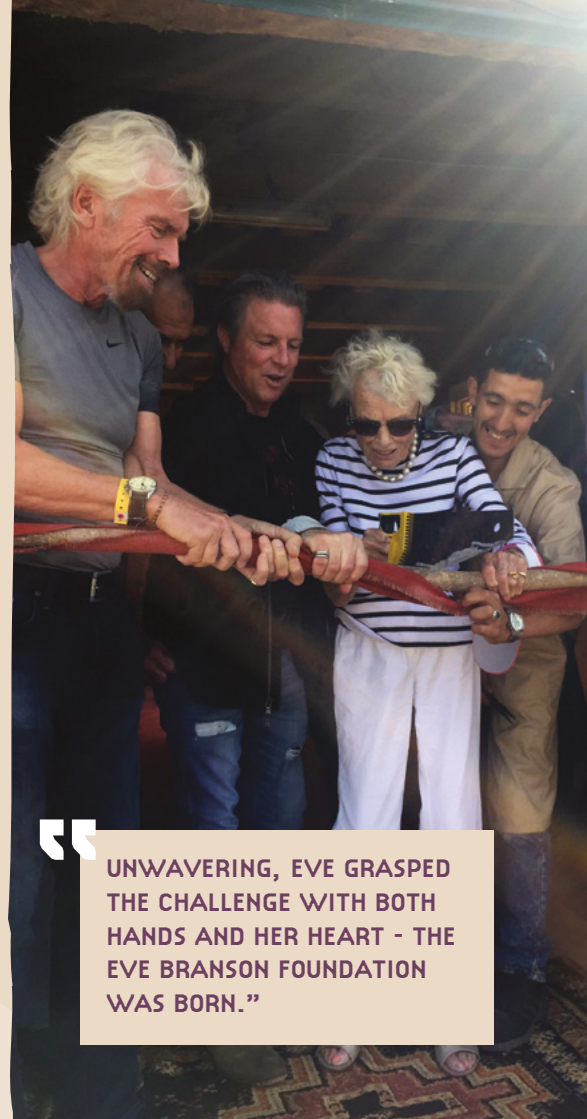
To understand the story of the Eve Branson Foundation, we have to travel back to the late 90s, when Eve's son Sir Richard Branson famously made a series of endeavours to pilot a hot air balloon around the world in a non-stop attempt. The launch point for these attempts, which ultimately ended in a dramatic rescue off the coast of Hawaii on Christmas Day 1998, began in Morocco's Atlas Mountains.

While Richard was preparing his balloon for the voyage, Eve journeyed into the beautiful foothills of Morocco's High Atlas Mountains. Here she stumbled upon Kasbah Tamadot, an exquisite property with

breath-taking views and rooms filled with precious antiquities. Eve fell immediately in love with the place.

Although Richard's hot air balloon had been carried off by strong winds on his first attempt, leaving him (temporarily) to abandon his mission, Eve decided she could still make the trip fruitful and convinced her son to buy the Kasbah so others could experience the magic for themselves.

Richard agreed, but on the condition that his mother would help the local Berber people living in the surrounding villages. Unwavering, Eve grasped the challenge with both hands and her heart - the Eve Branson Foundation was born.



UNWAVERING, EVE GRASPED THE CHALLENGE WITH BOTH HANDS AND HER HEART - THE EVE BRANSON FOUNDATION WAS BORN."



Before...



... after

“ ... AFTER AN EXTENSIVE PERIOD OF RENOVATION KASBAH TAMADOT OPENED TO THE PUBLIC IN 2005, PUTTING A NEW SPOTLIGHT ON THIS RELATIVELY UNEXPLORED REGION OF MOROCCO.”

It took several more years before Eve's dreams would become reality, but after an extensive period of renovation Kasbah Tamadot welcomed its first hotel guests in 2005, putting a new spotlight on this relatively unexplored region of Morocco. The scene was set for Eve to fulfil her promise to Richard, and, naturally, she started with the village of Tansghart, a small village visible across the valley from the hotel.

Bravely crossing the river with wool and knitting needles in her hands, Eve

came across Fatima Imni, a 25-year old young woman who invited Eve into her house for a mint tea. Eve began to teach Fatima how to knit and other local girls soon joined.

More than a decade later, the Eve Branson Foundation's work remains anchored around the principles of creating and developing ideas in harmony with the Berber people, celebrating the richness of their culture and providing the resources and motivation to encourage young people to learn vital and useful skills.



OUR PROJECTS

We have been present in this region of Morocco for over ten years, operating three centres dedicated to providing skills training that can lead to socioeconomic advancement. Helping individuals to learn new skills can touch the lives of many other Berber families. We welcome visitors to come and see our work firsthand and join us for a glass of Berber mint tea.

TANGSHART CRAFTHOUSE

Our original craft centre, 45-50 girls have participated in a tailoring programme where they are taught a range of dressmaking skills and embroidery techniques. Items can be purchased on site.

TAMGOUNSSI WEAVING CENTRE

Young women train for up to 18 months in the ancient process of weaving, using natural fibres on upright looms to create high quality soft woven fabrics such as linen throws, rugs and scarves. The centre also teaches skills in finishing techniques and artisanal embroidery.

TANGSHART WOODWORK CENTRE

A vocational training centre for 8-10 young men and boys who, following an initial training course in Casablanca with Green Sahara Furniture, put their skills into action, creating beautiful bespoke pieces of furniture, handcarved gifts and jewellery from local wood offcuts. The centre can fulfill international orders and create original items for a range of customers.

OTHER INITIATIVES

We also support local healthcare and education initiatives in the region. Each year, we partner with other organisations providing healthcare, including dentist volunteers who set up a temporary dentist surgery providing treatment for over 500 children and young women.

Our work in the region has supported the construction of two water wells and the 'Big Clean' project aimed at tackling litter collection and waste management.

We also provide equipment for the nearby birthing centre, Asni crèche and a secondary school boarding house for girls.





MY MOST MEMORABLE MOMENTS ARE ALWAYS THE CELEBRATIONS WITH THE GIRLS; WHEN THEY GET MARRIED, HAVING A PICNIC TOGETHER IN IMLIL AND THE REWARD AND SATISFACTION THAT COMES WITH TEACHING AND SHARING MY KNOWLEDGE WITH THEM. EVE BELIEVED IN ME AND I BELIEVE IN THEM”

AMINA AIT LAARBI, TEACHER AT THE TAMGOUNSSI WEAVING CENTRE





“ I WANT TO BE A WOODWORKER. IF SOMEONE CAN SHOW ME THE CORRECT WAY TO BUILD THINGS: DOORS, TABLES, WINDOWS, DESKS, CARVING – EVERYTHING IS WOODWORKING.”

HOUSSAIN, 19
TRAINEE AT TANSGHART
WOODWORK CENTRE



**WORKING HERE GIVES ME
AMBITIONS FOR MY FUTURE”**

FATIMA IMNI, SALES ASSISTANT AT
THE BERBER BOUTIQUE

**“OUR AIM IS THAT THE GIRLS WE
HAVE HELPED WILL CONTINUE TO
HELP OTHERS IN THE SAME WAY.”**

– EVE BRANSON



HOW YOUR DONATION CAN HELP:

- ☀️ 200 MAD (approximately £16) can purchase supplies such as yarn, needles and scissors.
- ☀️ 500 MAD (approx. £40) can provide new carpentry handtools, other essential training equipment and support our local litter collection programme.
- ☀️ 1,000 MAD (approx. £80) can cover the cost of energy bills in our centres for one month or fund toothbrushing kits across a year.
- ☀️ 2,000 MAD (approx. £160) can cover teaching and trainer costs for one month.
- ☀️ 5,000 MAD (approx. £400) buys craft-making materials for three months or investment into renewable energy sources such as solar panels.
- ☀️ 10,000 MAD (approx. £800) can fund new machinery or support transportation and healthcare initiatives.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

We rely on the support of individuals and grants to further Eve's work within Moroccan Berber communities. By making a donation, your contribution will go directly to supporting these frontline projects.

DONATE

Donations can be made via our website evebransonfoundation.org.uk, or in person on a tour of our projects.

VISIT

Kasbah Tamadot arranges visits for resident guests to our projects, where a selection of handmade gifts can be purchased at the craft centres or from the Berber Boutique adjacent to the hotel's tennis courts. Sales from purchases go directly back to the artisans and centre operations.

PURCHASE

High quality items including Moroccan woven carpets, handcarved wooden gifts and contemporary soft woven fabrics can also be purchased overseas via our website evebransonfoundation.org.uk

PARTNERS

We are always looking for long-term partners and sponsors who share our values and with whom we can build personalised relationships. If there is a particular project that you wish to support by making a monthly donation or you have a fundraising idea for a new initiative, please get in touch by email contact@evebransonfoundation.org.uk

Kasbah Tamadot are proud members of Pack for a Purpose, an initiative that allows travellers like you to make a lasting impact in the community at your travel destination.

All you need to do is make some space in your luggage for some essential items that are desperately needed in the villages nearby Kasbah Tamadot. If you would like more information about what to bring with you and how to contribute to the lives of the children and their families, please visit packforapurpose.org/kasbah-tamadot

OUR PARTNERS

Kasbah Tamadot is part of Virgin Limited Edition, Sir Richard Branson's collection of unique retreats and luxury hotels. Set in the heart of Morocco's Atlas Mountains, the award-winning property employs more than 90% of its staff from the local Berber community and works hand in hand with The Eve Branson Foundation to develop a range of initiatives.

www.virginlimitededition.com/kasbah-tamadot

Virgin Unite is Virgin Group's charitable arm who, together with Virgin Limited Edition, jointly support The Eve Branson Foundation. Virgin Unite's mission is to connect people and entrepreneurial ideas to make positive change happen, driving business as a force for good. Overheads are covered by Sir Richard Branson and the Virgin Group, meaning that all donations received go directly to frontline projects.

www.virginunite.com

ADDITIONAL PARTNERS:

Dental Mavericks, Green Sahara Furniture, PHull Holdings, Pack for a Purpose

Virgin Unite UK Registered. Charity Number 297540

Owned and operated by the Virgin Foundation

The Eve Branson Foundation operates with support from:



We are a registered charitable association in Morocco providing opportunities to improve the lives of people living in rural areas.

Kasbah Tamadot, BP 67, Asni 42152

Thank you for helping to enrich the lives of hundreds of young people in rural Morocco.








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