

MAKING SCHOOL ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE

In mid-October 2025, Caritas Morocco delivered two school buses to the Aghbar commune in the province of Al Haouz to support its effort for **“Education for All.”** With a fleet of six school buses, children and young people from 22 villages can now reach their schools more easily.

Abdel Karim Ait-M'Barek, President of the Aghbar commune, confirms: *“With school transportation, we encourage children to go to school rather than trying to convince some parents who don’t know the value of education. The illiteracy rate is very high – 44.1%.”*



Abdel Karim Ait-M'Barek, President of the Commune of Aghbar

The Aghbar commune is among the poorest in the Al Haouz province. It is located in the High Atlas Mountains, 150 km from Marrakech. The terrain is very difficult, and it experiences harsh weather conditions such as snow in winter.

Houcine Ait-Ben Ali, President of the Parents’ Association of the Fatima al Fihria middle school, explains: *“We had a problem with distance. Students live far away, and we faced school dropouts in the mountains because there were no roads or school transport.”*



Commune of Aghbar

This commune faces numerous challenges, especially in primary and middle school education. *“When I took office as President of the commune in 2022, there were few students, both girls and boys. We encountered many difficulties due to parents’ attitudes and mentalities.”*



The new school buses

Indeed, the Aghbar commune does not have many services or human resources. *“Parents are forced to stop their children’s schooling so that they can help with their work.”*

The Communal Council then decided that **access to education should be one of its priorities**. It was necessary to improve school transportation, since there was only one school bus linking the Aghbar commune to the Tallat n’Yacoub middle school, 15 km away. *“We made requests to the governor of the Al Haouz province and also to the regional authorities. We found that there were only four classrooms in the middle school. Our student boarding facility was still under construction at the time.”*

*“The governor responded to our requests. We made a great effort with our partners, such as the **National Initiative for Human Development (INDH)**. In 2022, we provided three school buses to the most remote villages to encourage students.”*



Houcine Ait-Ben Ali with Fayçal and Jihad, from Caritas Morocco

Unfortunately, with the September 2023 earthquake, the schools and the middle school were destroyed. *“Thanks to our partners, such as the **National Initiative for Human Development and National Mutual Aid**, and with the efforts of the **Communal Council**, the middle school was rebuilt with more classrooms.”*

However, the commune now faces a new problem — the exodus of families after the earthquake. *“We have fewer students. Several families have rented houses in other cities and are staying there until their new homes are rebuilt.”*



Girls getting on the bus to go to school

“This year, we were encouraged thanks to the support of Caritas Morocco, which donated two school buses. **Now there is full coverage of school transportation across all the villages of the commune, which will also encourage families to return.**” *We hope our children will have a better future than ours, because today’s students are tomorrow’s leaders.”*

Fadma Ifkirm, a mother, emphasizes: *“The school was far from Aghbar. During the winter, the children suffered to get there. With the donation of these two buses, Caritas makes our children’s journey easier.”*

The representative of the student boarding home adds: *“These school buses have reduced the demand for accommodation in the boarding home. It was overcrowded because of its small capacity. Without this transportation, we would have faced problems in carrying out our educational activities.”*

Today, students from distant villages will use the school buses to come to the middle school. They will have lunch at the boarding home and take the bus back; others will stay there overnight.”

That same day, the young middle school students joyfully inaugurated the new buses.

Bénédicte Bergeron
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Bus in front of the school