

Home Learning Unit Resource 6: FAQ

Q: How far do the girls have to travel from their homes to stay in the boarding houses?

The majority of the girls live in villages or small family communities upto 15 miles away from where the boarding houses are located. Many of these villages are high up in the Atlas Mountains. Many of these families earn their living from looking after some animals as well as growing crops, fruit and vegetables.

Q: Do the girls stay at their boarding house at the weekend or do they go back to their families?

Many girls do go back home to their families each weekend. However, a number of them stay in their boarding houses, especially if they have coursework or exams to prepare for. The housemothers and sometimes volunteers are there to help them with their school studies which they wouldn't have access to back with their families.

Q: How do the parents of the girls feel about their daughter leaving home when she is 11 years old to live in one of the EfA boarding houses.

This is a really interesting question. When EfA opened its first boarding house, eleven years ago, there were only 7 girls. At that time, quite a lot of parents were understandably nervous about sending their daughter off to live in a house some miles away from their home. However, Housemothers, like Latifa and Hadeija, who are Moroccan women from the region were able to reassure and convince them that their daughters would be safe and very well looked after. Gradually over the years, more and more families apply for their daughter to be able to stay in one of the EfA boarding houses. And so from starting with 7 girls in one house, there are now over 200 girls living in six different boarding houses. PLUS for the past few years, the 'EfA girls' have been the highest performing students in their respective year groups at school – which is not only a great credit to them but also to the support and work of the Housemothers.