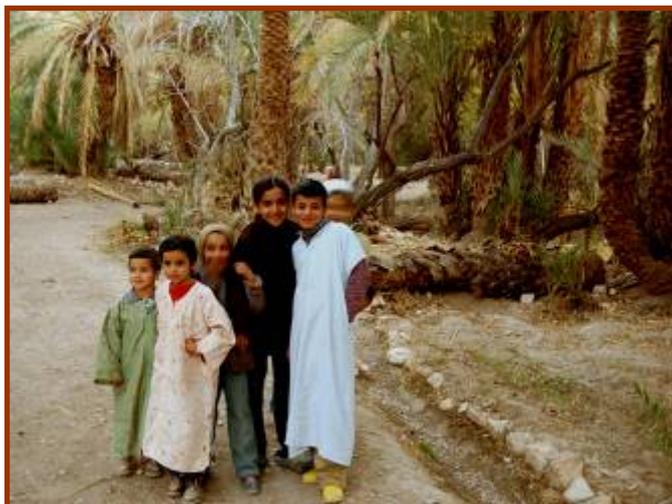


# DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN TIOUADOU, ANTI ATLAS

*Promoter:* **Association Tiouadou pour  
le Développement**

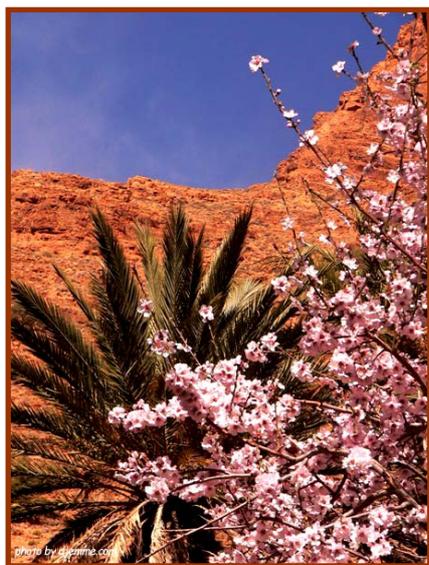
*Type of activity:* **development, health,  
education**



47 km far away from Tafraout, in the Anti Atlas, among palm trees oasis, pink granitic rocks and blooming almond trees, **Mohamed Sahnoun**, a native Berber living in Tiouadou, was one of the founders of the *Association Tiouadou pour le Développement*. Through the association, and also thanks to private European contacts and the foundation of new associations, Mohamed pushed the creation of a feminine atelier in Tiouadou for carpeting and fighting illiteracy, and a feminine cooperative for the argan oil production, provided specialized health care (ophthalmic and dental) for the children in the valley, opened a college with feminine and masculine dorms, encouraged public works for the drinkable water distribution. For the future he foresees the completion of the college equipment. Since 2007 he has been organizing the Cultural Festival in the school of Tiouadou; the same school signed in 2008 a Twinning contract with Il Classico in Milano, Italy.

*Mohamed Sahnoun died on 2012, Novembre 28th in a motorbike accident, leaving astonished his family and the whole village. The target of everybody is to go on with the work that Mohamed promoted during his full life.*

## AIT MANSOUR VALLEY



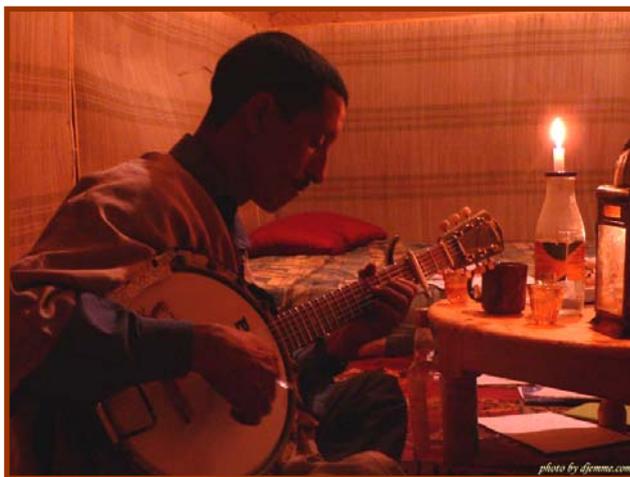
Closed in a magnificent theatre of pink granitic peaks, Tafraout is the centre of the Berber tribe of Ammeln, whose reputation of being smart traders is still valid. In fact they don't hesitate to migrate anywhere in Morocco, Europe and in the whole world for the required time to collect some money, to be used, back to their land, to build a comfort house and spend their old age. In this region there is also a small community of descendants from central Africa slaves.

Leaving Tafraout in the direction of the village of Agard Oudad you will cross the lunar landscape of Adrar Mqorn, with amazing views on Jebel el-Kest North of Tafraout, and you will reach Tleta Tazrite. Here the asphalt road goes on describing a circle through the Ait Mansour canyon and the spectacular palm tree oasis of Afella-Ighir, including different villages like Souk el Hadd Issi (the *mine* village, since in the local gold mine people from all over Morocco works), Tiouadou and Temguilcht.



Tiouadou village is located close to an antique valley with a great *palmerie*, which gives sustenance to each community living in the region. In the 50's the village was almost abandoned by men, to run after the emigration to the main towns in Morocco; therefore the population is mainly women and children, living on the remittances of the emigrants. Normally a large part of this money is invested in building huge modern houses, close to the mountains, while the very old villages made out of mud and straw, as for the tradition of chlehu tribe, are abandoned. Agriculture is in danger because of lack of men to work in the fields. When a man finds a new wife in town and stops sending money back home, for women life comes harder harder, being the head of the household and having children to grow. Education and formation are therefore the only solution to preserve a culture and a very antique tradition, proudness of Moroccan Berber heritage.

Tiouadou village is inhabited by around 250 persons, mainly women and children.



The traditional economy of the valley is mainly rural (almonds, argan, date palm trees, wheat, hay, goat and sheep breeding), but a significant plus is given by both emigration and tourism.

The school attendance rate is very high (99%), despite the isolation of the region, and this is due to the presence of a primary school in each village. But after the primary school, the only alternative to go on studying is to move to Tafraout or another town, and therefore live in a college: the rich families can afford the college, but for the great majority this is not viable. For girls, besides economic reasons there are also social considerations, and fathers and brothers prefer their girls to stay home rather than expose them to the risks of living in a college, far away from the family. And therefore the girls use to help the women in the house keeping activities, to prepare the argan oil in the traditional way, to tissue carpets and embroidery, and to tailor *djellaba* and *babouche*.



With respect to other Moroccan regions the cultural offer is very scarce due to a lack of resources to give value a very rich and antique culture.

In the villages there are no libraries, no either cultural events or festival are arranged, even though this is a strong need for small mountain communities; the chances to access a professional education are quite few; the internet connection via land line is not possible (in Tiouadou the net provided by the authorities was promptly destroyed to steel the precious copper wires) and even the internet connection via a usb key is hard because of the area is scarcely covered by the mobile network.



## DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS



### *library in Tiouadou*

*type of action: education*

*project status: work in progress*

some *YALLAZ* travellers, visiting the area in March 2008, noticed the total absence of books in the whole village of Tiouadou, and from the other side the wish of some girls and women to have something to read: the project of a small library was therefore started, with books in French, Arabic and tamazight as well; this library is hosted in the Essaayidine School

during the last four years around 350 books have been collected and gifted to the school, and Ahmed, the school director up to 2009, made an accurate catalogue of all of them, assigning a code to each book; the books include readings for children and adolescents, novels, tales and non-fiction for adults, and recipe books from European cuisine

the library is meant as a service for the whole village and not only for the school; the library seat is an unused class of the school, and it is accessible both for students and teachers, and for the people in the village; the inauguration of the library was on January 2013

**NOTE:** the book collection is not over, therefore whoever has books in French or Arabic or *tamazight* and wishes to donate them to the school can contact **Monica** ([monica@djemme.com](mailto:monica@djemme.com))



### *activities for the improvement of the Primary School Essaadiyine in Tiouadou*

*type of activity: education, health*

*project status: work in progress*

the Essaayidine primary school of Tiouadou hosts a total of around 120 children, and it is split in three seats spread in the villages of Tiouadou, Temguilchte and Tazounte

the Moroccan Education Ministry, starting from 2009-2010 year, made possible a fund of 5000 euros for each Moroccan primary school, at the condition that an association of both teachers and students is created inside the school and is capable of managing all the activities; each year the association has to allocate the ministerial fund, by choosing some items from a list including various renovation works, scholastic equipments, either cultural or sport events, cyber room, twinnings with other schools, etc

the new school director, Mohamed, is wishing to go on with the improvements started at the school

the following activities were already accomplished by Tiouadou school:

- **painting:** all external and internal walls were painted during both 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 year, and the perimeter fence was re-built, painted and decorated by the school boys and girls, helped by some Berber painters, among which Mohamed Farid from Taфраout
- **toilets:** the toilets construction was made possible thanks to the funding of the **Association Médecins Essafarn** from Casablanca (who gifted all the sanitary fittings), the **Association Souss Tuwizi** (building work) and a *YALLAZ* responsible traveller (who financed the finish work; the toilets are working since the beginning of 2010



- **courtyard:** while working for the toilet building, the school was connected to the water system of the village; this made possible the plantation of some trees in the courtyard where the children play, and the dust was consequently reduced; moreover, some waste basins were located in the courtyard
- **nursery:** the *Asociation Tiouadou pour le Développement* decided to realize a nursery class, and the teacher salary is payed by the same association; thanks to some funds from YALLAZ responsible tourists the class is now fully equiped with desks, chairs, toys and a big carpet where the children can play



### **socio-educational complex**

*type of activity: education*  
*project status: starting*

for infos about the Socio-Educational Complex of Tiouadou, pls read the correspondant project sheet



### **Spring Cultural Festival**

*type of activity: education*  
*project status: closed*

for infos about the Spring Cultural Festival of Tiouadou, pls read the correspondant project sheet



### **twinning among schools**

*type of activity: education / education to multi-culture*  
*project status: work in progress*

in 2008 the Essaadiyine Primary School of Tiouadou started a twinning project with IIClassico Music School in Milano (Italy), but the project was stopped by several bureaucratic matters

the fundings already collected for the implementation of this project were moved to other resources for the village, as for instance the **Socio- Educational Complex**



### **garbage collection system**

*type of activity: environmental*  
*project status: starting*

nowadays the area of the river is the garbage dump, with clear consequences on both water hygiene and houses proximity

Mohamed Sahnoun always tried to sensitize the village to the garbage problem, and now the local association is going on; among the proposed solutions, the laying of traditional plastic waste containers (but who will be responsible of their emptying is not yet defined) or the building of concrete bins which can be emptied by simply firing the garbage



### **arrangement of sustainable tourism travels in the region**

*type of activity: responsible tourism*  
*project status: work in progress*



local population likes the increasing interest of foreign and Moroccan travellers for closely meeting the valley life style, asking for both accommodation and guiding services for walks and trekking; some local families share their house with travellers, for meals and nights, thus getting an immediate economic help and opening their views to different cultures (see also the project **Ait Maghreb**)

there are two authorized auberges in this area: the "historical" one in Tiouadou (the **Auberge Sahnoun**, owned by Mohamed's family and hosting a small museum of traditional daily objects, and a new one at the entrance of Ait Mansour

moreover, **YALLAZ** travels contribute even economically with la *project cash* (a percentage of the travel cost) either to implement some projects or to help some local associations



### **arrangement of specialist medical visits**

*type of activity: health*

*project status: work in progress*

from time to time Mohamed invites medical professionals from all over Morocco and from Europe, in order to monitor the children health (in particular, ophthalmic and dental inspections); a truly active association in this domain is the **Association Médecins Essafarn** from Casablanca: the association provides, besides the professionals, all the required medicaments, whilst Mohamed is in charge of the logistics and of the doctors' hospitality



### **actions for drinkable water**

*type of activity: health*

*project status: closed*

some covered tubes were built to carry water from the mountain sources to the village wells and to the house taps, avoiding the contamination of animal drinking in the mountains; the work was financed by the **Netherland Embassy**

the water in the palm tree oasis, collected in basins and distributed to land owners, is for irrigation purposes only



### **Afella-Ighir educational centre**

*type of activity: education*

*project status: work in progress*

on the road between Souk el Hadd Issi and Tiouadou a new college has been being on duty for some years; this is the unique college in the Ait Mansour valley, and hosts both a feminine (**Dar Talibat**) and a masculine dorm (**Dar Taleb**); two associations were initially founded, the **Association El Kheyr pour la protection et la gestion du Dar Talibat** and the **Association Dar Taleb**, in order to manage respectively the feminine and the masculine house; in 2011 the two associations were merged, in order to save money and resources from a unique management; still missing a director for the masculine college and one for the feminine one, in order to help students for homeworks

in Summer/Autumn 2011 a new building was raised, including **a new large dorm for girls**; still missing the perimetral wall of the first feminine building; the two student houses are almost fully equipped with toilettes, kitchen, bread oven, television with parabolic antenna and decoder; a part of the equipment was provided thanks to some **YALLAZ** sustainable travels

during Summer 2010 some new buildings were raised, intended to host the **lyceum** (even the lyceum being the only



one in the whole valley), starting its function in year 2011-2012; the previous year the number of students were so low that the courses were suspended

**NOTE:** the school system in Morocco consists on a primary school (6 years, starting from 6 year old children), a college (4 years) and a lyceum (3 years), before university; the full school system, including the university, is free of charge!



### creation of an atelier and a feminine cooperative

type of activity: **social / development**  
project status: **closed**

women in the region are used to accomplish their traditional activities inside the house; Mohamed founded a feminine weaving atelier in Tiouadou and encouraged the start up of a feminine cooperative for the argan oil production (the president is Mohamed Lachgar) with the aim of collecting the women in a unique place where they can enjoy working together, singing and laughing, and where they can gain a slight economic independence from their husbands/fathers/brothers

the feminine atelier and the cooperative are experiencing great difficulties in their self-management, especially from an administrative point of view, and the women are starting to go back to their home activity; anyway, the idea of belonging to a cooperative might change their submissive mentality and give them some autonomy that men still hardly recognize

the weaving atelier produces carpets and embroideries (towels, table clothes); it has been running for 3 years, and it was financially supported in the first year by **Peace Corps** (American association of volunteer workers), during the second year by the association **ADRA Belge** and for the third year by an association of Dutch women; the support provided the salary to a administrative worker, and the weaving material

at the moment neither the broderie atelier nor the argan oil cooperative are active



### report and protection of rocky engraving sites

type of activity: **safeguard of the historical heritage**  
project status: **starting**

in the region there are several sites where prehistoric rocky engravings (up to 6.000 year old) and fossils (535 million years) were found; local authorities almost ignore the need of protection for those precious historical documents, and the sites are left unguarded at vandals and child games mercy



## HOW TO HELP

The best way to show appreciation and support for those berbers is to **go and visit them** while travelling in Morocco near the Tafraout - Anti Atlas region. It is not necessary to plan your trip in advance; you can take your time and you don't need to know either your stay is of one day or of one week.

The traveller can send a **report** of the visit directly to **Djemme** ([info@djemme.com](mailto:info@djemme.com)) as this would help to keep the given information up to date. Or he may send **remarks** or **suggestions** about one or more



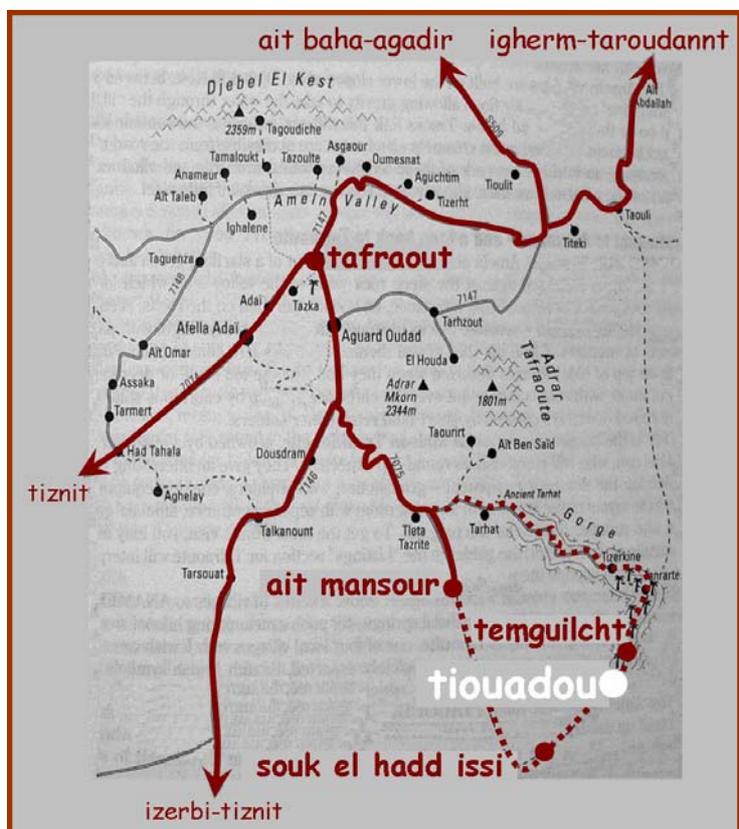
projects.

If the traveller wish to **sponsor** one project, he can send an email to **Monica** ([monica@djemme.com](mailto:monica@djemme.com)).

Activities requiring immediate help:

- **garbage management**
- **socio-educational complex**  
*collection of video, audio, working laptops*  
*volunteers for work camps*  
*co-founding*
- **Tiouadou library**  
*book collection (French, Arabic or tamazight)*

## HOW TO GET THERE



### By car:

- from Marrakech direction Essaouira (the way crosses the Gare du Train in Marrakech) up to Chichaoua, and from here on the left to Agadir  
*273 km, heavy traffic and mountain road, around 4h*
- from Agadir direction Inezgane-Ait Melloul-Ait Baha to reach Tafraout  
*130 km, strada in montagna, circa 3h*
- from Tafraout to Tiouadou: paved road till to Tiouadou  
*47 km, around 1h30'*

**NOTE:** coming from Tiznit, you can leave the main road at Izerbi taking the paved road that directly lead to Souk el Hadd Issi

### By public transports:

- from the Gare Routiere of Marrakech Bab Doukkala by bus to Inezgane (or to Agadir, and public taxi from Agadir to Inezgane, 6dh 30min): several buses all day long  
*around 70dh, around 5h, meal stop*
- from Inezgane to Tiznit by shared taxi  
*cost 23dh, around 1h*



- from Tiznit to Tafraout by either bus or shared taxi (taxi is advisable, since buses are pretty rare, slower and the Gare Routiere in Tiznit is on the opposite with respect to the taxi parking cost around 60dh, around 4h (bus), 3h (taxi), meal stop if by bus
- from Tafraout to Tiouadou by public minibus or on foot  
47 km, 18dh and 3h by minibus, 2 days on foot

## THE CONTACTS

Waiting that a responsible person for contacting tourists will be nominated by the *Association Tiouadou pour le Développement*, pks contact:



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