

Sarah Toumi: Planting Trees to Curb Desertification in Rural Communities Across Tunisia

Claire Fallender 18 July 2017

Growing up, Sarah Toumi, a French-born Tunisian woman, would spend time with her extended family in Tunisia.

During one visit, she remembers sharing with her cousins her dream of becoming an astronaut when she finished school. She then asked them about their dreams.

Her three cousins, all girls, said that they were dropping out of school because there was no bus to take them. The high school was 12 km away and it was too dangerous to go by foot. Sarah remembers thinking, "How is that possible? I can become what I want because the school is close by and everything is open in front of me." There had to be a way to get a bus for them. So Sarah enlisted her father's support and set up her first organization to help children in her family's village and beyond have access to learning opportunities in and outside of school. She was 11 years old.

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