

Project Number: 200493 | **Project Category:** Development Project
Project Approval Date: December 20, 2012 | **Planned Start Date:** December 01, 2012
Actual Start Date: July 01, 2013 | **Project End Date:** March 31, 2018
Financial Closure Date: N/A

Contact Info

Maria Lukyanova
maria.lukyanova@wfp.org

Country Director

Maria Lukyanova

Further Information

<http://www.wfp.org/countries>
SPR Reading Guidance



Capacity Development in the Framework of the School Feeding Programme

Standard Project Report 2017

World Food Programme in Tunisia, Tunisian Republic (TN)



World Food Programme

Table Of Contents

Country Context and WFP Objectives

Achievements at Country Level

Country Context and Response of the Government

WFP Objectives and Strategic Coordination

Country Resources and Results

Resources for Results

Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations and Lessons Learned

Nutritious school meals advance the economic empowerment of women in rural areas

Project Results

Activities and Operational Partnerships

Results

Performance Monitoring

Progress Towards Gender Equality

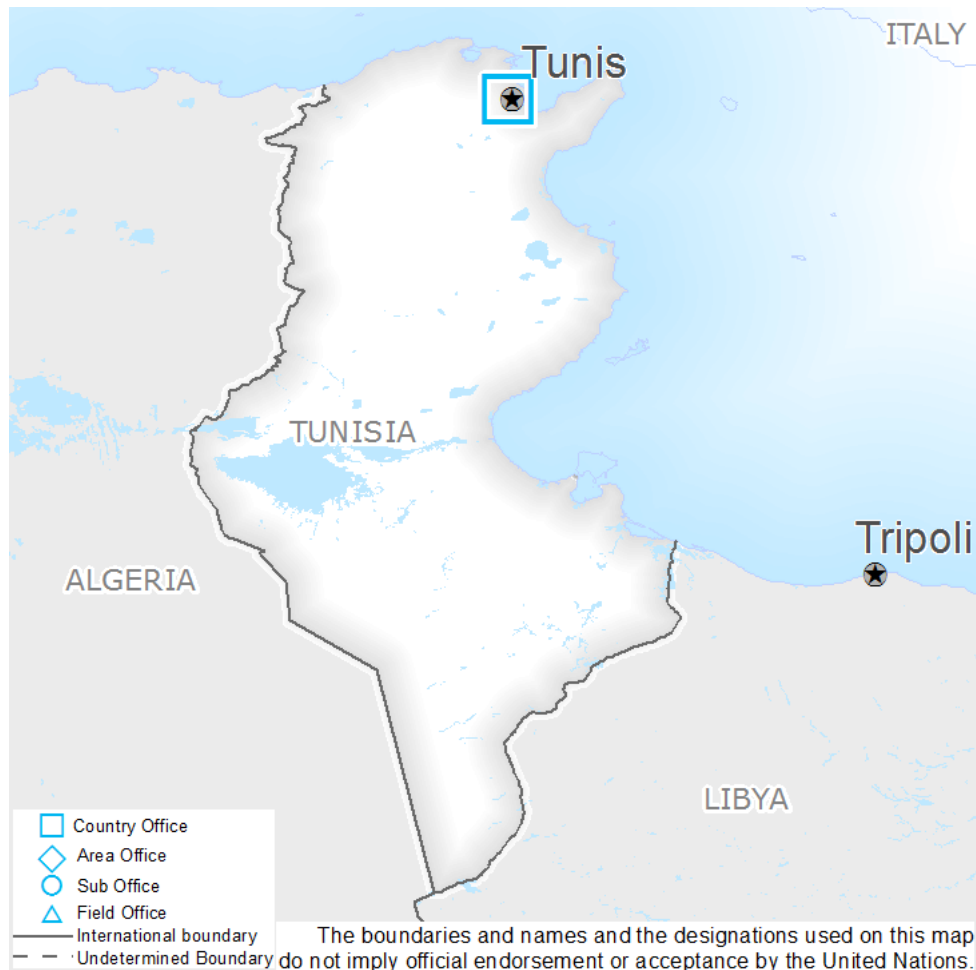
Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations

Figures and Indicators

Data Notes

Project Indicators

Country Context and WFP Objectives



Achievements at Country Level

WFP Tunisia successfully positioned itself in a technical advisory role through government capacity strengthening activities which aim to enhance Tunisia's National School Meals Programme (NSMP). Building upon this collaboration, the Government of Tunisia has recognised school meals as a social safety net that can enhance stability and social protection, contribute to greater access to education and nutrition and to rural development. WFP's advocacy efforts have driven the establishment of broad partnerships around school meals in Tunisia, bringing together national institutions, United Nations agencies, the private sector and civil society. WFP's engagement with the Government and its partners to make education a policy-priority contributed to Tunisia's nomination as Pioneer Country by the Education Commission; under the Learning Generation process. The Education Sector Reform will be implemented following a results-based approach, with technical assistance from WFP and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

In 2017, WFP provided critical support for the Government to operationalise Tunisia's Sustainable School Meals Strategy as a key component of the Education Sector Reform. WFP's technical assistance allowed the Ministry of Education's Office of School Services (OOESCO), responsible for the management of school meals, transportation and lodging, to enhance its capacity to run an improved NSMP at central, regional and local levels. OOESCO was established in 2016 with WFP support. In partnership with the Ministries of Education and Agriculture, WFP fostered links between women-led school canteens and community-based organizations (CBOs) in rural areas, to promote the use of locally produced foods, contribute to job creation and enhance local development. WFP engagement in developing solutions to address the main challenges of gender empowerment was through the home-grown school meals model, by identifying actions to promote rural women inclusion through the use of school gardens and

fostering links between school canteens and local agricultural production.

In this respect, WFP both supported the Government in the implementation of an innovative central kitchen pilot in the Zaghuan governorate, and provided substantive contributions to advancing the revitalisation of school gardens as hubs for nutritional and environmental education. Access to the school gardens will contribute to generating more stable source of income for women farmers' cooperatives, while providing school canteens with fresh produce to prepare hot and nutritious meals.

Moreover, WFP facilitated Tunisia's Strategic Review on Food Security and Nutrition, led by the Tunisian Institute for Strategic Studies (ITES). By bringing together line ministries, WFP contributed to the process of strengthening the multi-sectoral approach to food security and nutrition, providing a solid analytical foundation for discussions on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, and fostering synergies between programmes of various partners. The review also called for strengthening Tunisia's social protection system, with school meals as a key component, to effectively address the causes of food insecurity and contribute to Tunisia's attainment of SDG 2.

Country Context and Response of the Government

The Government of Tunisia has made steady progress to consolidate its transition towards more democratic governance which was triggered by the 2011 Jasmine revolution. In 2014, Tunisia adopted a new constitution and held successful legislative and presidential elections. The National Unity government - a coalition of the main political parties and civil society groups - was formed in September 2016 to tackle reforms needed for economic recovery. The security situation improved notably in 2017, and a date was fixed for the country to hold the long-delayed municipal elections in May 2018, the first since the 2011 uprising.

Tunisia is ranked 97th out of 188 countries in the 2016 Human Development Index. Government efforts to reduce inequality, strengthen public services and boost job creation have not yet materialized into major, visible improvement; while the tourism industry has started to recover from two major attacks in 2015. Unemployment rates, currently at 15.3 percent nationally, show considerable disparities, and are especially high in interior rural areas, and among women and youth. The services sector accounts for 52 percent of employment, 18 percent is in manufacturing, 15 percent in non-manufacturing industry and 14 percent in agriculture and fishing. It is estimated that the informal sector comprises half of the Tunisian economy.

Tunisia's 2014 constitution makes explicit commitments to promoting women's appointment to positions of responsibility in all sectors, working towards gender parity in all elected bodies in the country and eliminating violence against women. In spite of progress, gender inequalities remain a significant impediment to social and economic development, and result in disadvantages for, and discrimination against, women and girls. The Gender Inequality Index 2015 ranks Tunisia 58th out of 159 countries.

Although there are low levels of hunger, regional disparities render the poorest portion of the population vulnerable to food insecurity. Access to nutritious food is not hindered by a lack of availability, but rather by economic barriers such as low purchasing power. Tunisia faces a double burden of malnutrition, driven by the prevalence of micronutrient deficiencies - most notably, iron deficiency - anaemia, overweight and obesity. Natural resource degradation as well as a growing dependence on food imports may hinder the long-term sustainability of national food systems.

Government-funded food subsidies have promoted access to basic food for vulnerable people, but are increasingly seen as insufficient, poorly targeted social policies, with a significant proportion of the subsidy expenditure going to people with middle to high incomes [1]. The major policy gaps identified by the 2017 Country Strategic Review (CSR) include the needs to develop a national, multi-sectorial strategy for healthy nutrition; address the high levels of food waste through coordinated policy response; and encourage agricultural entrepreneurship.

Education is a fundamental right guaranteed by the 2014 constitution. Although primary school enrolment is high at 99 percent, cumulative dropout rate during primary education is estimated at 5 percent for boys and 7 percent for girls [2]. Tunisia's educational project, laid out in the Ministry of Education's White Paper on the Education Sector Reform (2016), identifies four challenges for the reform: (i) ensure equity and equal opportunities; (ii) improve the quality of teaching and student achievement; (iii) ensure the integration of the education system into the job market and society; and (iv) improve governance. The Government is working to advance the reform's strategic objectives, including developing school life - which encompasses school meals, lodging, school transportation, and extra-curricular activities - and preventing school failure and drop-outs.

[1] The International Labour Organization (ILO), Tunisia Social Protection Profile, 2017

[2] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2016.

WFP Objectives and Strategic Coordination

Development Project 200493 was launched in December 2013. The primary purpose of the project is to strengthen Government capacity to improve the quality and sustainability of the existing National School Meals Programme (NSMP). During the first phase of the project (2014-15), WFP provided technical assistance and policy advice under three main pillars: i) a review of the existing programme; ii) study visits for South-South cooperation, sharing experiences and best practices; and iii) development of a Sustainable School Meals Strategy (SSMS). The Government requested WFP's continued assistance in a second phase, until June 2018, to provide technical assistance and policy advice to operationalize and implement the SSMS.

WFP's current support aims to strengthen regulatory frameworks and tools; upgrade the existing decentralized school meals model; and pilot new implementation modalities that are efficient, accountable, and support local development. WFP advocates the adoption of a multidimensional approach to sustainable school meals, which includes fostering links with local agricultural production, creating revenue generating opportunities for women in rural areas, promoting community participation, supporting nutrition and environmental education through the creation of school gardens, designing nutritious balanced school meals menus based on locally available produce, and strengthening programme governance.

The programme is aligned with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Tunisia (UNDAF) 2015-2019. In particular it is aligned with Axis III on social protection and equitable access to quality social services.

Partnerships are essential to WFP's work in Tunisia, both to ensure its success and sustainability and to foster synergies for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2 and 17. The 2017 Country Strategic Review (CSR) brought together Government line ministries, national civil society and private sector stakeholders, and development partners, to achieve a common understanding of the gaps and opportunities for Tunisia's achievement of SDG 2.

In 2017, the Tunisian Ministry of Education, the Government of Italy and the European Union partnered with WFP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in favour of quality education and to improve school life in the framework of the education sector reform. WFP is also coordinating efforts with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to train school canteen personnel.

Additionally, WFP works with the Ministry of Agriculture in advancing the revitalisation of school gardens, and to integrate smallholder farmers, notably women, into the school meals supply chain, in partnership with the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Furthermore, WFP collaborates with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Women, Family and Children's Affaires, private sector and civil society stakeholders.

As part of its South-South cooperation efforts, WFP continued to support the Government of Tunisia's active participation in the Regional Initiative for School Meals and Social Protection in the Middle East and North Africa. The partnership brings together governments and national institutions, as well as United Nations agencies and international organisations, donors, and the private sector to enhance the quality and multiply the impact of school meals programmes as a crucial social protection instrument, in support of most vulnerable children and communities.

Country Resources and Results

Resources for Results

In October 2017, the project received a EUR 2.5 (USD 2.9) million contribution from the Government of Italy to support WFP's programme over a duration of 3 years (2018-2021). The contribution from the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation will cover 80 percent of the costs of planned activities under the upcoming Country Strategic Plan (CSP) (2018-2022), which will commence on 01 April 2018. The CSP budget will allow WFP to continue the provision of capacity strengthening to national institutions to enhance national school meals and social protection programmes.

The project began in 2013 following a contribution of USD 1.5 million from the Russian Federation. In 2015, the budget was revised to USD 6.5 million for the second phase of the project. This required an additional contribution of USD 5 million which was not resourced. Thus, WFP focused on two of the three components of the programme: i) activities aimed at strengthening regulatory frameworks and tools; and ii) technical support for the design and implementation of innovative school feeding modalities. The resource limitations, over the majority of the timespan of the project, resulted in a significant gap in the 'actual' against 'planned' number of model schools with upgraded equipment and infrastructure, as well as in the number of schools with revitalised school gardens. Interventions aimed at upgrading individual school canteens and revitalising school gardens are reprioritised under the upcoming CSP and will be strengthened thanks to the October 2017 Italian contribution.

Despite the project being under-resourced, the Government of Tunisia's strong commitment to the activities resulted in significant national contributions to the implementation of innovative school feeding modalities' component. The Ministry of Education is financing the development, construction and equipment of two pilot central kitchens. The construction of the first central kitchen is underway in the Nadhour district of the Zaghouan governorate, including a 1ha school garden (1ha = 10 thousand m²). It is expected to be completed in the first half of 2018. Feasibility studies to determine the location of a second pilot in the Beja governorate are underway. The Ministry of Education has also contributed to cover the costs of workshops, events and training sessions, for around 120 public staff involved in the preparation of school meals.

Complementary financing in the framework of the Nadhour pilot involved physical and technical contributions from the Ministry of Agriculture. This was comprised of assistance in preparing the school garden terrain, which included planting 200 olive trees. Alongside this, technical assistance was given through training for the women's community-based organisation (CBO) which will be engaged in the cultivation of the garden. The Nadhour municipality contributed by covering some transport-related costs.

The engagement of civil society partners such as *Femmes pour les Cantines Scolaires* (FCS, Women for School Canteens) has helped to create synergies and provide complementary resources. FCS contributed by financing greenhouses for the home grown school meals pilot in Zaghouan, as well as by advocating to mobilise the Tunisian private sector's support.

The national private sector was involved in financing programme activities. For instance, the local private sector funded the fence around the Nadhour school garden, and the private holding Délice-Danone Tunisia covered the costs to train 70 cooks on the WFP-developed Nutrition and Hygiene Guidelines.

WFP has developed a partnership and fundraising strategy which explores wider financing opportunities, maps potential donors and their priorities. It also continues to work to diversify its donor base in the framework of the upcoming CSP.

Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations and Lessons Learned

An external Operation Evaluation (OE) of the project was undertaken in 2015. In line with the OE's recommendations, WFP provided technical assistance and policy advice to the Office of School Services (OOESCO), the Ministry of Education's unit responsible for the management of the National School Meals Programme.

WFP continued to support a Regional Steering Committee in the Zaghouan governorate, where the central kitchen pilot is being implemented. WFP supported the Government in defining the regional steering committees' roles and responsibilities in the focus regions, as prioritised by the Ministry of Education.

Funding mechanisms were discussed "School Feeding as a Vector of Academic and Social Inclusion" Seminar held in November 2017. Funding and governance challenges were identified and solutions were proposed.

The OE recommended the reinforcement of the capacities and addressing the constraints of local women producers in order to supply school canteens. WFP supported the creation and training of the members of a women-led Agricultural Development Group (GDA) near the Nadhour school garden and central kitchen pilot site. In line with the gender action plan for Tunisia (2017), WFP strived to incorporate consideration of gender equality issues in all its capacity development activities and in the design, implementation and monitoring of projects.

WFP continued to support the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Agriculture, collaborating in the revitalisation of school gardens, and promote the participation of smallholder farmers in the school meals' supply chain.

As per the OE recommendation, WFP supported the Ministry of Education to ensure monitoring and evaluation of programme activities. This was achieved through the development of a set of criteria for the selection of districts and schools to be targeted.

The 2017 Country Strategic Review (CSR) identified gaps and opportunities for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2, and highlighted school meals as a key component of the national social protection system, which can be leveraged to ensure access to food for the most vulnerable groups in the country. School meals are also at the heart of the ongoing Tunisian Education Sector Reform's launched in 2016, as part of its Strategic Goal 5: Developing School Life. WFP's Tunisia upcoming Country Strategic Plan (CSP) (2018-2022) envisions a continuation of technical assistance and policy advice, leveraging the current successful partnership with the Government and other national and international stakeholders.

Nutritious school meals advance the economic empowerment of women in rural areas

In 2017, WFP successfully facilitated the establishment of a new regulatory framework which granted access to and the farming rights of school garden land to Community Based Organizations (CBOs), particularly those led by women in rural areas. The agreement, first signed between the Ministries of Education and Agriculture and a CBO in the Zaghouan governorate, set a milestone in strengthening the school feeding programme in Tunisia.

Nejla is the leader of *Groupement de Developpement Agricole* (GDA, Rural Development Group) Nadhour, a 23-woman CBO established in 2016 with WFP's support and now benefitting from this innovative regulatory framework. Nejla is 41 years old and a mother of three children. She faces challenges typical of a women in rural Tunisia. She says: *"When I was a girl, I used to wake up at 5 AM and walk 4 kilometres to reach school. I dropped out two years before graduation and went to work in the fields with my mother and other women"*. 80 percent of Nejla's labour is non-remunerated work on the family farm. She earns an average monthly income of TDN 250 (USD 95) as a low-paid seasonal worker.

Women comprise 58 percent of the rural workforce in Tunisia and, like Nejla, they play a vital role in agriculture by contributing to the food security of their families. The Ministry of Women, Family and Children recently launched its National Strategy for the Socio-Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls in Rural Areas. The strategy supports job creation for women and facilitates access to the labour market. In line with these efforts, guaranteed access to the school garden's land will facilitate the organization of women farmers in cooperatives, earning a more secure income while providing canteens with 30 percent of the produce used to prepare hot and nutritious meals.

Nejla was one of the 300 farmers benefitting from training on decision-making and entrepreneurship run by the Ministry of Agriculture. *"Like me, many other women receiving the training realized the advantages of getting organised and decided to put our skills together to earn a decent income. The school meals programme allows us to do that"*, Nejla said.

With WFP's assistance, GDA Nadhour currently farms 2 hectares of school garden land. Amina, an active member of Nadhour CBO says: *"Thanks to this project, we have stable access to land, which is guaranteed by a signed contract"*.

After piloting Nadhour's experience, WFP will support the government to scale up the implementation of the regulatory framework, helping other CBOs access school land and offer women opportunities for economic empowerment by providing home-grown, nutritious produce to school children.

WFP is a trusted partner of the Government of Tunisia in the institutional capacity strengthening and enhancing the National School Feeding Programme. Further, WFP works closely with relevant stakeholders and public institutions, developing legislative and policy frameworks which foster links with local agricultural production and support income generating opportunities for women in rural areas.

Project Results

Activities and Operational Partnerships

In 2017, WFP implemented a set of activities aimed at strengthening the Government's capacity at the national, sub-national and local levels, improving the quality and sustainability of the National School Meal Programme (NSMP). WFP's support followed the five pathways of capacity strengthening. These were policy and legislation, institutional accountability, strategic planning and financing, programme design and delivery, and engagement and participation of civil society and private sector. WFP's policy advice also continued to support the implementation of Tunisia's Sustainable School Meals Strategy (SSMS).

In addition, WFP contributed to the development of the legal framework for Community Based Organisations (CBOs) of rural smallholder farmers to enable access to school gardens. WFP supported a group of 23 women in the Nadhour district, Zaghuan governorate, to receive legal accreditation as a CBO, and provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Agriculture in preparing the first agreement, thereby allowing the CBO full access to and the rights to use the school garden's land.

WFP also supported the development of a School Garden Manual, as well as the roll-out of its Nutrition and Hygiene Guidelines (2016), through the training of 420 cooks in partnership with the Office of School Services (OOESCO), part of the Ministry of Education.

Complementing the aforementioned, the Ministries of Education and Agriculture and WFP hosted a multi-stakeholder workshop on school gardens, where more than 200 stakeholders exchanged ideas on how school gardens could provide multiple benefits for children and local communities. Participants included senior government officials, representatives of the Tunisian Agriculture and Fishery Union (UTAP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), as well as school principals and teachers.

The Government's strong commitment to these activities resulted in the allocation of significant national resources to finance the development, construction and equipment of the first of two planned central kitchens. By the end 2017, 75 percent of construction works for the central kitchen in Nadhour, Zaghuan had been completed, while the second central kitchen's construction was set to be launched in 2018.

During its participation in the 19th Global Child Nutrition Forum (GCNF) in Montreal, the Government - represented by the Ministry of Education - demonstrated a high level of commitment to establishing government-operated, sustainable school feeding programs. WFP supports the Minister of Education's vision that, in the framework of Tunisia's Education Sector Reform, integrated approaches to school meals are essential to keeping children in school, protecting them from extremism, and building a sense of justice and national identity.

WFP also supported the Government in co-organising a side event at the 44th Committee on World Food Security (CFS44) meeting in Rome, on the WFP-led Regional Initiative for School Meals and Social Protection in the Middle East and North Africa. The Ministry of Education's representative cited Tunisia's Strategic Review on Food Security and Nutrition facilitated by WFP in 2017, which affirms that well designed and well implemented social protection systems, with school meals as a key component, can effectively address the causes of food insecurity.

In partnership with the Italian Agency for Development and Cooperation (AICS), WFP and the Ministry of Education co-organised a seminar entitled "School feeding as a vector of academic and social inclusion". The 96 stakeholders who participated included government officials from the national, sub-national and local levels, development partners, and representatives of the private sector and the civil society. Participants worked in six groups to develop action-oriented solutions to address the different challenges underlying the enhancement of the NSMP. Building upon the discussions, WFP supported the development of an updated Plan of Action (2018-2022) for the implementation of Tunisia's SSMS.

WFP also supported upgrading the decentralised school meals model by developing a methodology to ensure sound school targeting practices prioritising vulnerable, rural areas for rehabilitation in 2018. In coordination with the Regional Commissariats of Education (CRE) and Agriculture (CRDA), WFP visited and assessed 19 primary schools, identifying 8 schools and 10 school gardens in the governorates of Ariana, Nabeul, Kairouan and Kasserine to be targeted for rehabilitation in 2018.

Moreover, WFP aided the Government's efforts to pilot innovative school meals modalities. WFP provided technical assistance to set up a school garden next to the pilot central kitchen site, in partnership with national NGO Femmes pour les Cantines Scolaires (FCS, Women for School Canteens), Zaghuan's CRDA and the Nadhour municipality. In March, the first food and environment class was held on site following the recently developed WFP School Gardens Manual. Benefiting from this assistance, an additional school garden was revitalised in the Jradou school,

also in Zaghouan.

Furthermore, in line with the WFP Tunisia Gender Transformation Programme (GTP) improvement plan adopted in 2017, WFP activities included the roll-out of learning sessions targeting government representatives and school staff on gender equality, as well as masculinity trainings addressed to educators and school principals. These raised awareness about gender biases and how to overcome these through school gardens activities.

In October, WFP and AICS signed an agreement to continue activities over a period of 36 months. This was part of a multi-stakeholder partnership between the Ministry of Education, WFP, the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the European Union (EU), and AICS that will allow around 250,000 children in the national school meals programme to benefit from improved school lunches and nutrition education.

Results

Throughout 2017, WFP continued to provide critical contributions to advance the outcome “ownership and capacity strengthened to reduce under nutrition and increase access to education at regional, national and community levels”, in line with national efforts to achieve SDG 2 “Zero Hunger” and the Education Sector Reform.

WFP supported the Ministry of Education, in particular its Office of School Services (OOESCO) - for the second year since its establishment - in the effective and accountable implementation of national school meals. Due to mainly budgetary, but also organisational constraints while OOESCO consolidates its mandate, the number of average school feeding days fell short of the 150 days' target.

WFP responded to OOESCO's request to provide training for boarding and secondary school cooks, which resulted in WFP exceeding the planned figure of 30 school staff trained. In April, 417 cooks were trained with WFP's support, and, in addition to this, the 3 staff running the school meals programme at the refurbished Ain Chebli primary school canteen also received training on nutrition and hygiene. Complimenting this, through workshops and other meetings throughout the year, WFP reached other 140 technical government staff over the reporting period.

WFP also worked to strengthen regulatory frameworks and tools in support of two national programmes: school meals, through the development of Nutrition and Hygiene Guidelines and an updated Plan of Action (2018-2022); and school gardens. WFP developed a School Gardens Manual, and contributed to stronger inter-ministerial coordination by supporting the implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministries of Education and Agriculture. WFP provided technical support to carry out the reforms necessary to guarantee the access of community-based organisations (CBOs) to farming of the school gardens, as a revenue-generating activity. This was done through a gender-transformative approach which challenges traditional gender roles and promotes the economic empowerment of women, particularly in rural areas, and in line with the Ministry of Women and Family Affairs' policy for women's economic empowerment.

The five technical assistance activities conducted include i) the March multi-stakeholder workshop on school gardens; ii) the November seminar on school meals as a vector for inclusion; iii) providing technical expertise on the implementation of the “Big Results Now” methodology, in line with Tunisia's nomination as a Pioneer Country by the Education Commission, in partnership with the United Nation Children's Fund (UNICEF); iv & v) two study visits by Government delegations for the exchange of experience and lessons learned in regards to national school meals. WFP supported the Government's engagement in global and regional fora, including in the framework of the Regional Initiative for School Meals and Social Protection in the Middle East and North Africa, the Global Child Nutrition Forum (GCNF) and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS). This engagement allowed for further consolidation of Tunisia's direct, recognised and ongoing engagement with the targeted global and regional fora partners.

In line with the Government's strategic preference which focuses on consolidating OOESCO's service delivery for school meals, a Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) - School Feeding Evaluation, which provides the next follow up value for the National Capacity Index (NCI), was not conducted in 2017. Within the framework of the upcoming Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022), the date of a SABER follow up workshop will be decided in consultation with the Government. This workshop will serve to reflect on the progress made in national school meals with regard to the five SABER standards/policy goals: policy frameworks, financial capacity, institutional capacity and coordination, design and implementation, and community participation.

As discussed in the Resources for Results section, limited resources over the year resulted in a significant reduction in the number of schools with revitalised school gardens or which received upgraded equipment/infrastructure. Moreover, the piloting of an out-sourced model and regional-level procurement which were planned at the onset of the project's budget revision in 2015 were de-prioritised by the Government, with focus on launching the central kitchen pilots. OOESCO's implementation of regional level food procurement is planned to take place during the first semester of 2018.

Further, WFP's advocacy efforts, as well as the consultative processes, which were set in motion under the framework of two multi-stakeholder events and the facilitation of Tunisia's Strategic Review on Food Security and Nutrition, contributed to strengthening the Government's partnerships with key food security and nutrition (FSN) actors and other relevant actors in Tunisia, including the private sector and civil society.

WFP supported the Ministry of Education in articulating a strategic roadmap to support the enhancement of the national school meals programme, through the development of the updated Plan of Action (2018-2022). WFP advocated for government and complementary financing mechanisms to ensure the efforts to improve school meals are sustainable, inclusive, equitable and gender-transformative.

Performance Monitoring

WFP's monitoring plan is aligned with Development Programme 200493's logical framework and the milestones set by Tunisia's Sustainable School Meals Strategy (SSMS). In 2018, WFP will update its monitoring plan in line with the updated Plan of Action for the implementation of the SSMS (2018-2022) and the Tunisia Country Strategic Plan (CSP), which will commence on 01 April 2018.

All WFP monitoring is gender responsive. In accordance with the WFP Strategic Plan (2017–2021), its gender policy (2015–2020) and WFP Tunisia's Gender Action Plan (2017-2018), consideration of gender issues was integrated in the monitoring of WFP's activities to drive gender-transformative programmes and policies. WFP's monitoring aimed to ensure that all data was disaggregated by sex and age; gender analysis was embedded in all assessment, research, technical assistance, knowledge, information management and related work; gender considerations were mainstreamed in all programme, policy and capacity strengthening initiatives; and that women, men, girls and boys and their organizations and institutions were engaged in ways that are empowering and that foster equitable outcomes and advance gender equality.

Field activities such as the establishment and revitalisation of school gardens, support to the Nadhour women's community-based organization (CBO), and the construction of a central kitchen have primarily been monitored by a dedicated WFP programme assistant based in Zaghuan. Alongside this, the assistant has also been supervising and promoting progress in the field. Presence of staff in the field has helped WFP to better coordinate between the local, regional and central levels with key partners including the ministries of Education and Agriculture. Weekly reports are used to keep track of developments in the field and inform on any required changes in implementation.

WFP also collaborated with the Ministry of Education working group, which was established in 2016, to ensure the monitoring and evaluation of pilot projects with the aim of identifying and measuring the main success factors for and challenges to the large-scale replication of the sustainable school meals pilots. In collaboration with WFP, the group developed a set of criteria for selecting districts and schools to be included in a subsequent scale-up phase. These criteria include vulnerability of the schoolchildren and communities where the schools are based, and indicators such as the average distance of the students to the school, water and sanitation, conditions and feasibility to put in place a school garden, and presence of potential partners in the vicinity of the school to foster synergies.

Further, WFP and the Government developed mission reports reflecting the insights gained and lessons learned from study trips. Mission reports serve to ensure that knowledge is shared through the South-South initiative, as regional and global cooperation informs both the national school meals policy and the implementation of the school meals pilots, as well as being a useful tool for tracking the outcomes of each visit.

Progress Towards Gender Equality

In Tunisia, gender inequality remains a significant barrier to social and economic development, as well as causing disadvantages for, and discrimination against women and girls. Women engage in revenue-generating activities and participate in the remunerated labour force and political processes substantially less than men do. Gender stereotypes contribute to women's higher rates of unemployment and portray men as responsible for providing for their families. Critical issues include gender-based discrimination in the labour market, wage disparities, access to economic resources, including loans for starting or expanding businesses, and limited social protection for low-income households headed by women.

While 80 percent of agricultural production is produced by family businesses, men are considered to be the managers of family farms while women work mainly as unpaid labour. As a result, women's contributions to agricultural production and household food security tend to be invisible in the data. Gender-based power relations mean that women are paid less than men and have more constrained access to productive assets such as land, markets and agricultural inputs.

The multi-dimensional approach to school meals currently being implemented by WFP in Tunisia features significant efforts to mainstream gender and ensure that national programmes are gender-transformative, promoting gender-balanced relations and roles. The approach fosters the creation of revenue-generating opportunities for smallholder women in rural areas. This is achieved through promoting the participation of women-led, community based organizations (CBOs) in the school meals supply chain and the use of school gardens. Roughly 90 percent of 420 the cooks trained were men, which is an indication of the predominance of men employed as heads of the larger kitchens in boarding and secondary schools.

Privileged access to the local school market will facilitate the organization of women farmers in cooperatives, earning a more secure income while providing canteens with 30 percent of the produce used to prepare hot and nutritious meals. In order to avoid any risks on women farmers, WFP accompanies its advocacy for school market access facilitation for women CBOs with community sensitisation efforts, which includes local male farmers and heads of households.

Further, a dedicated workshop on gender, inclusion and women's empowerment was part of the "School meals as a vector of academic and social inclusion". The workshop's participants were highly engaged in developing solutions to address the main challenges to gender empowerment through a home-grown school meals model, identifying clear actions to promote the inclusion of women in rural areas through guaranteed access to farm school gardens and fostering links between school canteens and local agricultural production. In occasion of the closure of the seminar, the Minister of Women Affairs highlighted the importance of the role that women play in school meals.

WFP reached out to interested and motivated smallholder women in the pilot region of Zaghuan through meetings, discussions and awareness-raising activities. These outreach activities allowed for the organization of the first CBO in Nadhour, composed of 23 women. With this pilot experience, as part of WFP Tunisia's Gender Action Plan (2017-2018), WFP aims to drive lessons learned to foster the creation of revenue-generating opportunities for smallholder women in rural areas, contributing to curb existing discriminatory social norms.

Thanks to WFP's advocacy efforts to national authorities, the Minister of Education has now designated a ministerial Gender Focal Point, who will be in charge of advancing gender equality and women's empowerment within the framework of the Ministry of Education's governance, policies and programmes.

WFP Tunisia is also one of the 18 country offices pioneering WFP's Gender Transformation Programme (GTP) which was adopted in 2017. The GTP plan (2017-2018) promotes engagement, accountability, and seeks to integrate gender equality and female empowerment into all WFP's work and activities. WFP Tunisia actively participated in WFP's Gender Results Network (GRN), including through advocacy activities with government and community-level counterparts during the 16 day campaign to say no to violence against women and girls. Additionally, WFP Tunisia country office has achieved gender parity in terms of staffing, with 50 percent of women/men national staff.

In November, a senior staff member attended a four day 'Training-of-Trainers' workshop on "Working with Men and Boys to Transform Patriarchal Masculinities" organised by WFP's Gender Office in Rome. The training material was disseminated with the office staff, and learning activities were held to share and discuss insights and lessons learned, addressing the following topics 1) the importance of WFP staff working on transforming masculinities; and 2) stepping outside of the gender boxes.

Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations

While the WFP Development Project 200493 consists of technical support and capacity development activities only, with no direct beneficiaries and no populations directly affected by the project activities, WFP seeks to ensure that the National School Meals Programme is in line with WFP's commitment for protection and accountability to affected populations, and that it does not compromise the safety, dignity or integrity of the children receiving school meals, or their families.

WFP encourages the establishment of school councils as a proactive means to engage parents, children and school staff, and to address any protection risks related to the provision of school meals. The school councils function to provide information to beneficiaries about the school meals programme, and to facilitate discussions about the school meals experience.

Moreover, WFP advocates for the Government to establish and maintain feedback mechanisms to ensure that parents and children are aware of their entitlements, as well as to provide them with a channel where they can share experiences with the school meals programme.

Figures and Indicators

Data Notes

Cover page photo © WFP / Zein Mohsen

A student having lunch at the school canteen in Jradou, Zaghouan governorate.

Project Indicators

Outcome Indicators

Outcome	Project End Target	Base Value	Previous Follow-up	Latest Follow-up
SO4 Reduce undernutrition and break the intergenerational cycle of hunger				
Ownership and capacity strengthened to reduce undernutrition and increase access to education at regional, national and community levels				
NCI: School Feeding National Capacity Index				
<i>TUNISIA, Project End Target: 2016.12, SABER - SF Workshop, Base value: 2014.04, Joint survey, SABER-SF Workshop</i>	=2.80	2.20	-	-

Output Indicators

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
SO4: Capacity Development - Strengthening National Capacities				
Average number of school feeding days per year in model schools	instance	150	130	86.7%
Number of government staff trained by WFP in nutrition programme design, implementation and other nutrition related areas (technical/strategic/managerial)	individual	60	140	233.3%
Number of model schools with upgraded equipment and infrastructure	school	20	1	5.0%
Number of national programmes developed with WFP support (nutrition, school feeding, safety net)	national programme	1	2	200.0%
Number of school staff and school committee members trained by WFP in school feeding programme design, and implementation in model schools	individual	30	420	1,400.0%
Number of schools with revitalised school gardens	school	10	2	20.0%
Number of technical assistance activities provided	activity	2	5	250.0%
Out-sourced model piloted in at least one region (no=0, yes=1)	activity	1	-	-
Regional level procurement piloted in at least one region (no=0, yes=1)	activity	1	-	-

Gender Indicators

Cross-cutting Indicators	Project End Target	Base Value	Previous Follow-up	Latest Follow-up
Proportion of women beneficiaries in leadership positions of project management committees				
<i>TUNISIA, Capacity Development, Project End Target: 2016.12, Base value: 2015.12, Previous Follow-up: 2016.12, Latest Follow-up: 2017.12</i>	>50.00	60.00	68.00	60.00
Proportion of women project management committee members trained on modalities of food, cash, or voucher distribution				
<i>TUNISIA, Capacity Development, Project End Target: 2016.06, Base value: 2016.01, Previous Follow-up: 2016.12, Latest Follow-up: 2017.12</i>	>60.00	60.00	61.00	60.00

Partnership Indicators

Cross-cutting Indicators	Project End Target	Latest Follow-up
Amount of complementary funds provided to the project by partners (including NGOs, civil society, private sector organizations, international financial institutions and regional development banks)		
<i>TUNISIA, Capacity Development - Strengthening National Capacities, Project End Target: 2016.12, Latest Follow-up: 2017.12</i>	>0.00	740,000.00
Number of partner organizations that provide complementary inputs and services		
<i>TUNISIA, Capacity Development, Project End Target: 2016.12, Latest Follow-up: 2017.12</i>	>5.00	6.00
Proportion of project activities implemented with the engagement of complementary partners		
<i>TUNISIA, Capacity Development, Project End Target: 2016.12, Latest Follow-up: 2017.12</i>	>90.00	100.00
Share of inputs provided for infrastructure rehabilitation (including canteen, water and sanitation) by local authorities, communities and parents out of total value of costs for infrastructure		
<i>TUNISIA, Capacity Development, Project End Target: 2018.06, Latest Follow-up: 2017.12</i>	>20.00	100.00