



31 January 2019

Management Comments to the Internal Audit Report of WFP Operations in Tunisia (AR/19/01)

WFP Management appreciates and welcomes the observations made by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) in its audit report AR/19/01 on WFP operations in Tunisia, for the period 1 October 2017 to 30 September 2018.

WFP has been active in Tunisia since 2014, providing policy advice and technical assistance to improve a National School Feeding Programme fully funded and implemented by the Government. As a result of this collaboration, the Government reinforced its commitment to school feeding as a social safety net that can serve as a catalyst for enhanced stability and protection, through improved access to education and nutrition. The 2017 Strategic Review of Food Security and Nutrition highlighted school meals as a core component of the national social protection system that can be leveraged to ensure access to food for the most vulnerable and to promote community resilience and women's economic empowerment. The WFP Tunisia Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022) started on 1 April 2018, with the main focus on strengthening the capacity of national institutions to enhance national school meals.

WFP management welcomes OIG's acknowledgement that WFP has been recognized by stakeholders, government members and cooperating partners for the quality of its capacity strengthening services and its technical skills and the knowledge provided. Furthermore, WFP management welcomes the audit's recognition that programme design was adequate and aligned with the Country Strategic Plan and the fact that due consideration was given to an exit strategy.

WFP Management acknowledges the overall conclusion of *partially satisfactory/some improvement needed* as well as the two observations resulting in one high priority and one medium priority actions. The implementation of the agreed actions is well underway and will be fully completed by the agreed implementation dates of 31 July 2019 for the high priority observation on budget management and 31 January 2020 for the medium priority observation on organizational structure and knowledge retention.

WFP Management will continue to pay close attention to ensuring that the necessary internal controls are in place, mitigating operational risks associated with budget management and monitoring of unspent balances, as well as to appropriately recording grant expiry dates in the corporate system. The Country Office has already taken necessary action to resolve the temporary cross-charging identified during the audit mission before the 2018 financial year closure. WFP Management will work in close collaboration with OIG to ensure a regular review of outstanding agreed actions, as well as to prepare implementation status reports.

WFP Management sincerely thanks the OIG for the collaborative and supportive approach to this audit and for its constructive observations.