In July 2022

The “Fill the Nutrient Gap (FNG) in Tunisia” is now available.

Operational Updates

- The government of Tunisia, with technical assistance from WFP, undertook a Fill the Nutrient Gap analysis in 2021-2022 to mobilize multistakeholders to build consensus on how to improve the availability and affordability of nutritious food to reduce malnutrition. WFP has published the document in July with recommendations articulated around 5 main areas:
  - School feeding and health: recommended strengthening and expanding the school canteen programme as well as nutrition education.
  - Micronutrient supplementation and fortification: recommended fortification of wheat flour and building capacity of actors included in the fortification process, and iron supplementation especially for pregnant and breastfeeding women.
  - Social protection: recommended reviewing the targeting strategies of social assistance programmes making them more nutrition-sensitive.
  - Agriculture: recommended a nutrition-sensitive agricultural development strategy.

The FNG analysis shows that for a typical household, the monthly cost of a nutritious diet ranges from TND 133 to 239 and is about 4.5 times higher than a staple-based diet that meets only energy needs. It also shows that more than a third of households in the central-western and north-western governorates cannot access nutritious food, with a strong impact on their dietary diversity.

Although the National Programme for Assistance to Vulnerable Families (PNAPFN) has the potential to partially cover the cost of nutritious food, it is still insufficient. Without cash transfers, households in the lowest food expenditure percentiles would only be able to cover 31 percent of the cost of a nutritious diet.

Fortification of essential foods is one way to increase access to micronutrients and help reduce micronutrient deficiencies. School meals also offer an opportunity to help meet the nutritional needs of young school children and adolescents.
The cumulative pressure of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukraine conflict has led to increased food prices, higher costs of domestic agricultural production and limited foreign exchange reserves. With strained finances and potential issues in securing sufficient wheat supplies, Tunisia is facing increased food insecurity.

This grant will enable WFP to support the Ministry of Social Affairs in strengthening its capacity to provide food assistance as a top up to the most vulnerable families in the most affected regions: Kairouan, Kasserine and Siliana.

The food assistance will be a top up to 7,500 vulnerable families enrolled in the Government program "Amen Social". The food basket covers 2100 kcal per person per day and includes pasta, couscous, chickpeas, lentils, and vegetable oil. WFP will provide 50 percent of the nutritional needs of a family of 5 people for 15 days/month, over 2 months.

The project will be implemented in collaboration with Union Tunisienne de Solidarité Sociale (UTSS), a local NGO with extensive experience in food and non-food assistance to vulnerable populations, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs. WFP previously worked with the Ministry of Social Affairs and UTSS and successfully provided in-kind food assistance to vulnerable households in late 2021.

This grant is part of Japan's USD 200 million food security assistance to countries in the Middle East and North Africa, announced by the Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at the G7 Summit in May.

This support from the Japanese Government will further strengthen the cooperative relations with Tunisia, Japan's partner country in the North Africa and Middle East region, in view of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) 8, which will take place in Tunis on 27-28 August this year.

The World Food Program is a partner of choice to support the Tunisian government in strengthening food security and the nutritional status of the most vulnerable populations.

**Funding partners**
- Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS)
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
- Ministry of Agriculture - Regional Commissariat for Agricultural Development of Siliana (CRDA)
- UNAIDS - Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework (UBRAF)
- UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund
- Principality of Monaco
- Government of Japan