Operational Context

Despite the democratic achievements of the Jasmine Revolution, Tunisia still confronts significant political and socioeconomic challenges. Due to persisting structural issues and an economy that is primarily dependent on external funding sources, the country has had 14 governments in the past 10 years and is experiencing visible social tensions and a delayed economic recovery. In July 2021, President Kais Saied prompted changes in the country's political governance from a parliamentary to presidential system. While a new Government came into being in September 2021, parliamentary activity has been frozen. A referendum on constitutional reforms was held in July 2022, to grant the President vast prerogatives. But the low turnout undermines the legitimacy of the process and threatens the young Tunisian democracy. The adoption of the new Constitution was followed by a parliamentary election in December 2022. Though, the low turnout again affected the legitimacy of the democratic process.

WFP Tunisia Country Strategic Plan (CSP) 2022-2025 consolidates the previous work accomplished in school feeding, while strengthening the resilience of smallholder farmers and the capacity of government institutions to improve the quality, flexibility, inclusivity, and shock responsiveness of national social safety nets. The CSP is aligned with the Government’s reform of the education sector and its Sustainable School Meals Strategy, as well as with Tunisia’s United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2021-2025). WFP’s operations in Tunisia contribute to the implementation of WFP’s Strategic Result 5 “Developing countries have enhanced ability to implement the Sustainable Development Goals” which focuses on SDG 2 (targets 2.1 and 2.2), SDG 4 (target 17.9), and SDG 17 (target 17.9).

Operational Updates

- WFP has submitted the logical framework for its intervention under the project for collaboration in the areas of management and implementation of projects financed by the Climate Change Adaptation Fund established under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. This project is in partnership with the National Coordination Unit on Climate Change (UGPO/CC*) within the Ministry of Environment and is for five years. The project focuses on Sustainable Management of Oasis Ecosystems in Tunisia (GDEO**) which targets 29 oases in the governorate of Tozeur.

The objective is to reduce the vulnerability of communities residing in the most vulnerable oases of Tozeur identified by the Ministry of Environment, by increasing their capacity to adapt to the climate and strengthening the institutional structure for better management of the ecosystem adapted to the climate. To do this, WFP will focus on three areas: institutional capacity building, adoption of climate adaptation measures and livelihood improvement, and knowledge management and exchange.

In concrete terms, WFP’s activities will help combat the degradation of oasis ecosystems and the intensification of agricultural production but will also allow for the establishment of sustainable irrigation and a more traditional management of oases in accordance with natural cycles. This project will directly impact more than 7,500 vulnerable people (50% women) and indirectly affect more than 100,000 people from vulnerable communities.

Challenges

- WFP in Tunisia expects resourcing shortfalls throughout 2023 to carry out planned activities under its CSP, due to global shrinking resources, coupled with the rise in new emergencies worldwide such as the Sudan crisis. The country office will continue to advocate the needs to its donors and seek to diversify funding sources.

In Numbers

US$ 0.2 m six months net funding requirements (May - October 2023)
Mariem is the mother of a teenage girl and three boys in their early twenties. Three unemployed men who share the same “dream”: to cross the Mediterranean Sea illegally. This “dream” is paradoxically Mariem’s worst nightmare. “Yes, I am afraid for my boys”, she whispers.

A heavy and deep confusion. What can these young people do in the middle of nowhere and without support? A stopover for passengers could be a solution. Meriem’s honey is of very good quality. The oil and the bread too. The idea is launched, and she thinks about it. However, she fears the administrative obstacles and the endless paperwork.

However, thanks to the support of WFP through the association Balades Culinaire and their programme that promotes local products, Mariem will be provided with the necessary tools, knowledge, skills and network to build her own business. Her children will be able to work with her and thus offer them an economic sustainable opportunity to live better lives in Tunisia and have an alternative to illegal immigration.

Mariem gives us a beautiful lesson in the struggle for survival yet keeping energy to get up and look for solutions. Mariem presses her own olives, walks her bees, weaves rugs on her saddeya and creates sources of livelihood for her family. Dignified and strong. An Amazigh woman standing up, fighting and ready to face the challenges of everyday life!

Donors
- Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS)
- 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

Mariem from the village of Tijma, near Matmata in the south of Tunisia.

Balades Culinaires