

UNICEF TUNISIA

WASH Thematic Report

January – December 2018



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March 2019

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Executive summary

Seven years after the Revolution, Tunisia goes through a period of democratic transaction, full of challenges, opportunities and the hope for a stabilization of the country, which would create the conditions for the implementation of reforms and for socio-economic development.

Therefore, Tunisia's future remains inextricably linked to its capacity to sustain growth, implement inclusive policies to address socioeconomic demands and reduce inequalities. The country remains fragile with politico-security concerns, low economic growth, persistent strikes, social unrest and high unemployment. Cases of gender discrimination, suicide of adolescents, child marriage and incidents of violence and abuse against children, are increasingly reported in social media and by civil society.

Despite these challenges, there is cause for optimism. The Tunisian Government has become aware of the importance of investing in quality education for all as it will be key to address the main challenges that threaten the sustainable development of the country, such as youth unemployment and the lack of opportunities for youth to participate in public life, which too often leads to their enrolment in violent groups.

In this context the Tunisian Country Office (TCO) is playing an important role, above all in the domain of Education serving as a convener in order to establish a coordination mechanism with the aim to bring together donors and technical partners leading to large ODA commitments for the education sector.

In particular the TCO is facing the challenge of the out of school boys and girls and implementing its strategy to fight against school dropout. In the framework of this cross-cutting objective, the TCO is moving ahead in the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) outcome area. With support from the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, UNICEF finalized renovation and rehabilitation of WASH facilities and playground facilities in 11 schools in 7 regions. Moreover, activities for the promotion of hygiene have been carried out in 39 schools in partnership with Civil Society Organisations such as Islamic Relief Tunisia and the Tunisian Scout.

Strategic context of 2018

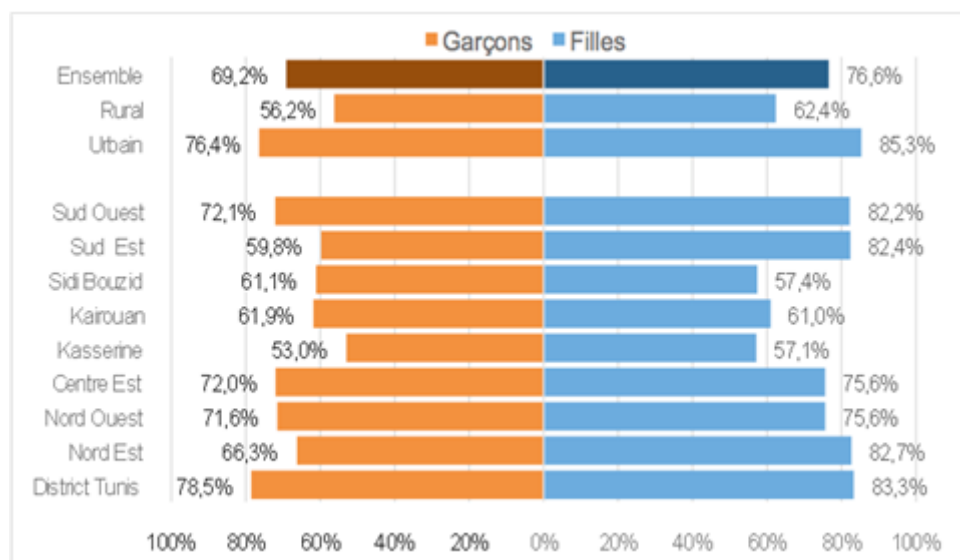
The "post-revolutionary" Tunisia is going through a democratic transition, characterized by several challenges. Over 15% of the active population is unemployed, and this rate exceeds 30% for young graduates. Young people, who were on the frontline during the 2011 Revolution, are currently deprived of the opportunity to express themselves and to actively participate in society. This could jeopardize their social inclusion and, in some cases, could bring to their enrolment in violent groups.

The incompatibility of the education system to the Tunisian economy and labour market is among the factors that can explain this situation. Indeed, even if important results have been achieved to improve access to education in Tunisia (the enrolment rate for the primary cycle is 98%), still several challenges need to be addressed such as the school dropout.

In Tunisia, about 100,000 children are out of school, either because they dropped out or because they never entered school. According to the OOSCI ([Out Of School Children Initiative](#)) study, carried out in Tunisia in 2013 and published in 2014, about 12% of children aged between 5 and 14 are out of school or at risk of school exclusion. There are notable differences between disadvantaged and wealthy areas, at the expense of the first. The study also shows that about 30% of five-year-old children do not attend school: these children are more likely to leave school when they reach college or high school, compared to their peers who attend pre-primary education.

As we analyse more deeply the phenomenon at the regional level, we also see that some regions are more affected by school dropout and school exclusion than others, especially for what concerns the preparatory year, the lower secondary and the high school.

School attendance of children, adolescents and young people at compulsory school age for lower secondary and high school levels, 2012 (disaggregation girls / boys)



Source: MICS4, 2012

The study also reveals weaknesses of the Tunisian education system that should be addressed as soon as possible in order to ensure the quality and equity of the sector and to prevent school dropout. Among these challenges, there is the need to invest more for the rehabilitation and the maintenance of the school infrastructure, especially WASH facilities. This would contribute in making schools more attractive and effective in keeping children (especially girls) in school.

One of the causes of the dropout, indeed, is the poor condition of school infrastructure, especially water and sanitation facilities. Their incompatibility to the needs of all children is another important factor, which has a negative impact on school enrolment, especially for girls and for children with disabilities. In Tunisia, all secondary schools have access to drinking water and electricity, but the situation is slightly different in primary schools, where 11% do not have access to drinking water. In addition, even if access to water and sanitation facilities exists in most Tunisian schools, the latter are often not designed in a child-friendly way. In many cases, girls and boys use the same sanitation facilities, and this infrastructure is very often not accessible for children with reduced mobility.

Within the framework of its national campaign to reintegrate out of school children in the school system, the Ministry of Education expressed the need to carry out interventions to rehabilitate sanitation facilities in schools (especially primary schools). TCO responded to this request and decided to include a “WASH in schools” (WinS) intervention in its programme to fight against school dropout, for the period 2016/2018 in line with the Country Programme Document and the Country Programme Action Plan.

The actions undertaken by the TCO are consistent with the 2030 United Nations Agenda for the Sustainable Development and in particular with SDG #4 “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”, SDG #5 “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”, SDG #6 “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all” and, in the long term it will help in the achievement of SDG #8 “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”.

Results in the Outcome Area

Outcome 3 of the UNICEF Strategic Plan: Improved and equitable use of safe drinking water, sanitation and healthy environments, and improved hygiene practices.

As said above, the interventions related to WASH carried out in Tunisia during 2018 are linked to the Education component of the Country Programme, in particular the Output 2.3 related to school dropout.

Output 2.3: By 2019, the education system is able to limit school dropout and school failure, by using a participatory, decentralized and child-centered approach, based on the improvement of the quality of education.

In 2018, 11 schools that benefited from rehabilitation and construction of sanitary blocks and play areas. Thus, 2,247 pupils of the total 10,000 students enrolled in the 34 schools targeted by the program have already benefited from sanitary facilities.

Based on the lessons learned for the first batch of schools, a new implementation strategy has been developed; it is based mainly on: i) the development of standards and reference plans validated by the Ministry of Education, ii) the separation of the study function and the control of the work from that of implementation, iii) the reinforcement the coordination dimension at the local level with the community and the deconcentrated structures of the state, iv) the diversification of implementation partners and the partnership with an NGO with experience on the issue of hygiene in schools (and not just the works) and v) strengthening technical capacity for internal monitoring at UNICEF with the recruitment of an architect.

Phase II, aimed at covering the remaining 23 schools, began with the development and validation by the Ministry of Education of standards and reference plans (first half of 2018) and the recruitment of an architectural firm for the technical studies of adaptation of these plans in the 23 sites. The firm is responsible for (i) carrying out the technical and architectural studies for each of the 23 schools, (ii) preparing bidding documents in accordance with the new standards developed in the framework of this project and validated by the Ministry of Education; and (iii) technical follow-up of the overall implementation of the work. For implementation, another partner (Islamic Relief Tunisia) was identified for the implementation of the work, for community mobilization at the local level and coordination with the Regional Education Commissions - CRE (the agreement been signed in October 2018). In addition, Islamic Relief will be responsible of [water supply mitigation operations](#) in five (5) of the eleven (11) schools, as problems persist. These operations consist in building: i) water masonry and pumphouse treatment/storage facilities and ii) equipped boreholes.



List of schools

Regio	School
Manouba	PRIMARY SCHOOL Ezzahra Jdaïda Route El Battane
Ariana	PRIMARY SCHOOL Mansoura Enkhilette Raoued
Zaghouan	PRIMARY SCHOOL Zouagha Ennadhour
Kairouan	PRIMARY SCHOOL Ennahla Oueslatia
	PRIMARY SCHOOL Edhriaat Essbikha
Gafsa	PRIMARY SCHOOL Elbaten Zanouche
	PRIMARY SCHOOL El Manajem Oum Laarayes
Sidi Bouzid	PRIMARY SCHOOL El Azirigue Jelma
Kasserine	PRIMARY SCHOOL Sidi Harrath
	PRIMARY SCHOOL Oued Erracheh Foussana
	PRIMARY SCHOOL Elghabet 2 à Sbitla

In 2018, in hygiene promotion, 15,000 students benefited from educational sessions on handwashing and brushing with the support of 200 Scout leaders who distributed 10,000 personal hygiene kits and information leaflets and workshops in 39 schools in 5 regions (Manouba, Sfax, Gabes, Bizerte and Nabeul). Field observations confirmed that the promotion actions favored the establishment of a dynamic within the school through the activation of school health education clubs.



For example, students participating in cleaning campaigns at school, sensitize their peers on the importance of hand washing at key moments and ensure that toilets are well maintained and have water points and soap.

In the same context of the hygiene promotion programme, an agreement was signed with Islamic Relief to intervene with 10,036 students in the 34 institutions that will benefit from infrastructure improvements (30 primary schools and 4 colleges in 19 regions). The intervention began with social mobilization actions through information days with local authorities and regional partners in 18 targeted regions. A rapid assessment of the state of water, sanitation and hygiene was conducted in the targeted schools. 68 teachers and school principals, as well as 23 volunteers and community leaders were trained in participatory learning through hygiene and sanitation, as well as facilitation and communication techniques. A manual and a toolkit with activity cards and educational games have been developed to guide the facilitator to stimulate children's reflections on these topics. At the national level, a steering committee composed of officials from the Ministries of Health and Education has been set up to contribute to the achievement of project results, coordinate priority actions and validate the materials developed under the programme.



The floods occurred in Cap Bon, North-East on September 22, 2018 have had a major impact on the education sector. The agglomeration of Nabeul, main of the governorate of the same name has been the most affected. A total of 57 schools, including WASH facilities, were damaged and more than 4,600 students lost their school supplies. The disaster increased the risks of epidemics and constitute a factor of school dropout.

The Scouts movement in Nabeul was very active in the first line response following the disaster: cleaning and

painting operations in 8 schools were carried out by Scouts. They also participated in handwashing promotion sessions during the [World Handwashing Day celebration](#).

The issue of hygiene and sanitation emerged as one of the priority actions in the recovery plan. To provide an emergency response plan, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, UNICEF and the Scouts Association in Nabeul set up a distribution operation of 6,127 hygiene kits accompanied by hygiene promotion sessions for girls and boys and teachers in 18 rural and urban primary schools in Nabeul Governorate. The intervention integrated, the revitalization of school health clubs and the organization of routine hygiene and sanitation activities at the school to make sanitation facilities cleaner, more enjoyable and easier to use. The school health club constituted the platform for participatory monitoring, in addition to representatives of parents' associations.

In addition, almost 5,000 students whose homes were flooded lost their school supplies just weeks after the start of school. While back to school was very near, the purchase of these supplies for families affected is a risk of dropping out of school. In this sense, UNICEF has given the Ministry of Education 10,000 school bags with 10,000 notepads, 10,000 pens and 10,000 packets.

As part of the generation of evidence related to childhood and adolescence and the plan for monitoring and evaluation of programme activities, TCO supported the Ministry of Development, Investment, and International Cooperation and the National Institute of Statistics in the realisation of the 4th round of MICS¹ in Tunisia. [Data collection](#) has been carried out in the period March to May 2018 and covered 12,000 households. The results, which will be shared at the end of the first quarter of 2019, will significantly contribute to providing an overview of the situation of children in Tunisia. The study was enriched with new modules in particular a module on WASH (quality of drinking water, sanitation and hygiene services, and management of facilities).

Among the evaluation mechanisms an important role is also played by [U-Report](#), a digital platform which gathers data and contribute to generate tendencies by submitting surveys and questionnaires to children and adolescents. This toll allows to submit to U-Reporters surveys to test their perception of hygiene situation at school².

Financial Analysis

The resources granted, planned and funded contributed to the achievement of the results described in the previous paragraphs. In particular the resources funded have been transferred to the national partners for the

¹ MICS 6, Multi Indicator Cluster Survey

² <https://tunisie.ureport.in/poll/2323/>

realisation of the MISC6 survey, to carry out the analysis on the quality of water in schools, and for the organization of activities for the promotion of hygiene practices in schools (namely, Handwashing day).

	Expenditures	Commitments
WASH Outcome		
Social policies and health (MICS6)	2761,17	0
Quality education (Fight against school dropout and WASH in schools)	431,75	0
Cross sectorial support	0	411,37
Total Programmable Cost	3192,92	411,37
Indirect support cost 6.651480%	212,38	
TOTAL	3405,3	

Future Work Plan

In terms of sanitary facilities, 2019 will focus on bidding, contracting and building. The architectural studies for a first batch of 13 out of the 23 remaining schools, have been finalized and submitted to the Ministry of Education for its internal review committee. In parallel, a series of trainings for the staff of the Regional Commissions of Education will encourage the use of the maintenance manuals and the appropriation by the national partner, the Ministry of Education, of the new approach based on new construction standards.

As part of the promotion of hygiene, Islamic Relief has programmed for the 2018-2019 school year, the distribution of 10,000 hygiene kits and the production of brochures, posters and promotional and visibility objects (t-shirt, caps, roll-ups, streamers).

Expression of thanks

Investing in Education, from preschool to secondary Education, is the best way to ensure the sustainable, inclusive development of Tunisia, and to facilitate the socio-economic inclusion of children, adolescents and young people. This investment means a lot for Tunisian children who are more likely to stay into the education system.

Therefore, UNICEF and Tunisian governmental and non-governmental partners are grateful to all public and private sector partners that provided resources to the Thematic Fund for WASH, which were key to take important steps towards the realization of this programme in Tunisia and therefore contribute to the fight against school dropout.

Annexes

Report Feedback Form

UNICEF is working to improve the quality of our reports and would highly appreciate your feedback. Kindly answer the questions below for the above-mentioned report. Thank you!

Please return the completed form back to UNICEF by email to:

Name: Lila Pieters

Email: lpeters@unicef.org

**SCORING: 5 indicates “highest level of satisfaction” while
0 indicates “complete dissatisfaction”**

1. To what extent did the narrative content of the report conform to your reporting expectations? (For example, the overall analysis and identification of challenges and solutions)

5	4	3	2	1	0

If you have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we missed or what we could do better next time?

2. To what extent did the fund utilization part of the report meet your reporting expectations?

5	4	3	2	1	0

If you have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we missed or what we could do better next time?

3. To what extent does the report meet your expectations in regard to the analysis provided, including identification of difficulties and shortcomings as well as remedies to these?

5	4	3	2	1	0

If you have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we could do better next time?

4. To what extent does the report meet your expectations with regard to reporting on results?

5	4	3	2	1	0

If you have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we missed or what we could do better next time?

5. Please provide us with your suggestions on how this report could be improved to meet your expectations.

6. Are there any other comments that you would like to share with us?

Thank you for filling this form!