

# UNICEF TUNISIA

## WASH Thematic Report

*January – December 2016*



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## Executive summary

Six 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. Following the momentum of the national investment conference in November and thanks to UNICEF's advocacy efforts on children rights and equity, Tunisia ends 2016 with an announcement from the Government that 2017 will be "the year of the child", calling for:

- greater investment in Education, Early Childhood Development (ECD), and Child Protection;
- revision of all legislation pertaining to children to be in line with international treaties and the new constitution;
- reflection of child rights in national development programmes.

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 Cooperation and in partnership with UNOPS, UNICEF began work to improve WASH and playground facilities in 11 schools in 7 regions.

In a nutshell, the key achievements in the WASH outcome area in 2016 have been the technical assessment of 34 targeted schools, the organization of focus groups with students, the identification of NGOs as implementing partners and the documentation of the whole participatory process and sharing of the good practices.

## Strategic context of 2016

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 labor 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.

Every year in Tunisia, about 100,000 children are out of school, either because they dropped out or because they never entered school. This figure rises to 200,000 children, if we take into consideration also those who are at risk of school exclusion. 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 (see table below). 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.

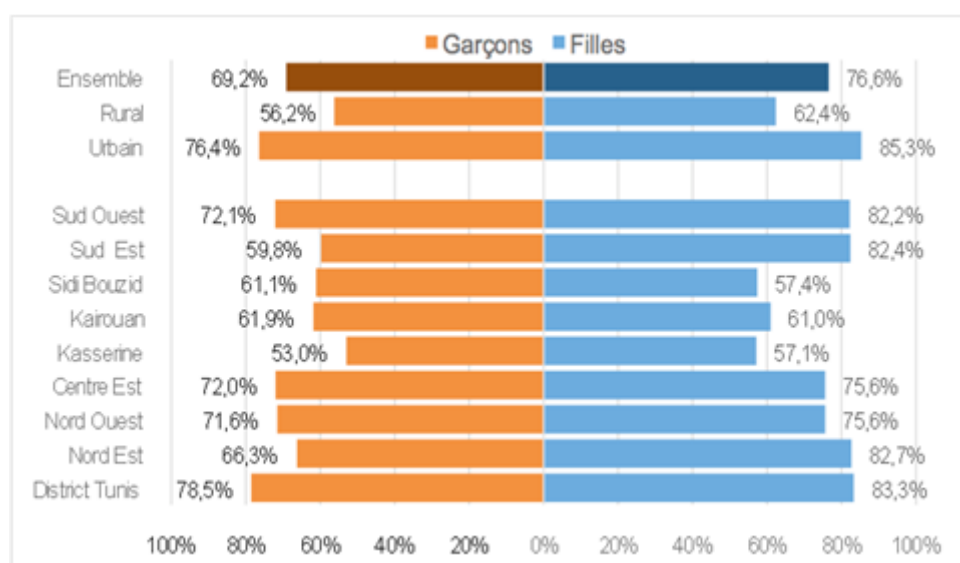
The five dimensions of school exclusion in Tunisia

	Girls		Boys		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Out of school children</b>						
D1: Children aged 5 years (Preparatory/pre-primary)	26,351	30.0%	28,258	30.6%	54,609	30.3%
D2: Children aged 6 to 10 years (Primary)	6,070	1.2%	8,963	1.7%	15,033	1.5%
D3: Children aged 11 to 14 years (Lower-secondary)	23,357	9.8%	26,023	10.3%	49,380	10.0%
<b>Total out of school children</b>	<b>55,779</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>63,244</b>	<b>7.2%</b>	<b>119,022</b>	<b>7.0%</b>
<b>Children at risk of dropping out</b>						
D4: Children enrolled in primary education	11,026	2.2%	16,012	2.9%	27,038	2.5%
D4: Children enrolled in lower-secondary education	17,471	7.4%	37,584	14.9%	55,055	11.3%
<b>Total Children at risk of dropping out</b>	<b>28,497</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>53,596</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>82,093</b>	<b>5.3%</b>

Source National Report on out of school children (OOSCi), Tunisia (2014) - <http://www.unicef.org.tn/?wpdmdl=3396>

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.



*Ben Gafsa*



*Hazoua*

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 2016/2017 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”.





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## 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 2016 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.*

The knowledge generated through the OOSCi Report for Tunisia, and the recommendations drawn from this study, were key to guide the elaboration, in 2015, of a national strategy to fight against school dropout and to launch a national campaign to reintegrate out of school children in the school system. This national campaign, called “The school gets back its children”, was one of the main priorities for the Ministry of Education in 2015, given the extremely negative impact of school dropout on Tunisian society and economy. UNICEF decided to support this campaign, which has already allowed reintegrating 5,562 children between 2014 and 2015 and 9,586 in 2016. That means a decrease in school dropout of 10% during last year (from 106,260 to 96,671 children).

Following the agreement signed with UNOPS at the beginning of 2016, an important first step was made: the technical assessment of all the schools in order to establish an estimated budget for all the work to be undertaken.

During the technical assessment conducted by the UNOPS teams, UNICEF conducted 12 focus groups in different schools in 7 different regions with students to involve them in the process and to integrate their needs and expectations into the final assessment. This activity demonstrated the importance of involving the students in the process to adapt the infrastructure to children taking into consideration their needs.



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After a long process of selection of local companies by UNOPS, the work in two schools in the difficult areas of Tunis began. The selection process for the other schools had to be relaunched.



In order to implement the hygiene awareness program within schools, an open selection was launched during the year to identify NGOs as implementing partners. The call was launched several times and a list of NGOs was identified.

Finally, a production agency has been contracted to monitor the entire project through photos of the different schools (before and after our intervention), but also to document the whole participatory process and the sharing of the good practices with the various actors.



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## 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 UNOPS in line with the *Basic Agreement for transferring contributions from UNICEF to UNOPS for rehabilitation of school's environment in Tunisia* targeting 11 schools in 7 regions across the country.

Outcome/Output/Activity	Grant	Planned	Funded	Actual
<b>WASH Outcome</b>				
Output 2.3: Fight against school dropout				
WASH in schools				
	SC1499030075 / United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF			
2 <sup>nd</sup> tranche UNOPS agreement		1,029.08 USD	1,029.08 USD	1,029.08 USD



## Future Work Plan

UNICEF's future actions in the field of WASH will focus on a comprehensive "WASH in schools" intervention, within its programme to fight against school dropout (Output 2.3 of the Country Programme), as agreed with national partners.

Under the umbrella of strategic plan of Ministry of Education and AWP 2016-2017 signed between UNICEF and Ministry of Education, and the efforts/activities aiming to reduce the percentage of dropping out, the project mainly designed to provide safe drinking water, improve sanitation facilities and promote lifelong health. WASH in Schools enhances the well-being of children and their families, and paves the way for new generations of healthy children. Moreover, the strategy aiming to improve the attractiveness of the school infrastructure environment and to be more welcoming to all children taking into account the principle of equality.

The principle of the strategic plan for "WASH in Schools" in Tunisia Country Office will be built on three pillars: (i) water and sanitation facilities and services, (ii) behavioural changing, and (iii) enabling environment. In particular, for 2017, several objectives have been set within the framework of this project.

First, rehabilitation work, which has already started in 11 schools, will be extended to targeted 34 schools (10,036 children), and lessons learned will make the process less time consuming. Indeed, the process has experienced some difficulties that have been identified and which may be exceeded for other schools.

Then, a Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) survey will be carried out on hygiene-related behavior in order to better design the hygiene education programme and above all to better respond to the difficulties. The survey will be carried out with students, parents and the school environment. The results will therefore be used in the hygiene sensitization programme, which will be carried out jointly by the NGOs and the Ministry of Health. Several partnerships agreements will be signed with local NGOs to carry out activities within hygiene education schools. These NGOs will be able to benefit from the support of the Ministry of Health, which already has a programme on hygiene with teaching materials but has not sufficient resources to carry out all activities in schools.

Finally, several activities of sharing good practices and lessons learned are planned with partners of the Ministry of Education throughout the project. In particular, workshops will be organized in order to bring together and sensitize all the stakeholders involved in school sanitation infrastructures and hygiene.



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The following table summarizes the “WASH in schools” intervention that will be carried out in 2017.

<b>“WASH in schools” intervention in Tunisia</b>	
<b>General Objective</b>	Reduce the percentage of children who drop out of school through WASH in Schools and light rehabilitation.
<b>Specific Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure access to safe drinking water and safe, culturally accepted, gender sensitive sanitation facilities with suitable hand washing facilities in the targeted schools.</li> <li>• Ensure that the children and school staff of the targeted schools receive enough knowledge and apply hygiene practices.</li> <li>• Increase the attractiveness of the targeted schools and create a welcoming environment that protect the child rights.</li> </ul>
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	This project will benefit directly about 10,000 school children (girls and boys) nationwide in 19 governorates. Moreover, some of the activities planned for the scaling up phase, such as KAP survey and Mass media campaign, will reach all children all around Tunisia.
<b>Activities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Light rehabilitation of 34 Schools.</li> <li>2. Construction/Rehabilitation the WASH facilities in 34 schools.</li> <li>3. Hygiene awareness raising activities</li> <li>4. Distribution of Hygiene and other needed items.</li> <li>5. Mass Media campaign</li> <li>6. KAP survey</li> <li>7. Technical support for Ministry of Education in terms of development of Standard and Norms for preparatory classes under the initiative of generalization of preparatory classes in all schools nationwide.</li> </ol>
<b>Partners and counterparts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ministry of Education</li> <li>- Ministry of Health</li> <li>- Ministry of Agriculture</li> </ul> Implementing partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UNOPS and other UN agencies.</li> <li>- NGOs/INGOs.</li> <li>- Private Sector.</li> </ul>
<b>Estimated budget</b>	2,600,200 USD

## Expression of thanks

Even if the action carried out in 2016 in Tunisia in the field of WASH was relatively limited, the contribution of the Thematic Support allowed the UNICEF TCO, the Ministry of Education and national partners implementing the strategic WASH intervention in Tunisian schools.

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 the “WASH in school” programme in Tunisia and therefore contribute to the fight against school dropout.



*Morgague, May 2016*

## 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: Julien Hautier

Email: [jhautier@unicef.org](mailto:jhautier@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
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

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
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

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!**