

TUNIS

REFORMULATION OF THE SUBSIDIZED BREAD IN TUNIS CITY

AfriFOODlinks

Funded by the European Union

ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability AFRICA

Coordinated by ICLEI Africa

KEY TAKEAWAY

The pilot demonstrates that gradual bread reformulation is a feasible, acceptable, and scalable strategy for improving the nutritional quality of a consumed staple and reducing population sodium intake through existing national subsidy and production systems.

REASON FOR THE PILOT AND ACTORS

Tunisia faces a high burden of diet-related non-communicable diseases. Subsidized bread is a daily staple (245g/person), but its high salt content (1.79g/100g) and low flour extraction rate (78%) may contribute to health risks. Under AfriFOODLinks, the National Institute of Nutrition and Food Technology (INNTA) partnered with key ministries (health, agriculture, trade), bakers' chambers, and millers to reformulate subsidized bread by reducing salt and improving its nutritional quality.

THE INTERVENTION

A 12-month phased intervention was implemented in 50 volunteer bakeries in Tunis City, including 5 women and 45 men, who received practical training at Ftartchi Kitchen on sourdough preparation and fermentation techniques. During the first three months, bakeries progressively reduced the salt content of bread by 30% (10% per month), followed by a nine-month maintenance phase.

Practical measures, including a shortened autolyse, extended kneading, and the use of marked jugs to standardize salt quantities, helped bakers achieve and maintain the targeted reduction. The intervention also pilot-tested 85% extraction flour and used bakery signs, television, radio, and social media to increase consumer awareness and acceptance.

RESULTS AND LEARNINGS

Overall, 100 bakeries were enrolled, representing 34% of Tunis City's formal bakeries. Mean bread salt content decreased by 30.4%, from 1.79 to 1.24 g/100g within three months, stabilizing at 1.21 g/100g after one year and shifting bread from the high- to moderate-salt category. Consumer acceptance remained high : 80.4% approved the sensory characteristics and 79.4% expressed willingness to purchase the reduced-salt bread. The intervention also contributed to an April 2026 interministerial decree authorizing 85% extraction flour nationwide marking an important policy-level outcome. Gradual salt reduction and strong multisectoral collaboration facilitated implementation, while flour performance and the feasibility of long fermentation remained key challenges.

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TUNIS

JNINET EL HAFSIA COMMUNITY GARDEN

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KEY TAKEAWAY

A small-scale urban garden can create significant social, educational and environmental benefits, demonstrating how community-led governance can transform neglected urban spaces into resilient food and learning environments.

REASON FOR THE PILOT AND ACTORS

The Medina of Tunis is characterized by a lack of accessible green spaces and limited opportunities for community participation in urban agriculture. Under AfriFOODLinks, HIVOS and OSAE, together with local residents, community groups, and the Mdinti coalition, developed Jninet El Hafsia to transform an abandoned municipal site into a community-managed agroecological garden promoting sustainability, biodiversity, social inclusion, and citizen participation.

THE INTERVENTION

Between March and December 2025, community members co-designed and managed the garden through participatory workshops, training sessions, and collective gardening activities. The initiative included the Jnina Academy, which provided capacity building on urban agriculture, agroecology, composting, biodiversity conservation, and garden governance. A management committee and the Jnina Charter were established to ensure community ownership and long-term stewardship.

RESULTS AND LEARNINGS

The pilot transformed a neglected site into an 80 m² productive community garden, achieving 53% of the initial cultivation target. A total of 25 plant species were cultivated including vegetables, aromatic plants and fruit trees. The garden hosted 12 community activities, surpassing its target of 10 activities. Women represented more than 50% of participants, while 3 of the 5 committee members (60%) were women. Approximately 20 residents participated monthly, with around 15 children regularly involved. While water access and administrative barriers delayed the installation of an irrigation system, the project successfully strengthened community ownership, environmental awareness and intergenerational learning.

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TUNIS

MAPPING OF URBAN AND PERI-URBAN AGRICULTURE IN GREATER TUNIS

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REASON FOR THE PILOT AND ACTORS

Urban and peri-urban agriculture plays an important role in food production and livelihoods in Greater Tunis, yet remains largely undocumented and poorly integrated into planning processes. HIVOS, OSAE, and Cartographie Citoyenne launched a participatory mapping initiative to generate evidence and increase the visibility of urban agriculture practices.

THE INTERVENTION

Between May and December 2025, the project combined surveys, interviews, field visits, and spatial analysis across Greater Tunis. Through a participatory Summer School, 24 students and young researchers were trained in urban agriculture mapping and food systems analysis. The initiative documented agricultural activities across urban, residential, and peri-urban territories.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Participatory mapping generates essential evidence for urban food policies, while making visible the diversity and importance of urban and peri-urban agriculture in Greater Tunis.



RESULTS AND LEARNINGS

The project collected 360 questionnaires, conducted approximately 15 qualitative interviews, trained 24 students and 5 trainees, and mapped 7 agricultural territories, exceeding the initial target of 4 sites. Three public dissemination events were organized to share findings with stakeholders. The mapping documented agricultural practices in locations including El Hrairia, La Soukra, Mornag, El Omrane Supérieur, El Ouardia, Cité Hédi Nouira and Cité Aïcha. The initiative produced the first structured knowledge base on urban and peri-urban agriculture in Greater Tunis, making visible many informal and residential agricultural practices that are often overlooked.

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TUNIS

ABDELAZIZ LASRAM PRIMARY SCHOOL GARDEN AND MAJEL SYSTEM

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REASON FOR THE PILOT AND ACTORS

Located in the historic Medina district of El Kherba, Abdelaziz Lasram Primary School lacked green educational spaces where children could learn about food systems, biodiversity and environmental sustainability. OSAE, the school administration, the Municipality of Tunis, AUDI and AfriFOODLinks partnered to create a pedagogical garden supported by a traditional rainwater harvesting system (Majel).

KEY TAKEAWAY
School gardens are powerful tools for environmental education and food literacy, while demonstrating how nature-based and traditional water-management solutions can support climate resilience in urban schools.

THE INTERVENTION

The project combined environmental education with the rehabilitation of an underused school space. Activities included site diagnostics, environmental awareness sessions, waste clearing, roof rehabilitation for rainwater collection and preparation for the installation of a school garden and Majel. Students followed weekly learning modules covering biodiversity, agroecology, pollinators, plant cycles, native species and water management.

RESULTS AND LEARNINGS

The project delivered 6 planned training modules, engaging more than 20 students each week. During implementation, a larger-than-expected area of over 600 m² was identified, compared with the initial estimate of 150 m², creating opportunities to considerably expand the garden design. Approximately 10 - 12 truckloads of accumulated construction waste were removed from the schoolyard. Teachers showed strong interest in integrating the garden into future educational activities. Administrative procedures, funding delays and infrastructure rehabilitation requirements postponed the installation of the garden and Majel system, highlighting the importance of aligning implementation timelines with institutional processes.

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