



Republic of Tunisia



Implementing SDGs:

the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic

Presentation

1. Introduction
2. The instability in the region constitutes a high risk for the achievement of SDGs more particularly SDGs 1 and 8.
3. The COVID 19 pandemic severely slowed down the implementation of SDGs, particularly SDGs 1, 3, 8, and 13
4. Compensatory measures taken by the government
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1. Introduction

Tunisia has made progress at the political level with:

- i. The regular holding of transparent and democratic elections: local, legislative and presidential
- ii. The improvement of the situation of human rights, political participation and governance.
- iii. Access to water and electricity is universal
- iv. The school enrollment rate exceeds 99%
- v. Vaccination for children is free and compulsory
- vi. Extreme poverty is 2.9%

However, two factors have slowed down the implementation of the SDGs:

- i. the geopolitical and security context at the regional level
- ii. but mainly the COVID 19 pandemic.

These two factors have not made it possible to meet the economic and social expectations of the population.

2- The instability in the region constitutes a high risk for the achievement of SDGs particularly SDGs 1 and 8.

SDG #1 (No Poverty): Instability in the region affects the most vulnerable, mainly people who live near the borders.

The intensification of the conflict in Libya since 2014, and particularly since April 2019, has significantly increased the number of people arriving in Tunisia, particularly by sea and land. The proportion of people who applied for asylum on Tunisian territory is multiplied by five between 2018 and 2020

According to the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Libyan crisis **cost Tunisia 24 % of its economic growth between 2011 and 2015.**

SDG # 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth): Although Tunisia is not a hotbed of violent extremism, the country has been weakened by a rise in violent and terrorist actions that have negatively impacted the national economy.

- Between 2011 and 2019, **additional security and military spending** is estimated at nearly 16.3 billion dinars. This amount can finance most of the projects in the five-year development plan (PQD 2016-2020) that have not found funding.
- **The effect on the tourism sector:** The opportunity costs that can be attributed to this difficult regional situation correspond to the cumulative loss of earnings from 2015 to 2017 estimated at 4.24 billion dinars.

SDG # 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth): Although Tunisia is not a hotbed of violent extremism, the country has been weakened by a rise in violent and terrorist actions that have negatively impacted the national economy.

The effect on investment: The opportunity costs of political unrest at the regional level, in terms of investment, are estimated at 47.1 billion dinars

- **Effect on real GDP per capita growth:** The opportunity cost, measured by the difference between the counterfactual real GDP per capita and that actually achieved for the year 2019, is estimated at 1 460 dinars,
- A study, conducted by the UNDP not yet published, shows that if the growth rate of the period 1990-2010 had been maintained at 3.28%, Tunisia would have doubled its real GDP per capita in 21 years. But with the growth rate of the 2011-2019 period (0.7%), it will take about 99 years to reach the doubling of the average income, i.e. 78 years more.

Conclusion

**The stability process in Libya is promising
we wish the success of our brothers for a lasting
stability and for the prosperity of our two countries
which have a common history and family ties**

3- Implementing SDGs: the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic

SDG #1 (No Poverty). Impact of covid on poverty

- 37% of the poorest households have reduced the quantity and quality of food during the lockdown (NIS).
- **Risk of a 15-year setback in the fight against poverty.** The well-being of Tunisian children will be impacted, with consequences for social cohesion and the realization of children's rights, particularly those from poor families, in terms of health, schooling, protection,
- **The measures taken by the public authorities in favor of households have helped to mitigate the effects of the crisis but insufficient**

SDG # 3: *Impact of COVID on the health sector*

- **Impact of the pandemic on the public sector.** A significant drop in activity compared to the same period in 2019, up to -71%.
- **Impact of the pandemic on the private clinic sector.** Tunisia is among the most popular destinations for medical tourism. Nearly a hundred clinics belong to the private sector, which in 2019 employs more than 17 thousand employees. The number of visits and admissions of foreign patients exceeds 500 thousand in 2017.

SDG # 3: *Impact of COVID on the health sector*

- This sector has been heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and, the risk of impacting the entire ecosystem of the health sector is high. During the containment, the closure of the borders blocked any flow of foreign patients and limited medical activity to urgent procedures.
- With fixed charges of around 47% of normal turnover, 97% of clinics operated at a loss.

SDG #13: Recycling hospital waste and managing health care waste has become acute

The overall volume of waste has decreased as a result of lower local consumption.

However, the sanitary measures put in place to counter the pandemic have had an impact on the environment.

- The number of single-use masks discarded each day has been estimated at between 5 and 6 million pieces.
- The risks associated with the handling of hazardous and noxious waste (solid and liquid) remain high and significant due to the limited capacity of the health sector and non-health agencies in charge of waste collection and treatment.

4- Compensatory measures taken by the government

Compensatory measures to benefit households

More than 1000 families have benefited from financial aid through several programs

Target people	Aid amount in Tunisian Dinars (DT)	Period	Number of households targeted (in theory)
National assistance program for needy families / AMG1	50	April 2020	260,000
	60	May 2020	
Families with limited income (AMG2)	200 200	April & May 2020	370,000
Families caring for a person without family support	200	April 2020	779
Low retirement pensions (moins de 180 TND-60 dollars)	100	April 2020 Pension up to 180 dinars from August	140,000
"Istimarat" family (excluding families with limited income)	200	May 2020	301,149

Compensatory measures for the benefit of companies

The Ministry of Finance published on March 22, 2020 a plan of 23 measures to support businesses in the face of COVID-19.

To finance these measures, the country has turned to its traditional donors.

- The International Monetary Fund, European Union and the World Bank
- Several countries have also provided assistance to Tunisia, including France, Italy and Qatar.
- The private sector for its part has participated in the national effort to fight against the corona virus.

Challenges

Tunisia faces several challenges

- ❑ The country is faced with the effects of climate change and the scarcity of water resources
- ❑ Unemployment which has reached under the effect of covid 19 the rate of more than 17% is a major challenge for Tunisia
- ❑ Unbalanced development and regional disparities have been accentuated under the effect of covid 19

5. Conclusion

- COVID 19 has had a negative impact on the progress recorded in the implementation of the SDGs, with some indicators even regressing, especially in poor and least developed countries.
- Achieving the SDGs requires additional efforts and a shared international solidarity to leave no one behind.

Thank you **شكرا**

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