



AfriFOODlinks

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*Tunis Bread Reformulation Pilot: Training 50 Bakers  
Demonstrates National Readiness for a 30% Salt-Reduction  
Policy in Subsidized Bread*

*Tunis, November 27, 2025*



## Reformulation of subsidized bread with Tunis city bakers' evidence of feasibility and strategic potential for national scale-up

The INNTA pilot initiative in Tunis provides robust scientific and operational evidence that a 30% reduction in salt in subsidized bread is technically feasible, highly acceptable to consumers nearly 2,000 individuals, and operationally ready for nationwide expansion. This intervention substantially reinforces the national evidence base supporting a future salt-reduction policy within Tunisia's bakery sector.

### 1. A policy-relevant intervention grounded in technical and operational evidence

The reformulation pilot, coordinated by INNTA under the AfriFOODlinks project, sought to improve the nutritional profile of subsidized bread; an essential staple that contributes significantly to household sodium intake in Tunisia. The intervention was implemented through a rigorous sociotechnical framework that integrated scientific expertise with artisanal bakery practices.



A cohort of 50 bakers in Tunis was trained to apply a standardized, stepwise salt-reduction protocol, achieving a 30% cumulative decrease over three months through controlled 10% incremental reductions. This gradual approach facilitated necessary adjustments in dough handling, fermentation, and baking processes, ensuring that reformulation did not compromise product quality or production rhythms.



Scientific validation was stringent: laboratory analyses conducted at INNTA's laboratory at T0 and T3 confirmed the full 30% reduction, demonstrating accuracy, consistency, and fidelity of implementation. Operational performance was equally strong, with all 50 bakeries fully achieving the reformulation target clear evidence of feasibility under real working conditions.

## 2. Strong Consumer Acceptance and High Health Awareness

A large-scale consumer survey was essential in assessing public acceptance and behavioral response to the reformulated product.



A total of 1,957 respondents were surveyed three months after implementation, representing a robust empirical dataset. Overall acceptance exceeded 80% (specifically combining “Agree” and “Strongly Agree”), with no indication of negative consumer reactions.

Sensory attributes including appearance and taste received consistently high approval, confirming that reduced-salt bread remains fully acceptable to Tunisian consumers. Importantly, bakery sales remained stable throughout the pilot, demonstrating commercial feasibility and dispelling concerns regarding market resistance.

Health perception and awareness were notably high: nearly 90% of respondents considered the reformulated bread “adequately salted,” indicating that the 30% reduction did not alter perceived sensory quality.

Health literacy was exceptionally strong, with almost 95% recognizing excessive salt intake as a major health risk most frequently citing hypertension. This elevated public awareness offers a favorable foundation for adopting a national salt-reduction policy.



### 3. Building a National Framework: Visibility, Governance, and Scale-Up Pathways

The pilot's success highlights the strength of its collaborative governance structure and represents a pivotal step toward national policy adoption.

#### Strengthened Public–Private Partnership

The initiative benefited from coordinated engagement between INNTA, the UTICA Bakers' Chamber, and the Ministry of Health, ensuring essential institutional support for training, monitoring, and operational follow-up.

#### Enhanced Public Visibility and Consumer Trust

A total of 50 illuminated signs displaying the Ministry of Health and INNTA logos were installed on participating bakeries. This visibility strategy aims to reinforce consumer trust, signal official endorsement, and sustain sales during the transition to lower-salt formulations.



#### National Advocacy for Improved Nutritional Standards

Policy advocacy efforts continue to support the adoption of an 85% flour extraction rate, which would improve fiber and micronutrient content in subsidized bread—complementing salt reduction to enhance overall nutritional quality.

#### Rigorous Monitoring & Evaluation and a Multi-Platform Media Campaign

A comprehensive Monitoring & Evaluation system is currently underway to assess long-term adherence to the reformulation protocol, ensure sustainability, and provide evidence to guide national scale-up decisions.

In parallel, a multi-platform media and public communication campaign is being deployed, combining in-store outreach within participating bakeries, face-to-face consumer

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The Tunis Bread Reformulation Pilot generates compelling scientific, operational, and behavioral evidence to support the national adoption of a 30% salt-reduction policy for subsidized bread. The successful training of 50 bakers, consistently high consumer acceptance, and rigorously validated laboratory results collectively demonstrate that Tunisia is fully positioned to implement this critical public health reform at national scale.