



REPORT 3

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



2025

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Ambassador of SDG 3



Pr. Lilia Zakhama



Pr. Iheb Labben

UTM's Strategic Commitment to SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being

The University of Tunis El Manar (UTM) is dedicated to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 3 through targeted education, research, and community initiatives. These efforts focus on improving public health outcomes, expanding access to healthcare, and promoting holistic well-being across Tunisia.

Academic and Research Excellence in Health Sciences

UTM comprises four leading academic institutions delivering comprehensive training in diverse health disciplines, including the distinguished Faculty of Medicine of Tunis. It also hosts the Pasteur Institute of Tunis, a nationally recognized center for pioneering medical research and public health innovation. Through strategic collaborations with healthcare institutions, UTM reinforces its commitment to advancing societal health as a core component of its academic and social mission.

Promoting a Healthy University Environment

UTM upholds a smoke-free policy across all university-controlled spaces to safeguard the health of students, staff, and visitors. This policy includes prohibitions on smoking, tobacco advertising, promotion, and sales, alongside refusing financial support from the tobacco industry. By doing so, the university respects individual freedoms while actively reducing tobacco-related harm.

Access to On-Campus Health Services

The Tawhida Ben Cheikh Medical Center, located at the Faculty of Mathematical, Physical and Natural Sciences of Tunis, provides essential healthcare services to students, faculty, and administrative staff of the Farhat Hached University Campus at El Manar. Operating under the joint supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Health, the center is staffed by a multidisciplinary team of health professionals, including general practitioners, dentists, ophthalmologists, psychiatrists, and nurses.

Medical Center Services and Outreach

The Tawhida Ben Cheikh Medical Center offers comprehensive health services during morning and afternoon hours on all working days. These include medical consultations, preventive care, and health awareness activities. The center actively promotes a culture of well-being within the university through informational stands and screening campaigns for chronic conditions such as hyperglycemia and hypertension, as well as mental health assessments.

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SDG 3 Initiatives at UTM

UTM Barrier-Free University Initiative

The University of Tunis El Manar leads nationally in inclusive health education, offering specialized programs such as:

- Physiotherapy training for the visually impaired and blind at the Higher School of Health Sciences and Techniques of Tunis
- Sign language courses at the Higher Institute of Human Sciences of Tunis

To advance inclusion and mobilize engagement across the university community, a "UTM Barrier-Free University" awareness day was held on May 26, 2022, at the Tunis Faculty of Medicine.



Epidemiological Surveillance

Ongoing monitoring and research include a survey on the prevalence of healthcare-associated infections at La Rabta and Charles Nicolle university hospitals, supporting evidence-based improvements in patient safety and clinical practice.

Strengthening Healthcare Systems and Public Health

1. National Survey on Healthcare-Associated Infections

To mitigate the health and economic impact of healthcare-associated infections, the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), launched a national surveillance initiative. From May 23 to 25, 2022, clinical staff from La Rabta and Charles Nicolle hospitals participated in a specialized training program delivered by WHO experts Dr. Sara Tolba and Dr. Engy Hamed. The curriculum covered:

- Surveillance methodologies for healthcare-associated infections in low- and middle-income countries
- Point prevalence survey techniques
- Roles and responsibilities of data collection teams
- Implementation tools for effective monitoring

2. Tobacco-Free Healthcare Initiative

On July 2, 2022, the "Béchir-Hamza Children's Hospital: Tobacco-Free Healthcare Facility" initiative was launched through collaboration between the Ministry of Health, WHO Tunisia, the Tunisian Alliance against Tobacco, the Tunisian **Association for the Defense of Children's Rights**, and the Tunisian Red Crescent. This multidisciplinary partnership established comprehensive tobacco control measures within healthcare settings.

3. Neonatal Care Enhancement Program

With CAD \$500,000 support from the Government of Canada, WHO is strengthening neonatal healthcare capacity at Charles Nicolle Hospital (UTM) and Hédi Chaker Hospital. The initiative provides:

- Newborn-equipped ambulances
- 12 resuscitation incubators
- 4 neonatal ventilators
- 6 syringe pumping stations
- 4 patient monitoring systems

This investment enhances neonatal services and builds healthcare worker capacity amid COVID-19 challenges.

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4. mRNA Technology Transfer Initiative

As one of six African countries selected for WHO's mRNA technology transfer program, Tunisia hosted WHO experts from August 23-25, 2022. The delegation engaged with key stakeholders including the Pasteur Institute of Tunis (UTM), national regulatory authorities, and the Ministry of Health to establish local vaccine production capabilities, advancing both health security and economic development through biomedical innovation.



5. Health Awareness Campaigns

- World No-Tobacco Day 2022: The Faculty of Medicine of Tunis (UTM) partnered with the Ministry of Health and WHO to organize awareness activities during May 31-June 3, 2022.

- Hearing Health Day: On March 31, 2022, the Pasteur Institute of Tunis hosted an auditory health awareness event for staff and researchers, organized in collaboration with clinical specialists and biomedical organizations.

These coordinated efforts demonstrate UTM's institutional commitment to advancing SDG 3 through healthcare system strengthening, professional education, and public health advocacy.



Awards and Honors

International Recognition for Public Health Leadership

Professor Abdellatif Chabbou of the Faculty of Medicine of Tunis received a World Health Organization (WHO) award in 2022 for his outstanding contributions to tobacco control and the success of World No Tobacco Day initiatives. This honor reflects WHO's recognition of his dedicated efforts in public health advocacy and respiratory disease prevention.

Excellence in Medical Research

- Dr. Rym Kefi, Senior Lecturer at the Pasteur Institute of Tunis, was awarded the Sadok Besrouer Prize for research excellence in November 2022, recognizing her significant contributions to biomedical genomics and oncogenetics.

- Dr. Erij Messadi, Researcher at the Pasteur Institute of Tunis, won first prize in the Institutional Research category at the 2022 World Cup of Invention and Scientific Research for her innovative work on "lebecetin," a venom-derived therapeutic for treating ocular neovascularization.

Global Health Leadership Appointments

Professor Ridha Barbouche, Head of the Transmission, Control and Immunobiology of Infections Laboratory at the Pasteur Institute of Tunis, has been appointed as the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMRO) representative and steering committee member of the WHO Global NITAGs Network (GNN). He also serves as GNN representative on WHO's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE), the highest advisory body on immunization.



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Prestigious Scientific Memberships

Dr. Emna Fehri, Postdoctoral Researcher at the Pasteur Institute of Tunis, was inducted into the prestigious Sigma Xi Scientific Research Honor Society in recognition of her work on molecular and immunohistochemical markers for cancer diagnosis and progression.

Continued Excellence in Health Sciences

Dr. Lilia Romdhane, Lecturer at the Faculty of Sciences of Bizerte and Researcher at the Pasteur Institute of Tunis, received the 2023 Sadok Besrour Prize for Excellence in Medicine and Health Sciences, highlighting her innovative contributions to biomedical research and knowledge transfer.

Clinical Advancements and Screening

- Specialized Health Screenings
- La Rabta University Hospital organized a deafness screening day on June 10, 2023, providing accessible hearing health services to the community.
- Charles Nicolle Hospital conducted diabetes screening campaigns for night and on-call staff from December 4–27, 2023, supporting early detection and preventive care.
- Pioneering Surgical Achievements
- A medical team at La Rabta University Hospital successfully performed a left ventricular assistance device transplant on a patient with acute heart failure, demonstrating advanced capabilities in cardiovascular surgery.
- In a world-first procedure, cardiologists at La Rabta Hospital implanted a physiological left-branch pacing system in a 12-week pregnant patient with complex congenital heart disease, showcasing innovative solutions for high-risk maternal and cardiac care.

These accomplishments reflect UTM's ongoing commitment to advancing clinical excellence, research innovation, and public health leadership in alignment with SDG 3 objectives.

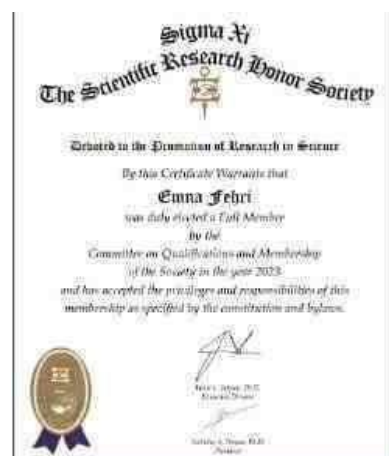
Clinical Advancements and Screening

Bioinformatics and Research Ethics Training

- November 2022: "Introduction of Bioinformatics to Arab Education Systems" course organized by Pasteur Institute of Tunis with Arab German Young Academy
- Specialized training in bioethics fundamentals and biomedical ethics committee submission procedures

International Conferences and Seminars

- Infectious Diseases: Conference on canine rabies elimination strategies (Sept 2022) and seminar on AIDS-COVID-19 syndemic in Africa (August 2022)



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Capacity Building and Certification Programs

- WHO/TDR Massive Open Online Course on Implementation Research in Arabic
- International Measles/Rubella Serology Training for Somali healthcare professionals (Nov-Dec 2023)
- Biohazard crisis communication training with military health authorities (March 2022)

Specialized Health Awareness Campaigns

- World Diabetes Day scientific program (Nov 2023)
- Pink October breast cancer awareness event emphasizing genetic testing (Oct 2023)
- Scientific day on genetics in hearing health (Sept 2023)

Innovative Research Initiatives

- AMAX Project: African Modeling and Analytics Academy for Women, focusing on HPV, HBV, COVID-19 and antimicrobial resistance
- PerMediNA Project: Advancing precision medicine in North Africa

Faculty of Medicine Master Classes and Continuous Learning

The Faculty of Medicine of Tunis offers advanced training across multiple specialties:

- Clinical Specialties: Thorax exploration, pediatric hematology, vitreoretinal surgery
- Oncology: Skin cancers, oncogenetics, cervical cancer therapeutics
- Surgical disciplines: Laparoscopic surgery, organ transplantation, orthopedic fixation
- Emergency medicine: Hematology emergencies, psychosis detection, mental health screening

Pasteur Institute Seminar Series 2022-2023

Featured cutting-edge research presentations on:

- Pharmacological properties of tick-derived antihemostatic compounds
- Artificial intelligence in therapeutic molecule discovery
- Mathematical modeling of biological systems
- Precision medicine implementation challenges
- Neuroimmunological disease mechanisms
- Venom-derived biomolecules for glioblastoma treatment

Interdisciplinary Collaborations

- Tunisian Society of Medical Sciences events focusing on research productivity enhancement
- Integration of artificial intelligence in medical research and publication
- Ethical discussions on racial discrimination in healthcare (June 2023)
- Specialized training in pharmacogenetics and personalized medicine

These comprehensive educational initiatives demonstrate UTM's commitment to advancing healthcare knowledge, fostering international collaboration, and addressing both current and emerging health challenges through continuous professional development.

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Under the supervision of the university of Tunis El Manar and the Faculty of Medicine of Tunis, the Tunisian Society of Medical Sciences (STSM) had successfully organized a high-impact medical congress. The event featured an excellent theme and venue, with a strong focus on practical skill development, particularly in academic medical writing. Highlighted workshops were led by distinguished experts including Dr. Helmi Ben Saad, Dr. Ismail Dergaa, Dr. Mohamed Ali Chaouch, and Dr. Ahmed Abdelaziz. The congress was noted for its exceptional organization and valuable networking opportunities for attendees.



The 12th edition of Doctime was held on February 23, 2025, in Ain el Baya, Jendouba Governorate. This demanding yet highly rewarding initiative provided over 2,500 free medical consultations and treatments to more than 1,200 local residents.



The success of the event was the result of a remarkable collective effort, supported by the dedication of over 65 specialist physicians across various medical fields. Their work was complemented by exemplary organization and the active participation of more than 160 medical students.



XIII Pan African. Regional Congress on Military Medicine – November 2025

Held under the patronage of Tunisia's Minister of National Defence and the aegis of the International Committee of Military Medicine (ICMM), the 13th Pan African Regional Congress of Military Medicine convened in Gammarth, Tunisia, during November 6-8, 2025.

The three-day high-level scientific congress brought together military health delegations from across Africa to strengthen regional cooperation. Key objectives included modernizing armed forces health systems and adapting to evolving security

and health challenges. The agenda featured critical themes such as war surgery, combat casualty care, military mental health, biothreat prevention, and the integration of emerging medical technologies.

Hosting the event underscored Tunisia's active role within the ICMM and its commitment to fostering a modern, effective military medical capability for both peacetime and conflict operations, highlighting the strategic importance of military health within national defense.



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The Faculty of Medicine recently organized an event in observance of World Cancer Day. The program focused on the critical theme "Cancer and Nutrition," highlighting the significant role of dietary and lifestyle factors in both cancer prevention and management.

This thematic focus aimed to raise public and professional awareness on the impact of nutrition as a key modifiable element in the fight against cancer. The event served as an educational platform to disseminate evidence-based information, fostering a deeper understanding of this vital public health issue.

The MENA Region One Health Conference was held in Tunis on June 2025:

The MENA Region One Health Conference was held in Tunis on 14–15 June 2025. Hosted by the Government of Tunisia and co-organised by the World Bank and the Quadripartite Organisations: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH).



On the sidelines of the conference, the Minister of Health, Mr. Mustapha Ferjani, met with a World Bank delegation led by the Regional Director for the Maghreb and Malta, Mr. Ahmadou Moustapha Ndiaye, and the Resident Representative in Tunisia, Mr. Alexandre Arrobbio. The meeting served to announce the launch, beginning in 2025, of new projects to strengthen the Tunisian health system, focused on three priority areas:

- Enhancing preparedness for epidemics and emergencies.
- Restructuring primary healthcare.
- Developing hospital and emergency services.



The event also featured the participation of our distinguished professor from the Faculty of Medicine of Tunis, University of Tunis El Manar Prof. Hechmi Louzir, Professor of Medicine and Immunology, and Former Director General of the Pasteur Institute of Tunis.