



“Together in Health Project” to prevent Noncommunicable Disease (NCD) risk factors in Sousse, Tunisia

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The “Together in Health Project” to prevent Noncommunicable disease risk factors in Sousse, Tunisia is an example of a comprehensive intervention designed to reduce the NCD risk factors in Tunisia.

Specific Aim: to evaluate the feasibility (learning by doing) and effectiveness of a 3 years community based intervention to prevent NCDs risk factors (smoking, unhealthy diet and physical inactivity) and their determinants.

Main results:

Table 1: Socio demographic characteristics and response rate in intervention and control groups at pre and post assessment

		Intervention group		Control group	
		Pre assessment	Post assessment	Pre assessment	Post assessment
Schools	Response rate	1929 (93.1)	2170 (91.9)	2074 (96.0)	2105 (93.9)
	Sex (boys) n (%)	968 (50.2)	1045 (48.7)	965 (46.5)	1003 (47.7)
	Age mean (SD)	13.2 (1.2)	13.2 (1.2)	13.4 (1.3)	13.3 (1.2)
Workplace	Response rate	914 (76.7)	1098 (67.5)	861 (72.5)	1015 (77.5)
	Sex (Men) n (%)	591 (64.7)	719 (65.5)	508 (59.0)	623 (61.4)
	Age mean (SD)	32.2 (8.1)	33.8 (8.1)	35.4 (8.7)	38.9 (8.8)
Neighborhood	Response rate	940 (73.5)	1001 (74.3)	940 (73.1)	976 (62.5)
	Sex (Men) n (%)	406 (43.2)	442 (44.2)	271 (28.8)	335 (34.3)
	Age mean (SD)	37.2 (13.2)	39.2 (13.6)	38.6 (13.7)	40.4 (13.9)

Table 2: Results of intervention to prevent NCDs risk factors in school setting in the region of Sousse Tunisia

	Intervention group			Control group		
	Pre assessment n(%)	Post assessment n(%)	p value	Pre assessment n(%)	Post assessment n(%)	p value
Do recommended level of physical activity	554 (29.1)	536 (25.5)	0.01	434 (21.1)	425 (21.2)	0.88
Consume 5 fruits and vegetable daily	565 (30.0)	702 (33.2)	0.027	821 (40.2)	695 (35.0)	0.001
Consume tobacco	110 (5.7)	104 (4.8)	0.19	155 (7.5)	193 (9.2)	0.048
Obese or overweight	533 (27.6)	564 (26.0)	0.24	416 (20.1)	540 (25.6)	<0.001

DISCUSSION & MAJOR CHALLENGES FOR NCD CONTROL:

- Despite promising results, targeting behavioral changes only through educative approach without environmental actions and community mobilization that facilitate healthy choices is not enough.
- The growing urbanization, the environment and economic pressures in Tunisia may result in poor diet choices and limited physical activities.
- Lack of resources and low interest in prevention may result in increasing of the NCD’s burden. “Together in Health” initiative is to be expanded to other regions in Tunisia

Study design : quasi-experimental study (pre post assessment with control group)

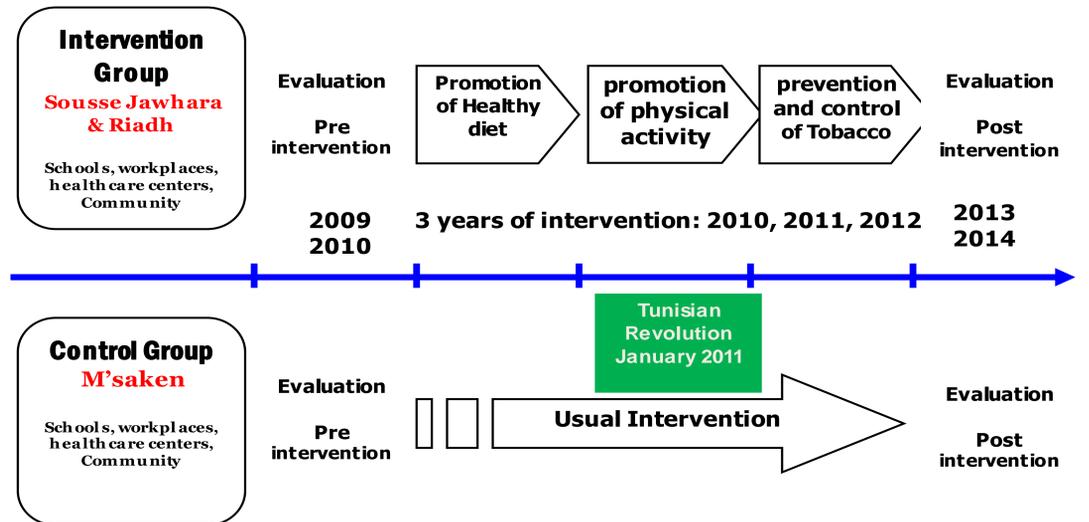


Table 3: Results of intervention to prevent NCDs risk factors in workplace setting in the region of Sousse Tunisia

	Intervention group			Control group		
	Pre assessment n(%)	Post assessment n(%)	p value	Pre assessment n(%)	Post assessment n(%)	p value
Do recommended level of physical activity	253 (28.3)	414 (37.9)	<0.001	262 (31.2)	626 (42.9)	<0.001
Consume 5 fruits and vegetable daily	421 (47.5)	558 (52.1)	0.04	504 (60.9)	613 (62.2)	0.57
Consume tobacco	350 (39.2)	410 (37.5)	0.43	250 (31.7)	308 (30.6)	0.62
Obese or overweight	435 (47.6)	615 (56.0)	<0.001	509 (59.1)	693 (68.3)	<0.001
Hypertension	146 (16.2)	140 (12.8)	0.027	112 (13.3)	236 (23.3)	<0.001

Table 4: Results of intervention to prevent NCDs risk factors in neighborhood in the region of Sousse Tunisia

	Intervention group			Control group		
	Pre assessment n(%)	Post assessment n(%)	p value	Pre assessment n(%)	Post assessment n(%)	p value
Do recommended level of physical activity	141 (15.1)	400 (40.1)	<0.001	141 (15.0)	375 (38.5)	<0.001
Consume 5 fruits and vegetable daily	368 (39.4)	579 (58.4)	<0.001	483 (51.4)	663 (67.9)	<0.001
Consume tobacco	242 (26.2)	232 (23.2)	0.13	135 (14.4)	178 (18.3)	0.02
Obese or overweight	580 (61.7)	656 (65.5)	0.79	578 (61.5)	642 (65.8)	0.05
Hypertension	325 (35.8)	311 (31.4)	0.04	274 (29.3)	296 (30.3)	0.625

CONCLUSION

- Building capacity: How to face the structural changes (policy and environment)
- How to build coalitions and partnerships with nongovernmental organizations and academia
- How to engage intersectoral approach for NCD prevention is the way to follow by health policy makers in Tunisia while it is not too late.