A scenic landscape photograph of a lush green forest with a large mountain peak in the background and a calm body of water in the foreground reflecting the scene. The sky is blue with some clouds.

BASIC EVALUATION – MIDLINE LEARNING EVENT

CASE STUDY SUMMARIES

February 2023



ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

The Better Assistance in Crises Programme (BASIC) aims to support the new and/or improved use of social protection (SP) approaches during crisis by providing expert advisory, capacity building, learning, coordination, high-level policy influencing, and research services. It is being delivered between 2018 and 2025 (extended from 2024 at the time of data collection) by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) Social Protection Team (SPT).

In October 2020, FCDO commissioned Integrity Global to undertake an independent performance evaluation of BASIC at three points over its five-year implementation period. The midline is the second evaluation point, which covers the programme implementation period from September 2021 to August 2022.

This document presents a summary of the results of all four country case studies completed as part of the midline evaluation – Jordan, Nigeria, Somalia, and Yemen. It aims to support the delivery of an FCDO learning event about the use of social protection approaches during crises.

Click the map icons to go directly to the country case studies:



JORDAN



NIGERIA



SOMALIA



YEMEN

The BASIC learning event will also explore two thematic discussion topics. Case study findings relevant to each topic are indicated by these icons.



Strengthening the humanitarian-development nexus



Gender and inclusion in practice



Click the home icons to get back to this page

For more information about the BASIC Evaluation, you can find the baseline and midline evaluation reports published on socialprotection.org [here](#).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to FCDO for supporting this evaluation. We are indebted to the participants who generously gave their time and expertise to make the consultation fruitful and rich. This report has been written by Integrity Research and Consultancy. Due to the sensitivity of both the topic and findings, we request that caution is taken before referencing or circulating this document.

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CRISIS CONTEXT



High levels of unemployment



Protracted refugee crisis



Economic pressures exacerbated by C-19



JORDAN

SUPPORT PROVIDED BY BASIC

Technical assistance – BASIC TA support to FCDO Jordan has centred on gathering evidence to inform, and weighing design options for, two new programmes, Emergency Social Protection in Jordan (ESPJ) and Strengthening Societal and Economic Resilience in Jordan (SSERJ). This support has been delivered through five assignments, all of which had been completed at baseline. No BASIC activity has been delivered in Jordan since the baseline. British Embassy Amman (BEA) is likely to have reduced need for external TA as its new social protection (SP) programme will establish a TA facility specifically for Jordan.

Research – Despite interest from FCDO staff in-country, Jordan was not selected as a focus country for BASIC Research. At midline, FCDO Jordan expected that SSERJ, which will include a policy and evidence sub-component, would meet many research-related needs.

RESPONSE TO BASIC SUPPORT



WHAT WORKED WELL

FCDO Jordan characterised BASIC TA support and deliverables as high quality, rapid and flexible. They particularly valued that support facilitated cross-country learning and mainstreamed gender and inclusion-related considerations well.






CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

There were mixed views amongst FCDO staff as to whether BASIC support sufficiently integrated political economy considerations, and differences of opinion between the original commissioner and consultants around timescales for building the humanitarian-development nexus. During the pandemic, on-the-ground support was missing.



KEY CHANGES AND BASIC'S CONTRIBUTION

CHANGE	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHANGE	BASIC'S CONTRIBUTION
1: Rapid expansion of National Aid Fund programmes	High – The National Aid Fund increased transfer values and significantly expanded its caseload in response to the economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, with two additional programmes reaching a total of 241,332 and 154,690 households respectively.	Medium – BASIC TA contributed directly to the design of the ESPJ programme, which disbursed £34 million to the NAF through a World Bank (WB) Trust Fund and a USAID-led Joint Funding Arrangement. Use of the two funding modalities recommended by SPACE enabled the FCDO to leverage other donor funding.
2: Consolidation of NAF programmes into a unified cash transfer programme	High – The NAF has begun to consolidate its various programmes into a single, more cohesive Unified Cash Transfer (UCT) Programme, which will adopt a more sophisticated targeting approach, which is better aligned with those used by UN agencies delivering humanitarian cash. 	Low – The UCT is being supported mainly by a WB loan. Rapid expansion during the pandemic contributed to the decision to adopt a uniform approach. BASIC's contribution was indirect: an FCDO programme, whose development was supported by SPACE, part-funded the NAF programmes now being consolidated.
3: Shift in progress towards more sustainable financing for social protection	High – In 2022 the national budget included a line for the NAF for the first time. Donor interests have shifted markedly towards more sustainable financing models for SP. FCDO's new SSERJ programme will support the Social Security Corporation (SSC) to extend coverage of contributory SP to informal workers.  	Medium – Donor funding to the SSC began in 2019 in response to the pandemic, funded by USAID. The new programme has been developed by the SSC, ILO and the Netherlands. BASIC TA contributed directly to SSERJ's design and therefore to FCDO funding of Estidama++. FCDO is providing more than half of currently committed donor funding.



DRIVERS AND ENABLERS OF CHANGE



BARRIERS TO CHANGE

Long-term systems development accelerated during Covid-19: The experience of the pandemic demonstrated the value of SP and accelerated key reforms. Earlier support to systems development made the rapid expansion of the NAF feasible.

Effective donor coordination: Donors agreed shared objectives on SP in 2021, driven by the FCDO as Co-Lead of the SP donor group, the FCDO drove this process, with SPACE support helping them to position themselves as a thought leader in a crowded donor environment.

Continued FCDO funding to SP in Jordan: As a country of strategic importance, FCDO funding to Jordan has been less significantly affected by ODA cuts than other countries in the region.

Reduced funding: Levels of international funding are decreasing. Humanitarian agencies expect to reduce caseloads and transfer values. At the same time, inflation is reducing beneficiaries' purchasing power.

Persistent political barriers to refugee integration: Withdrawal of international funding is giving credence to government fears that they could be left financially responsible for a very large caseload.

Insufficient human resources: A government hiring freeze prevented NAF from hiring the civil servants needed to effectively run its operations. This has been partially mitigated through UNICEF/WFP financial support.

Lack of attention to climate change: Despite Jordan's status as the second most water scarce country in the world, SP programming pays little attention to climate-related vulnerabilities.



CRISIS CONTEXT



Widespread poverty, exacerbated by conflict



Insurgencies in the north east and north west



Flooding, droughts and desertification



NIGERIA

SUPPORT PROVIDED BY BASIC

Technical Assistance – The rationale for BASIC support relates to inadequate coordination amongst key actors. Nine assignments have been provided to FCDO Nigeria by BASIC TA across the life of the programme. Support has included a focus on Linking Social Protection Systems and Humanitarian Cash Transfers and support to the Cash Working Group. The core of BASIC support has been the deployment of a Nexus Adviser with a mandate to drive coherence between humanitarian and SP cash programming.

Research – Nigeria is a focus country for BASIC Research, which has carried out a programme of engagement with Nigerian actors to develop a research programme and partnerships. This included concepts on lived experiences (quantitative) and institutions and systems for linking humanitarian and social assistance (qualitative). No actual delivery of BASIC Research activities has taken place in Nigeria to date due to budget cuts and related uncertainties. The budget for Nigeria has been cut relatively more than other countries as a result of less formalised partnership development in country.

RESPONSE TO BASIC SUPPORT



WHAT WORKED WELL

The inter-personal and technical skills of the Nexus Advisor role were highly valued. The Nexus Advisor role enabled focused FCDO influencing, as well as cross-sector working.





CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

BASIC implementation delays and uncertainties curtailed momentum. The Nexus Advisor was contracted four separate times on short term contracts of up to six months, which undermined their ability to take a longer-term view. This also raised questions around who should be responsible for building sustained relationships.



KEY CHANGES AND BASIC'S CONTRIBUTION

CHANGE	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHANGE	BASIC'S CONTRIBUTION
1: Development and validation of the National Social Protection Policy	Medium – The National Social Protection Policy, the federal SP policy framework, was revised and validated at federal and state level. The revised policy addressed issues relating to inclusion, adequacy and financing. An operational framework is being developed to guide the implementation of state level policies.	Low – This change was largely led by federal officials. BASIC engaged directly in the policy validation process. Feedback provided by BASIC focused on challenging the policy to sharpen plans to engage with humanitarian actors and better consider GESI issues, especially regarding IDPs.
2: Scale-up of the World Bank National Social Safety Nets Project	Medium – In December 2021 the World Bank approved \$800 million in credit from the International Development Association (IDA) for the National Social Safety Net Program Scale-Up (NASSP-SU), the largest SP initiative in Nigeria. The loan will fund an expansion in coverage from 2m to just over 10m households.	Medium – The World Bank approved credit for this initiative, largely a continuation of the existing NASSP programme, which is coordinated by NASSCO and largely funded by the Nigerian government. BASIC directly engaged with the planning and design of the project, advocating successfully for improved access for IDPs and vulnerable households based in insecure locations. 
3: Development of FCDO Nigeria programme business case	Medium – A new business case for an FCDO humanitarian assistance programme has been developed to respond to crises in the Northeast and Northwest. It is comprised of four main pillars: humanitarian cash, humanitarian access, protection, and food insecurity and nutrition.	High – BASIC contributed significantly to the development of this business case. The nexus adviser provided extensive advice, drafting and oversight, and convened external actors around the business case's development. Without the nexus adviser, the business case would have given less consideration of nexus issues such as integrating IDPs into SP responses. 



DRIVERS AND ENABLERS OF CHANGE



BARRIERS TO CHANGE

Effectiveness of previous reforms: Results of SP interventions that demonstrated their potential effectiveness and efficacy have reduced levels of uncertainty associated with expected payoffs from investment in SP infrastructure, which in turn may have made additional investments by the government and international actors more viable.

Active and longstanding international engagement, with UN agencies, FCDO and Save the Children cited as positive influencers.

Political appetite to strengthen SP systems: The demonstration effects highlighted above, combined with a technical and practically-oriented international community, has resulted in a favourable political economy for SP, especially at federal level.

Residual network failures: Coordination challenges still exist between different government departments and levels, humanitarian and social development actors, and social protection, humanitarian, and climate adaptation personnel within the same organisation.

UK political uncertainties: Uncertainties relating to the international and development priorities of the UK government created delivery challenges for BASIC and FCDO Nigeria, making it challenging to commit resources to initiatives or reformulate programming against periodically revised strategies.

FCDO SDA capacity gaps: FCDO Nigeria has suffered from significant social development adviser gaps in the last year due to staff turnover.



CRISIS CONTEXT



Drought, famine and displacement



70% of population living below the poverty line



Territorial disputes and clan rivalries



SOMALIA

SUPPORT PROVIDED BY BASIC

Technical assistance – BASIC assignments have focussed on developing a better understanding of SP in Somalia due to the embassy’s focus on humanitarian interventions. Between May 2020 and January 2022, FCDO Somalia engaged with SPACE five times and BASIC TAS twice to produce seven outputs. Of these, the most recent were: first, a Cash Strategy, produced to support the approach to cash programming in the Humanitarian Assistance and Resilience Building in Somalia (HARBS) business case, and a co-coordinator role within the DCF, to develop the group’s objectives.

Research – Somalia is not a focus country for BASIC Research. However, BASIC Research selected Somalia as a case country for multiple planned studies, including on targeting, local accountability and the politics of social assistance, However, at the time of the midline, it appeared likely that these cases, or the selection of Somalia as a case study within them, would be cut.

RESPONSE TO BASIC SUPPORT



WHAT WORKED WELL

Outputs were targeted, responsive and useful, responding to FCDO needs and aligned with SP priorities in Somalia. Delivery from SPACE was timely and flexible. Some other stakeholders are also benefiting from outputs. Consultations during data collection processes generated important conversations around localisation.



CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

FCDO Somalia do not have an SP strategy or programming and as such have less use for BASIC support. The embassy were awaiting approval of the business case for a major programme which will define strategy for the next few years, making it challenging for them to commit to new pieces of work. The short-term nature of the Donor Cash Forum co-coordinator role prevented them from taking a longer-term view.

KEY CHANGES AND BASIC'S CONTRIBUTION



CHANGE	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHANGE	BASIC'S CONTRIBUTION
1: Establishment of social protection system in Somalia	High – The government developed its first SP policy framework and two large national programmes in 2019. Over the space of two years, the Baxnaano programme grew to provide monthly payments to 200,000 households and has shock response mechanisms covering up to 500,000 vulnerable households. Both programmes have worked to build foundations of the SP system.	Low – The development of Somalia's nascent SP system has been driven by the government and other donors. BASIC's support has aimed to support the FCDO develop its understanding of and an approach to supporting SP in Somalia. Stakeholders would welcome support from FCDO on TA for government institutions.
2: Development of FCDO Somalia programme business case	Medium – FCDO Somalia was, at the time of the case study, waiting to receive approval for the HARBS business case. This programme was designed to replace the previous humanitarian programme, which ran between 2017-2022.	Medium – BASIC made a considerable contribution to the business case through the production of a cash strategy document, which fed directly into specific areas of the business case relating to cash programming and applying humanitarian experience to social protection.



DRIVERS AND ENABLERS OF CHANGE



BARRIERS TO CHANGE

Effectiveness of early reforms: Somalia's main national SP programme has come a long way in a short amount of time, with perceived potential for further growth generating momentum around SP and contributing to a positive political economy around the sector.

Recurrent and protracted crises highlight the need for a functional SP system: Somalia continues to be severely affected by climate fuelled disasters, conflict, and mass internal displacement. Erosion of community resilience and high poverty levels demonstrates the importance of establishing a more sustainable and responsive SP system to provide long-term support to vulnerable households.

FCDO Somalia's portfolio: FCDO Somalia's portfolio is focussed on the humanitarian sector. Other stakeholders perceive FCDO as being potentially interested in supporting SP programming, but not as a major donor in this area.

Coordination issues: Coordination within the SP sector remains underdeveloped. Within government, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs who lead on coordination are under-resourced and over committed, and so despite their best efforts have struggled to develop robust coordination mechanisms. Amongst international actors, coordination across the nexus is also lacking.



CRISIS CONTEXT



7+ years of armed conflict and mass displacement



Escalating food prices due to high reliance on imports



Severe water scarcity and flooding in the south



YEMEN

SUPPORT PROVIDED BY BASIC

Technical Assistance – BASIC supported FCDO Yemen to develop a more strategic approach – both to their own programmes and to influence the collective donor response. Most of the TA studies were oriented towards understanding the opportunities for a more efficient, effective and sustainable emergency response in Yemen, contributing to the development of a new FCDO business case. FCDO also used BASIC TA to address other bespoke decision-making needs – for example, an analysis of Covid-19 impacts on vulnerable populations and advised on appropriate responses.

Research – There has been a strong level of interest in using BASIC Research in Yemen, including to inform the implementation of the FCDO business case. This demand underpinned the selection of Yemen as a Research focus country, with planned work divided into three strands focusing on targeting, systems and capacity strengthening and interoperability. However, post inception cuts to the research budget saw a particularly heavy cut to the planned research agenda in Yemen.

RESPONSE TO BASIC SUPPORT



WHAT WORKED WELL

The clear definition of deliverables by FCDO Yemen was important in ensuring the utility of products. BASIC displayed a high degree of flexibility and adaptability to evolving needs and a changing context. High quality and experienced consultants were provided in a timely way.






CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

Contextual knowledge and understanding of the consultants was mixed and the value of local consultants was highlighted. Access by the consultants to key stakeholders was constrained. There was overlap and replication of studies of the social protection and humanitarian nexus.

KEY CHANGES AND BASIC'S CONTRIBUTION



CHANGE	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHANGE	BASIC'S CONTRIBUTION
1: Development of the new FCDO Yemen Business Case	<p>Medium – FCDO has received approval for the Yemen Food Security Safety Net Programme, which will provide cash transfers to up to 1.5 million food insecure households. Spending £250 million over 5 years, it will replace three existing cash programmes, taking a more strategic, longer-term development approach with UN, NGO, and national partners.</p> 	<p>High – BASIC played a significant role in developing the business case and providing supporting evidence to inform the ministerial approval process. BASIC provided also Post with an important challenge function prior to turning outward to engage with other stakeholders.</p>
2: Increased harmonisation & interoperability between the different humanitarian and SP actors	<p>Low – There is increased action by a range of stakeholders to improve the harmonisation and interoperability of transfers. The significance of this change is rated 'low' as there has been little concrete progress. The potential significance of change is high, in reducing inclusion/exclusion errors and transitioning humanitarian caseloads towards more predictable forms of support.</p> 	<p>Low – There was a degree of technical collaboration from BASIC TA that helped to develop core arguments for improved interoperability and harmonisation. There has also been an indirect impact through support to the FCDO business case. However, it is clear that there are a large number of other actors in Yemen who are actively engaged in this agenda.</p>
3: Increased efficiency and effectiveness of national social protection institutions	<p>High – Transferring responsibility for the delivery of cash transfers from SWF to the Social Fund for the Development (SFD) should improve the targeting of transfers and allow a more realistic transfer value to be set. It may also improve effectiveness by creating direct linkages between the SWF cash transfer caseload and SFD livelihood interventions.</p> 	<p>Low – The World Bank is the main financier, supported by UNICEF TA to SFD. FCDO is supportive of the change but only peripherally involved. BASIC carried out one assignment in support of SFD targeting, but this had limited impact from the perspective of the agency. Work on transforming their systems was understood to already be in-process and led internally.</p>



DRIVERS AND ENABLERS OF CHANGE

Resilience of national institutions: SFD in particular, has maintained a cadre of well trained and capable staff despite the war. It has remained a well-respected and impartial institution that has proved able to work across the entire country.

Need for new approaches: The significant decline in the availability of humanitarian resources has increased the awareness and receptivity of the various actors to change. There is a growing perception that a business as-usual approach will no longer work and there is the need to innovate and increase efficiency.



BARRIERS TO CHANGE

Coordination challenges: Coordinated action by donors and implementing agencies is critical to making change happen – but challenging to achieve. A significant constraint has been the inactivity of the Yemen cash working group (CMWG) over the last two years.

Differing policy objectives amongst donors: Donors maintain differing policy objectives and operational parameters. For example, many donors remain bifurcated between humanitarian and development, which makes it challenging to bring them together to support the use of SP in crises.

LISTEN COMPREHEND RECOMMEND

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