

Endline Performance Evaluation Better Assistance in Crises (BASIC) programme

March 2026

ABOUT THE EVALUATION



Evaluation delivery period: 2020-2026

This brief summarises key findings and implications from the evaluation of the £23.5m Better Assistance in Crises (BASIC) programme (2018–2027), providing evidence

and learning to FCDO, other UK government departments, country governments, and partners on how technical assistance (TA) and research can contribute to the better use of social assistance approaches in crises.

BASIC overview

BASIC is a centrally managed FCDO programme running between 2018 and 2027, aiming to strengthen the use of Social Protection (SP) approaches in crisis settings – particularly in fragile and conflict-affected settings (FCAS). It has been delivered through three main workstreams: 1) technical assistance (TA), 2) research, and 3) knowledge management and learning (KML). Together, these aimed to strengthen SP systems, build evidence and improve coordination so that people affected by crises could better meet their basic needs and cope with shocks.

Figure 1: What BASIC delivered

Across its lifetime, BASIC's delivery was high-volume and well-targeted, spanning technical assistance (TA), research, and knowledge management and learning (KML)

103+
TA assignments



131
Research products



59
Countries



Cost effective:

As of April 2025, the World Bank alone provided \$29.5 billion in SP financing globally. Even marginal improvements in the efficiency or targeting of that spend attributed to BASIC represent returns many multiples the cost of BASIC.

Working across:



**Protracted
conflicts**



**Forced
displacement**



**Recurrent shocks
and natural disasters**



**COVID-19 response
through SPACE* facility**

*Social Protection Approaches to COVID-19 Expert (SPACE) Advice Service, was succeeded by the Social Protection Technical Assistance, Advice, and Resources (STAAR) Facility in 2022.

BASIC context

BASIC launched in a context where extreme poverty was increasingly concentrated in FCAS, humanitarian needs were rising and becoming more protracted, with humanitarian responses lasting three years or longer. Despite this, financing and delivery mechanisms often remained short-term and reactive. BASIC was designed to help address these growing needs and crisis-specific challenges which risked undermining progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 1 (ending poverty in all its forms), and the 2030 Agenda's commitment to "leave no one behind".

BASIC evaluation design

The evaluation took a theory-based, mixed methods approach which drew on multiple data sources, including a document review, secondary data analysis, key stakeholder consultations and a survey of FCDO post advisors. Case studies across seven countries were the primary source of evidence of outcome-level change within countries and were selected to provide rich and detailed perspectives at the country level. The primary analysis method was contribution analysis, and this was supplemented with a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) and a Value for Money (VfM) analysis. The key results highlighted in this brief largely focus on the case countries selected.

Why this matters now

The global humanitarian landscape has deteriorated sharply since BASIC launched. Crises are more frequent, protracted, and costly amid tightening global development budgets. Against this backdrop, the strategic case for investing in SP approaches – which offer a more efficient and sustainable option compared to parallel humanitarian deliveries – has never been stronger. The evaluation confirmed that SP approaches can work in crisis contexts and that UK investment generated catalytic influence across a breadth of diverse countries.



KEY OUTCOME-LEVEL RESULTS INCLUDE:

Strengthened FCDO programmes: BASIC directly influenced the design of large-scale FCDO programmes



JORDAN

In Jordan, BASIC TA informed the development of the business case for the large-scale £25 million Emergency Social Protection in Jordan (ESPJ) programme through high-quality advisory inputs, shaping key elements of programme design and implementation including programme architecture and delivery choices.



SOMALIA

In Somalia, the BASIC TA-supported Cash Strategy directly informed the design of the Humanitarian Assistance and Resilience Building in Somalia (HARBS) programme through the business case, providing a clear link from BASIC advisory work to programme design and implementation planning.



YEMEN

In Yemen, early BASIC inputs into the Food Security Safety Net Programme were influential in shaping the business case. The timeliness and demand-led nature of the TA as well as close alignment of BASIC support to programme objectives were key enablers of this outcome.

Improved donor and system coordination: BASIC improved the overall efficiency and effectiveness of crisis response by influencing policy dialogue and coordination practices



YEMEN

The Donor Coordination Platform set up in Yemen with BASIC TA support is evidence of improved donor and system coordination. It strengthened coherence between FCDO-funded (BRIGHTLY) and DG ECHO-funded (CCY) consortia and improved interoperability across Government, UN and Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) social assistance systems, supporting a more efficient and effective crisis response. The sequencing and layering of multiple TA assignments were enabling factors in this outcome.



ETHIOPIA

In Ethiopia, an integrated approach informed donor dialogue, while improving system-level coordination and technical alignment through embedded advisory support.



SOMALIA

In Somalia, TA inputs supported donor coordination through dedicated coordination capacity in the Donor Cash Forum (DCF) Co-Coordinator role.

Enhanced practitioner capability: UNICEF, FCDO advisers, and implementing partners reported improved technical skills and strategic use of SP



ETHIOPIA

TA support strengthened UNICEF's capacity to identify and include

children with disabilities in humanitarian cash programmes through targeted training and adapted guidance in Ethiopia, as part of broader efforts to better align humanitarian cash with the national social protection programme.



JORDAN

BASIC inputs supported FCDO to position itself as a thought leader in a crowded donor environment. For example, by informing

negotiations and dialogue with the National Aid Fund (NAF) and development partners during the period when Jordan was developing its National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS), this contributed to FCDO's ability to engage constructively on system reform, integration, and coordination across actors.



NIGERIA

In Nigeria, the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies

(NIPSS), the key federal training institution for senior civil servants, has incorporated some methodologies from BASIC Research into its training curriculum, shaping how Nigeria's senior decision makers are trained.

Strengthened attention to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI): BASIC advanced gender-responsive and inclusive SP, including disability inclusion by combining targeted work and GESI mainstreaming



IRAQ

BASIC Research identified gaps in SP legislation in the Kurdistan region of Iraq affecting marginalised groups and strengthened the advocacy capacity of local partner Pasawan,

increasing their credibility and agenda-setting influence on inclusive SP legislation.



HAITI

BASIC TA-supported analysis examined gender, inclusion and the role of women's organisations in crisis-affected SP in Haiti, underscoring the importance of women-led organisations in reaching marginalised groups, with findings

informing donor and partner discussion and debate on inclusive programme design.

Amplified FCDO visibility and global policy momentum

BASIC enabled FCDO to project technical influence well beyond its scale as a mid-sized donor, while simultaneously building global consensus on the use of SP approaches in crises, including in FCAS. The Rome Global Forum on Social Protection in Crises (2024) and the subsequent High-Level Panel (HLP) on SP in FCAS were not only high-profile platforms that raised FCDO's international standing, but also pivotal moments in shifting global policy debate towards greater acceptance of linking humanitarian cash assistance with national SP systems during crises. This momentum was reflected in evolving discussions within bodies such as the Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board (SPIAC-B) and was underpinned by the technical credibility and quality of BASIC's evidence base.



KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMING

TA facilities and research programmes are inherently catalytic but not always sufficient to create system change

BASIC shows that research evidence and technical assistance can help to trigger change. However, system reforms are carried forward by long-term country programmes and depend heavily on domestic political support. Partnerships are critical and expectations of the pace of change need to be pragmatic.

Offering a mix of delivery modalities is essential

No single modality works in all contexts. Rapid, light-touch inputs (e.g., a COVID-19 helpline) and longer, sequenced engagements (e.g. longer-term embedded advisory and coordination roles) both have value depending on context and need. Future programmes should design flexibility into delivery architecture from the outset to support the development of bespoke modality blends for each scenario encountered.

Localisation increases relevance, uptake, and sustainability

National consultants, researchers, and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) play an essential role in contextualising advice to the national context, improving credibility and momentum after research and TA assignments ended.

Translating high-quality outputs into policy and practice change requires deliberate uptake strategies, structured knowledge brokering, and clear accountability for use

BASIC produced a large and technically strong body of TA and research outputs that were widely regarded as high quality. However, the evaluation found evidence of some gaps between the delivery of outputs and their uptake into policy and practice. Evidence shows that where outcomes are achieved, they depend on sustained engagement, trusted relationships, alignment with decision points, and clear uptake pathways embedded within programme delivery.

Further information on the BASIC programme can be found in the full final evaluation report on the Integrity website: www.integrityglobal.com