

**Programme Evaluation Series**

**[01/2025](#)**

# **Evaluation of the Global Network Against Food Crises Partnership Programme**

**Annex 2. Yemen country investment brief**

**Project code: GCP/YEM/040/EC**

## Background

1. The Yemen country investment (GCP/YEM/040/EC) was implemented as part of the Global Network Against Food Crises (GNAFC) Partnership Programme between October 2019 and December 2022. With a budget of EUR 5 million (approximately USD 5.9 million), the project sought to enhance resilience among vulnerable households and communities in Yemen through a multifaceted approach combining cash transfers, distribution of agricultural inputs, infrastructure rehabilitation and targeted training programmes.
2. The project was implemented in the context of Yemen's severe and protracted food insecurity crisis, exacerbated by conflict, economic collapse, and environmental challenges such as water scarcity. Specifically targeting Al-Haimah Al-Kharijia District in Sana'a Governorate and Hajr District in Hadramout Governorate, the project later expanded to also include Yabuth District in Hadramout Governorate and Bani Matar and Al Haimah Ad Dakhliah in Sana'a Governorate. This was due to the reduced period of cash transfers, which allowed for an increase in the number of households targeted. Interventions were tailored to address immediate needs, restore livelihoods, and strengthen local governance systems to support resilience in the face of recurrent food crises.

The GNAFC Partnership Programme is organized around three components: i) analysis and information: providing data-driven insights to understand and predict food crises; ii) country-level investment and learning: piloting and scaling interventions to build resilience in vulnerable regions; iii) coordination and policy advocacy: driving systemic change at the national, regional, and global levels by promoting cohesive strategies and interventions.

As part of component 2, a number of country-level investments were implemented in Yemen, Cuba, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Myanmar, the Sahel (Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso), Somalia, South Sudan, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Palestine. These investments aimed at generating knowledge on a set of typologies of crisis as well as effective response options that can be replicated by relevant national, regional and global stakeholders. This is one of them.

## The GNAFC Partnership Programme evaluation

3. This brief is the product of the country case study conducted for the GNAFC Partnership Programme evaluation. The aim of the overall evaluation was to provide evidence and learning on performance, as well as accountability for results to the European Union funding the programme. The purpose of this country case study was to assess the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, sustainability, and impact in addressing food insecurity and building resilience in Somalia, as well as identify lessons learned, challenges faced and opportunities for scaling up.
4. A mixed methods approach was used. Primary data was collected through key informant interviews with different FAO country, headquarter and regional stakeholders, government officials and implementing partners. Focus group discussions were also conducted with community members to gather insights on the impact of the project on their livelihoods. Secondary data collection and analysis consisted of a review of existing documentary evidence and data, including project document, progress reports, project outputs, project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) data, complaints and feedback mechanism data and learning products. A final validation workshop was held with stakeholders to review the findings and ensure the evaluation's conclusions reflected the experiences and perspectives of local actors.

## What did the project achieve?

5. *Cash assistance programmes:* The project distributed over USD 1.5 million in unconditional cash transfers and cash for work (CFW) programmes to approximately 20 000 individuals. The aim was to provide immediate relief to households facing food insecurity and to engage communities in rehabilitating local infrastructure.
6. *Agricultural inputs:* The project provided 25 000 households with agricultural inputs such as high-quality seeds, tools, fertilizers and livestock (including poultry and small ruminants). These interventions were designed to restore agricultural production and improve food availability in the medium term.
7. *Infrastructure rehabilitation:* The rehabilitation of water management infrastructure was a major component of the project. Over 50 water-related assets were rehabilitated, including water storage tanks, irrigation canals and wells. These assets helped reduce water scarcity and supported irrigation for agricultural activities.
8. *Training and capacity building:* The project invested in building the capacity of local governance structures, community leaders and extension workers through training on conflict-sensitive water management, agricultural best practices and financial management. For example, the project established and supported nine water user associations (WUAs) to manage rehabilitated assets sustainably.
9. The project achieved notable outcomes, including: i) over 10 000 hectares of agricultural land were restored to full production capacity through improved irrigation and better access to seeds and fertilizers; ii) enhanced water access through the rehabilitation of water management infrastructure helped restore water access for over 30 000 people and enabling agricultural activities during dry periods. At the time of the evaluation, it was reported that the project contributed to improved social cohesion within and between communities by including both men and women in decision-making processes, especially in water management committees and agricultural cooperatives.

## Challenges

10. *Security and access constraints:* The conflict in Yemen created significant challenges for accessing some target areas, which led to delays in project implementation and the need for flexible programming.
11. *Logistical constraints:* The ongoing conflict and the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted supply chains and delayed procurement and distribution of agricultural inputs. In addition, it also restricted the possibility for FAO Yemen and implementing partners to conduct field visits. Slow procurement processes caused additional delays in distributing inputs.
12. *Gender and social inclusion:* Although the project aimed to ensure 30 percent female participation, entrenched social norms and security challenges limited women's involvement, particularly in cash for work activities and water user associations in northern districts. Marginalized groups, such as the elderly and disabled, were not fully integrated into the project's activities due to logistical and social barriers.
13. *Sustainability and learning concerns:* The sustainability of project outcomes was a key concern. While water and agricultural infrastructure were rehabilitated, local capacity for ongoing maintenance was limited. For example, water user associations were established, but there was

insufficient investment in generating local revenue to ensure the long-term sustainability of infrastructure. Despite training efforts, local governance structures and institutions faced challenges in managing and maintaining the rehabilitated infrastructure without ongoing external support. Delays in implementing interventions and challenges in collecting endline data limited the project's ability to provide robust evidence on long-term impacts.

## What did we learn?

14. *Cash+ interventions are effective:* The project's integrated pilot approach of combining cash transfers with agricultural support (Cash+) proved effective in addressing both immediate food needs and longer-term livelihood recovery. While it offered valuable insights for scaling, it also still requires stronger partnerships with local institutions to ensure sustainability and broader impact.
15. *Importance of inclusive design and community engagement:* More robust beneficiary consultation during project design could have improved the relevance and effectiveness of inputs, especially in livestock and seed distribution. Effective engagement of local communities, especially women and marginalized groups, is crucial for ensuring that interventions are relevant and widely accepted.
16. *Conflict-sensitive approaches must consider local dynamics:* The project highlighted the importance of conflict-sensitive approaches, particularly in water management and community-based interventions. By including all stakeholders in the design and implementation of infrastructure projects, the risk of tensions and conflicts was reduced.

## Next steps

17. *Develop a comprehensive resilience-building strategy for Yemen:* The success of this pilot project presents an opportunity for FAO Yemen to scale up interventions in other areas of the country. A more comprehensive resilience-building strategy is required to integrate lessons learned and address the country's complex needs, while ensuring alignment with national and international goals.
18. *Strengthen coordination with national institutions and UN agencies:* To enhance sustainability, future projects should strengthen partnerships with national and local institutions, including the Social Fund for Development (SFD) and local governments, to ensure long-term ownership and maintenance of infrastructure.
19. *Promote local ownership:* Expand training for water user associations and other community structures to strengthen local governance and ensure the sustainability of rehabilitated assets.
20. *Focus on gender inclusion:* Future interventions should incorporate mechanisms to overcome cultural and logistical barriers to women's participation, such as dedicated women's committees and gender-sensitive training modules. Future projects should integrate gender-sensitive strategies and ensure that local voices are heard in planning processes.

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