BRIGHTLY Consortium in Yemen

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EVIDENCE REVIEW

PATHWAYS TO RESILIENT LIVELIHOODS

Evidence Mapping from Yemen, 2020-2025

May 2026

Cover photo: Nasr, 45, practices beekeeping after the fund and training he received from BRIGHTLY. Credit: Al-Baraa Mansoor / Save the Children
Photo on the last page: Khadija* bought a second-hand sewing machine with BRIGHTLY support. Credit Credit: Al-Baraa Mansoor / Save the Children

Credits

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ACRONYMS

BRIGHTLY	Building Resilience through Integrated Community-based and Humanitarian Systems Transformation and Leadership
CFW	Cash for Work
CVA	Cash and Voucher Assistance
CSI	Coping Strategies Index
ECTP	Emergency Cash Transfer Programme
ERRY	Enhanced Rural Resilience in Yemen
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCS	Food Consumption Score
FSSN	Food Security Safety Net Programme
HDDS	Household Dietary Diversity Score
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMSEA	Integrated Model of Social and Economic Assistance and Empowerment
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
KII	Key Informant Interview
MPCA	Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PwD	Persons with Disabilities
SIERY	Strengthening Institutional and Economic Resilience in Yemen
SFD	Social Fund for Development
SWF	Social Welfare Fund
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
WFP	World Food Programme

KEY DEFINITIONS

The following definitions were developed by the authors of this report, drawing on and aligned with the literature and programme documents reviewed, except where specified otherwise.

Resilience: resilience is the capacity of individuals, households, communities, and systems to anticipate, absorb, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in ways that protect lives, wellbeing, and livelihoods, reduce future vulnerability, and avoid harmful coping strategies. It is shaped not only by household resources such as income, assets, and skills, but also by access to services, social networks, effective local institutions, and wider systems such as markets, governance, and social protection *(definition informed by common resilience language used across FAO, World Bank, UN/ UNDRR, and literature reviewed for this report)*.

Economic resilience: the capacity of a family, community and system to absorb, adapt and transform in the face of hazards and climatic stress to generate sustainable income. (Definition is from Save the Children's Economic Resilience Brief.[1])

Transition: a gradual and context-dependent process through which households reduce dependence on repeated humanitarian or short-term assistance and move towards either social protection mechanisms or livelihoods support. This process is preceded by several months of consumption support. Following this period, a defined set of indicators is used to determine whether a household is ready to transition into livelihoods programming or should instead be referred to social protection systems. While conceptually aligned with international "graduation" models used in social protection and poverty reduction practice, BRIGHTLY adopts the term "Transition" to distinguish its approach in a protracted crisis setting. Unlike standard graduation frameworks that anticipate full exit from project assistance, this approach supports reduced dependence, rather than complete exit, and recognizes that some households will transition to livelihoods support while others will transition to long-term safety net support.

Financial inclusion: the state in which individuals, particularly those from vulnerable populations, have access to useful, affordable, and appropriate financial products and services, such as payments, savings, credit, and insurance, delivered in a responsible and sustainable way. This involves facilitating linkages to formal financial mechanisms, including bank accounts and microfinance institutions, often supported by identification documentation and financial literacy coaching to ensure sustainable economic participation, as well as to less formal mechanisms such as Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs).

Cash Plus: a programmatic model that combines cash transfers with complementary support, such as productive inputs, assets, services, or technical training. Throughout this review, the referenced cash plus programming was designed to strengthen livelihoods.

Muhamasheen: an ascriptive term that literally means "the marginalized" - refers to a group of Yemenis who were traditionally called Al-Akhdam (meaning "the servants") and have resided in Yemen for centuries but have ancestral ties to Africa.[2]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building Resilience through Integrated Community-based and Humanitarian Systems Transformation and Leadership (BRIGHTLY) is a 4-year FCDO-funded consortium programme in Yemen, that combines lifesaving humanitarian assistance with livelihoods assistance and efforts to strengthen social protection systems to support households to transition towards greater economic self-reliance. This consortium commissioned this study to review evidence on livelihoods and transition programming in Yemen between 2020 to 2025 to help synthesize lessons and strategies relevant to BRIGHTLY's programming approach, and identify evidence gaps where BRIGHTLY could contribute to critical learning during its final year.

Within BRIGHTLY, transition is defined as the movement of households from short-term humanitarian assistance toward either more sustainable livelihoods or longer-term social protection; however, this review focuses on transition toward more sustainable livelihoods. This report complements previous BRIGHTLY research on referral pathways and services mapping which found that such pathways were limited and not yet feasible as a reliable route into longer-term support.[3]

Overall, the evidence on transition is strongest on short-term stabilisation, particularly improvements in household food security and reduced reliance on harmful coping through cash assistance, and on the added value of coherent multi-component support that links immediate assistance with livelihoods support. Emerging evidence also suggests that transfer frequency matters, with more frequent cash payments improving food security outcomes even where the overall transfer value remains unchanged. Evidence is strongest where progress is assessed through practical household-level outcomes, particularly food consumption, income, and coping behaviour, and much weaker where assessments rely on indirect proxies, perception-based measures, or claims about longer-term sustainability.

The evidence remains insufficient to determine with confidence when a transition can be considered successful, or what threshold would indicate that households have moved beyond short-term stabilisation. Rather, it is better understood as a gradual and context-dependent process through which some households may reduce reliance on repeated emergency support through livelihood strengthening, while others may continue to require periodic humanitarian or social assistance.

The evidence also remains weak on the durability of livelihood gains once humanitarian assistance ends, the most effective duration and sequencing of support for different household profiles, and the conditions under which households can sustain improved food security and income through livelihoods support. Innovative livelihoods approaches remain limited, as external assistance tends to rely on familiar, well-established models. Comprehensive market and climate analyses are also uncommon,

and persistent structural constraints, including frequent shocks, weak markets, high input costs, debt, climate pressures, and fragile service systems, consistently undermine potential gains. The study therefore finds a stronger evidence base on short-term stabilisation than on transition toward more sustainable livelihoods and highlights the need for differentiated learning to inform future programme design, adaptation, and policy engagement.

Key Messages

a. Livelihoods interventions mostly rely on conventional models, with limited innovation.

b. Cash support shows the clearest evidence of short-term improvements in household food security and reduced reliance on harmful coping strategies.

c. Evidence from BRIGHTLY suggests more frequent cash transfers can lead to better food security outcomes even where the overall transfer value remains unchanged – this is an area where further investigation, and possibly cost-effectiveness analysis, could add value.

d. For the livelihoods transition route, stronger and more sustained results are more likely when immediate support is linked to livelihoods assistance through a coherent package, rather than delivered as isolated inputs.

e. The evidence is strongest where progress can be observed through practical household-level outcomes, particularly food consumption, income, and coping behaviour, and weaker where claims depend on indirect proxies, perception-based measures, or longer-term sustainability.

f. Broader structural constraints, including weak markets, high input costs, debt burdens, climate-related shocks, and fragile service systems, combined with limited market and climate analysis, often undermine household gains and limit the sustainability of results.

g. Programming increasingly includes women, youth, people with disabilities, and other marginalised groups, but the evidence on outcomes for these groups remains uneven.

Evidence Gaps

The study identified limited evidence on key elements relating to the transition toward more sustainable livelihoods, including:

- Whether improvements in food security, income, and livelihoods are sustained after assistance ends.

- Whether sequencing or layering support is most effective. (Sequencing is one intervention after another, while layering is the provision of multiple interventions simultaneously)
- How to assess the success of a transition, including what indicators to use.
- How long cash support should continue, how transfer frequency should vary according to household profile or level of vulnerability, and whether more frequent transfers lead to more durable gains in food security, saving, and investment over time.
- What support package works best for the poorest households and different marginalized groups.
- What broader community impacts transition and livelihoods programming should have beyond infrastructure improvements via Cash for Work activities and why; and how to assess these impacts.

1. OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

1.1 Operating Context

Yemen's protracted crisis, driven by conflict, economic fragility, and fragmented governance, continues to erode household food security and coping capacity. Acute food insecurity is projected to persist at severe levels through 2026, with over 18 million people expected to face Crisis conditions (IPC Phase 3+) and 23.1 million (65.4 per cent of the population) requiring lifesaving humanitarian assistance. Regional instability, elevated food prices, and declining incomes further constrain households' ability to meet basic needs, forcing prioritisation of immediate survival costs over asset recovery.[4]

Structural weaknesses, including fragmented assistance, weak coordination, and limited linkages between humanitarian and development pathways, compound these needs. A divided political economy further constrains the humanitarian operational space, affecting access, delivery continuity, and data verification, resulting in uneven coverage and higher transaction costs. Consequently, while immediate assistance remains essential, repeated short-cycle support alone is insufficient for sustained recovery, highlighting the need for integrated approaches that bridge humanitarian action with longer-term development outcomes.[5 6 7 8]

1.2 BRIGHTLY Programme Context and Approach

The Building Resilience through Integrated Community-based and Humanitarian Systems Transformation and Leadership programme (BRIGHTLY) is a multi-year initiative delivered by a consortium of national and international non-governmental organisations. Established in 2022 within Yemen's protracted crisis, the programme is funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and seeks to connect humanitarian assistance with longer-term recovery through three interconnected pillars: household resilience, community empowerment, and system transformation.

These pillars are linked through a theory of change that connects short-term support with longer-term outcomes across household, community, and systems levels. At its core, the programme combines cash assistance, livelihood support, community-based mechanisms, and stronger system linkages to support more coherent and sustained assistance in a context of recurrent shocks and prolonged vulnerability.

The programme approaches household transition as a differentiated process through which some households may move from short-term humanitarian assistance toward more durable livelihood or social protection pathways, depending on their capacity, vulnerability, and contextual factors.

At household level, the programme focuses on stabilising basic needs and, where feasible, supporting movement toward improved income opportunities and reduced vulnerability. Immediate consumption gaps are addressed through unconditional cash transfers (UCT) and Cash-for-Work (CFW), while follow-on support is informed by assessment. This may include livelihood assistance (for on and off-farm economic activities), skills development, and financial inclusion via Village, Savings, and Loans Associations (VSLAs).

For households participating in livelihood activities, a Cash Plus approach layers temporary cash assistance with livelihood support, helping households to maintain food security while engaging in training, skills development, and related productive activities, and reducing the risk of backsliding during the transition period.

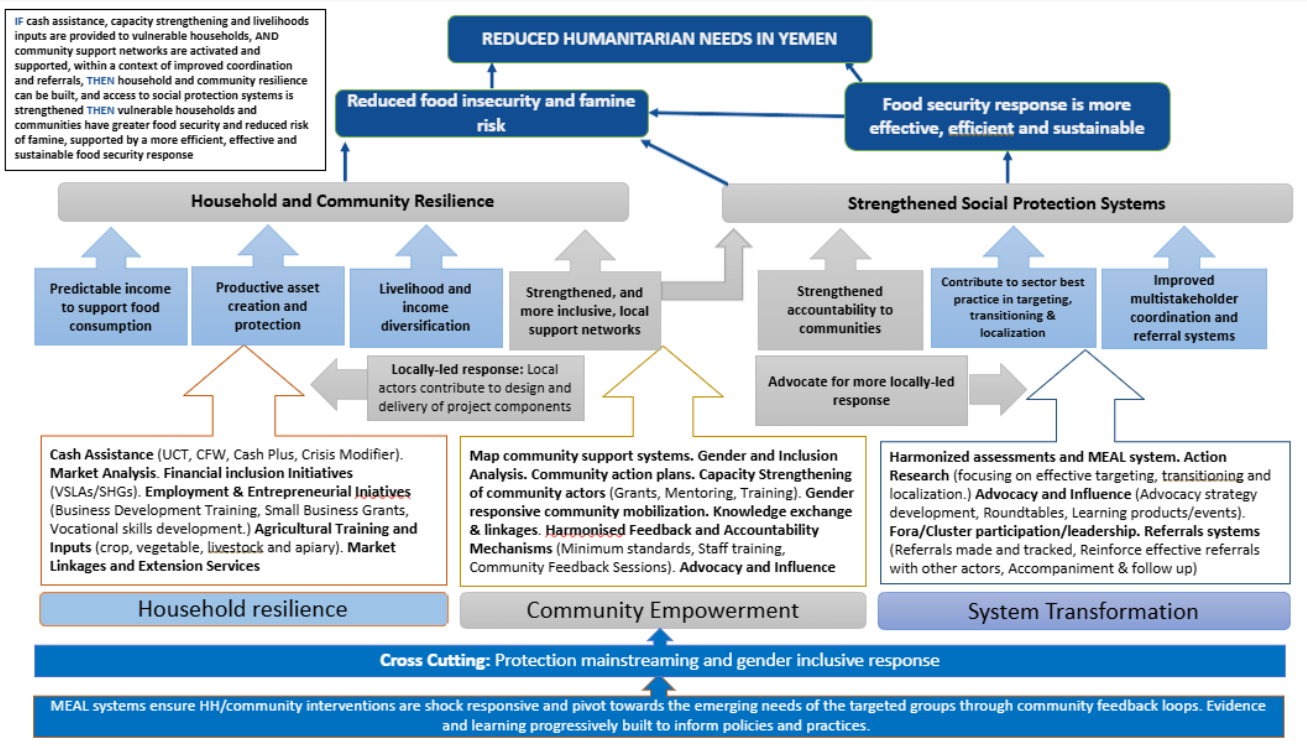
The programme applies differentiated pathways rather than a single transition route, recognising that some households may move into livelihood support, while others may continue longer-term cash assistance or referral to longer-term support depending on their profile and context.

At community level, the programme supports resilience through infrastructure rehabilitation, disaster preparedness, and local systems support, mostly delivered through CFW. These interventions are intended not only to provide temporary income, but also to improve local conditions for recovery and strengthen communities' ability to absorb and respond to shocks. Community committees, local structures, and feedback mechanisms are used to support targeting, communication, and accountability during implementation.

The programme also includes a crisis modifier component to enable flexible adaptation in response to shocks and help maintain continuity of support during periods of heightened vulnerability. For example, crisis modifier funds have been used by partners to provide hygiene kits and hygiene promotion for cholera response in 2024 and in multiple districts during rainy seasons to provide shelter kits and cash assistance for people affected by severe flooding.

At the systems level, BRIGHTLY aims to strengthen coordination, referral pathways, and alignment with existing social protection and food security mechanisms. This includes efforts to improve harmonisation and interoperability across actors, particularly in targeting, transfers, and data systems, so that support is better connected beyond direct programme delivery.

Figure 1: BRIGHTLY Theory of Change, from BRIGHTLY proposal



1.3 Purpose and Design of the Study

As BRIGHTLY enters its final year, the Consortium seeks to consolidate learning generated from its transition and resilience approaches to inform future planning, research, and advocacy. To achieve this, BRIGHTLY commissioned a desk-based evidence mapping and gap analysis of livelihoods and transition programming over the past 5 years in Yemen. The findings of this study will inform the identification of priority topics and the development of focused research plans for BRIGHTLY, ensuring that subsequent research is targeted, avoids duplication, and addresses genuine evidence gaps.

The specific objectives are of this review are to:

- Map recent evidence (2020-2025) on transition to livelihoods assistance, resilience, and economic recovery, in Yemen.
- Synthesise key messages and lessons relevant to BRIGHTLY's programming approach and strategies for external advocacy and internal programme learning.
- Identify evidence gaps where BRIGHTLY could contribute to learning.

The study is an attempt to identify lessons learned from studies and evaluations focused on livelihoods interventions from the past five years as well as evidence gaps that BRIGHTLY can help address in its final

year. For the BRIGHTLY programme, transition is a differentiated process shaped by careful assessment of household needs, capacities, and readiness, with pathways leading either to referral for continued basic assistance or to livelihoods-focused components. However, this review focuses on the evidence for transition to livelihoods activities, complementing research previously carried out under BRIGHTLY that mapped referral pathways and their feasibility.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Document Search and Screening

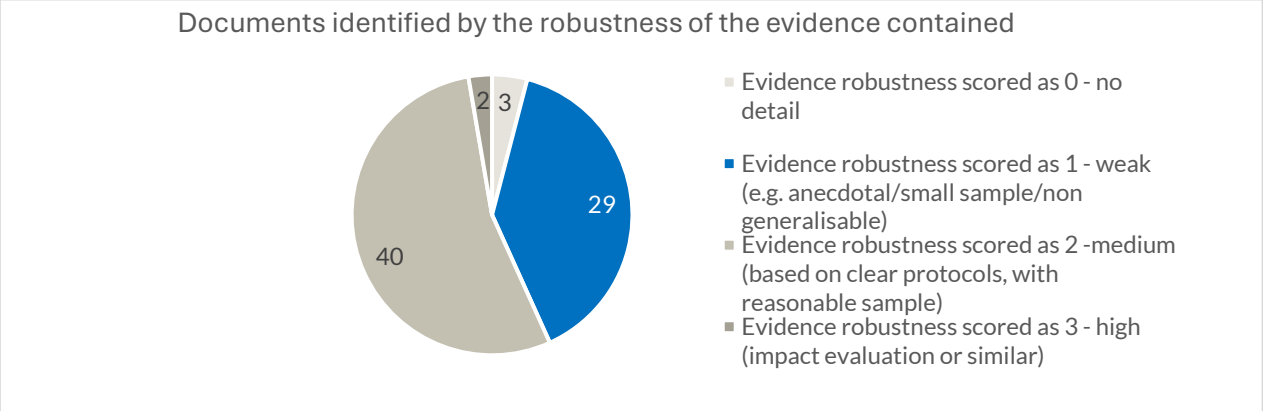
The team identified reports with evidence related to consumption support, economic resilience, and livelihoods in Yemen. An initial AI-assisted search (Copilot and ChatGPT), a screening of the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office repository for Yemen[9], combined with requests to BRIGHTLY technical advisors, were used to identify journal articles, grey literature, and internal BRIGHTLY documents published between 2020 and 2025. A snowball search then followed references cited within the identified reports.

Given the limited number of studies generated on these topics in this timeframe in Yemen, the research team opted to include any relevant report, regardless of the robustness of the evidence. The team assigned each document a score to reflect the robustness of the evidence. The possible scores were:

- 0 (no methodological details on how conclusions were reached),
- 1 (weak evidence, based on small samples),
- 2 - medium – with a sample appropriate to draw conclusions (e.g. statistically representative sample for quantitative data), and
- 3 - robust evidence (e.g. meta-analysis, impact evaluation).

This scoring for most of the documents was done by AI (Microsoft Copilot, enterprise solution), and a sample was verified as part of the analysis. Since 7 UNDP evaluations were added at a later stage, the scoring for these was done directly by the research team. As shown in **Figure 2**, most documents reviewed only contained low rigour (29 documents) to medium rigour (40 documents) evidence. This suggests that over the past five years, limited rigorous, generalisable evidence has been generated in the context of transition, and livelihoods interventions and their impact on the economic resilience of individuals, households, and communities. Only two of the 74 documents identified were based on high rigour evidence – these two documents, despite their high rigour, were screened out, and excluded, as they were of limited relevance to the study questions.

Figure 2: Number of documents identified, categorized by the robustness of the evidence they contained



The documents identified were then scored for relevance against the key questions of interest to the study, all reports that were deemed to provide sufficient insight on at least one of these questions were included in the analysis. Copilot was used to assign each document a relevance score from 0 to 3 against these questions, using the scoring criteria below.

3 = Actionable depth: The document explains not just *what* happened but *why* and *how*, sufficient to learn from or inform programme design. This includes at least some of: the rationale or theory behind the intervention (e.g. market analysis, targeting logic, sequencing decisions), how it was implemented (e.g. process, key steps, actors), what outcomes were observed with some specificity (e.g. measured indicators, % change, timeframes), and what worked, what didn't, or under what conditions. A reflection workshop + endline survey reported in this way would qualify.

2 = Descriptive with some learning value: The document describes what was done and states outcomes, but the *logic or process is only partially explained*, you can see that something worked (or didn't) but not clearly why or how. May include aggregate statistics or outcome claims without explaining how they were achieved, or process description without outcome evidence.

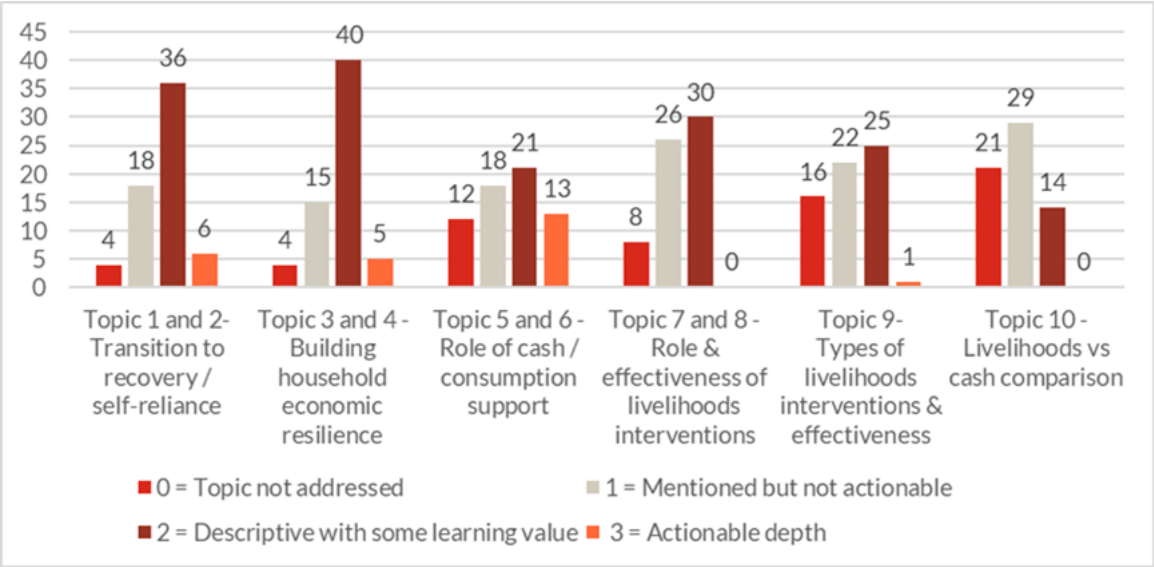
1 = Mentioned but not actionable: The topic is raised but only in passing, success stories, single quotes, promotional summaries, or brief mentions that confirm something happened without providing enough to understand or learn from it.

0 = Not relevant: The document does not address this topic.

Figure 2, below, shows the number of documents reviewed, and the degree of depth they contained on different areas of interest for the study: very few documents, overall, contained insights of actionable depth. Most of the documents providing “deep findings” did so around the issue of role of cash and consumption support. While the number of documents with some content relevant to transition to

recovery/self-reliance and economic resilience was relatively high, the vast majority only include some descriptive mentions, with limited learning value.[1]

Figure 3: Documents categorized by the depth of information available for each topic (N.B, Excluded 7 evaluations from UNDP repository identified at a later stage)



The reports scored between 3-35 points (combining the scores for rigour of evidence). The research Steering Committee (composed of two colleagues who work on the BRIGHTLY programme) reviewed the list and flagged any document that, in their view, needed to be included or excluded from the analysis based on their knowledge of the literature. At the end of this process, all documents with a score of 14 points or higher were included in the analysis: out of 67 possible documents identified, 40 were therefore analysed. Inclusion and exclusion decisions were ultimately guided by the research team's substantive knowledge of the Yemen context, iterative human review, and oversight by the BRIGHTLY technical steering group. The findings should be understood as a structured synthesis of the most relevant available evidence rather than an exhaustive review, with conclusions framed conservatively in line with the strengths and limitations of the underlying sources. The full list of documents is available in Annex 1.

[1] N.B. Six documents are not featured in Figure 2 as they were identified and reviewed manually at a later stage.

2.2 Analysis, Limitations and Use of AI

Once the 40 priority documents were identified, they were imported into Atlas.AI, a Computer Assisted Qualitative Analysis software, to conduct thematic analysis. The research team used a combination of inductive and deductive coding. *The full list of codes is available in Annex 2*.

At the review stage, contextual and tacit knowledge from BRIGHTLY staff was added to complement the information drawn from the documents reviewed. Where information comes from BRIGHTLY staff, this is stated explicitly.

One of the **limitations** of this document is that its findings are based on publicly available evidence which, as discussed earlier, was of limited rigour. BRIGHTLY staff also helped frame the limited amount of rigorous evidence identified in the context of Yemen with the fact that across Yemen, the conduct of robust monitoring and evaluation is severely constrained by intertwined conflict dynamics, institutional fragmentation, and operational limitations affecting both De Facto Authority (DFA) and Internationally Recognised Government (IRG) areas. Ongoing insecurity, shifting frontlines, and bureaucratic impediments—particularly in DFA-controlled areas—significantly restrict field access, limit third-party monitoring, and hinder independent verification, with movement approvals, interference, and risks to staff reducing both the frequency and quality of data collection. Political fragmentation further entrenches parallel governance systems, with divergent authorities, regulations, and approval processes undermining standardised MEAL approaches and complicating the harmonisation of indicators, sampling strategies, and comparability across areas, while also constraining data sharing. These challenges are compounded by weak data quality and availability, including reliance on outdated beneficiary lists, limited population data, and the absence of unified registries, all of which undermine targeting, baseline development, and outcome tracking and are exacerbated by weak national information systems and the lack of unique identifiers necessary for deduplication and longitudinal analysis. Funding volatility and short programme cycles further restrict investment in sustainable MEAL systems, constraining longer-term monitoring, learning, and adaptive programming.

A further limitation in terms of relevance is that the evidence includes documents published over five years and includes programmes that started before then. Because the situation in Yemen has changed substantially and generally worsened during this period, earlier findings may no longer be relevant.

In terms of **use of AI,** as discussed earlier in the text, the initial search for documents for inclusion was done on February 5, 2026, through a ChatGPT (GPT-5.3), Qwen (chat.qwen.ai) and Claude (Sonnet 4.6) search. These entries were reviewed and duplicates removed. For timing and efficiency, Microsoft Copilot was used to support screening and prioritisation. Scores were not independently validated in full; however, researchers reviewed a sample of low-scoring documents to confirm exclusions. In addition, the research team and steering committee applied judgement at review stage and excluded eight

documents that met the scoring threshold but were deemed insufficiently relevant (e.g., a high-scoring document focused on livelihoods during the peak of COVID-19 and was judged less relevant to current questions). AI was also used for editing specific sentences across the text for legibility and flow.

3. FINDINGS

3.1 Transition programming

The evidence base for this study draws on a range of programmes and delivery mechanisms relevant to transition, resilience, and social assistance in Yemen. This includes the BRIGHTLY programme itself, as well as other large resilience-oriented programmes such as the UNDP's Enhanced Rural Resilience in Yemen (ERRY) Joint Programme, and programmes with institutional and economic resilience components such as the UNDP's Strengthening Institutional and Economic Resilience in Yemen (SIERY) project. The reviewed material also includes major humanitarian cash and social assistance mechanisms, including CARE's Multisectoral Humanitarian Response Programme (MHRP) and the Emergency Cash Transfer Programme (ECTP) supported by the World Bank and UNICEF. For the full list of programmes consulted, refer to Annex 3. Within this landscape, livelihoods focused transition approaches are commonly framed as pathways that support households to move from humanitarian assistance to more sustainable livelihood strategies. Yet the available evidence indicates that only a small number of programmes were designed with an explicit mandate to transition households between types of support. Most programming reflects a more implicit logic, namely that as households strengthen their livelihoods, their reliance on humanitarian aid should diminish.

3.1.1 Transition Approaches for Food Security and Stability

According to documentation, transition approaches in Yemen typically begin with efforts to stabilise households' consumption and reduce reliance on emergency assistance by strengthening livelihood activities and household capacity to meet basic needs independently.[10] Within that framing, the reviewed literature most frequently examines five intervention types: cash transfers, cash-plus packages, livelihood support, CFW programmes, and linkages to social protection services. Evidence is most consistent where programmes measure changes in household food consumption, reliance on negative coping strategies, and short-term perceptions of stability.[11] Overall, documents rarely define clear "handover points" between consumption and livelihoods support, and the evidence base remains stronger on immediate stabilisation than on longer-term transition pathways. ERRY programme documentation highlights that transition from humanitarian assistance to livelihoods is gradual and non-linear. This reflects the fact that households who received combined support (cash and livelihoods)

reported more stable incomes compared to those who received only one type of assistance. This highlights the importance of ongoing consumption support as households transition to more sustainable livelihoods, particularly where returns take time to materialise or where food security remains fragile. Available evidence therefore suggests that, even when programmes begin with stabilisation and then move toward productive support, some degree of overlap between consumption and livelihood assistance is often needed to reduce backsliding and allow households time to stabilise before livelihoods can generate more reliable benefits.

3.1.2 Cash Assistance to Stabilise Food Security

Cash assistance emerges as the most consistently evidenced intervention for short-term protection of household food security, especially in helping households maintain minimum food access during acute stress.[12] Evidence consistently links cash to improved food consumption and reduced negative coping in the immediate term. At the same time, the available evidence is less consistent in showing that the levels and duration of cash assistance typically provided are sufficient on their own to produce durable household consumption stability, particularly where households remain exposed to weak markets, debt, or limited livelihood options.[13] This suggests cash at the levels discussed is best understood as a stabilising foundation, rather than a transition pathway on its own. An important implementation lesson emerging from the BRIGHTLY programme is that the frequency with which cash is delivered matters for food security outcomes. Households receiving transfers every 15 days were found to achieve stronger food security outcomes than households receiving monthly transfers. The analysis suggests that this is because the shorter interval allowed households to better plan and manage daily expenses. While this is consistent with the broader literature,[14] it seems more granular than studies done in other contexts, and one of very few examples generated in a humanitarian context. Note that both groups received the same total transfer value over the intervention period, but the 15-day interval group received smaller amounts on a more frequent schedule, allowing transfer frequency to be examined as the key variable.[15] This finding an under-exploited opportunity to explore more the differences in how to structure the frequency of transfers, identifying what works well for the financial and psychological lives of recipients and may be worth analysing further and disseminating externally in the last phase of BRIGHTLY. This finding also points to the importance of aligning transfer frequency with consumption needs to reduce volatility in food access. [16]

Evidence remains more limited, however, on cash transfer values, on how long cash support should continue for different household profiles, and on whether the short-term gains associated with more frequent transfers are sustained after assistance ends. As a result, the evidence base does not yet establish clear thresholds for transfer duration, value, number of transfers, or whether more frequent

payment cycles improve households' ability to save, invest, and maintain food security over time without renewed instability.[17]

3.1.3 Sequenced and Combined Approaches for More Durable Household Outcomes

The interventions that show the clearest evidence of stronger and more sustained impact on household food security and stability are those that combine or sequence immediate support with livelihood assistance rather one type of support.[18] Some documentation suggests that livelihood support in particular may improve household food security once immediate stabilisation from cash support has been achieved.[1920]

Evidence from livelihood programming shows that interventions such as microbusiness grants and business training; vocational and apprenticeship support; and livestock, dairy, agro-processing, and agricultural input packages are associated with improved Food Consumption Scores (FCS), reduced reliance on harmful coping strategies, and the continued operation of supported businesses within a few months of support. This suggests that livelihood interventions can translate food security gains into more durable household stability.[21] However, the lack of long-term outcome data leaves the durability of these approaches uncertain.[22] The evidence also suggests that outcomes are stronger where support is delivered as a coherent pathway rather than as disconnected inputs, although comparative documentation on optimal sequencing remains limited.[23] BRIGHTLY findings indicate that unconditional cash was strongest for immediate stabilisation, CFW provided transitional income with more limited food security effects, and livelihood support, including productive inputs, tools, training, and small enterprise support, generated the strongest combined outcomes for food security and household stability.[24] However, an evidence gap persists around the appropriate sequencing of interventions, and there is limited documentation on the timing of transition from consumption support to livelihood assistance, and on the indicators that should be used to signal when households are ready to make this shift.

"Cash plus" and economic recovery interventions reinforce the argument that sequenced or multilayered support can be more effective than stand-alone relief, although the evidence remains limited on the durability of gains after support tapers off. In Abyan, CARE combined seeds, farm tools, and fishing kits with cash for three months to vulnerable farming and fishing households.[25] Documentation shows that the cash was timed to coincide with the distribution of the inputs and was used to bridge the food gap before the harvest, and helped households cover basic needs, protect assets, increase food consumption, and improve agricultural and fishery productivity. A similar logic appeared in the GIZ transitional assistance approach, which combined small infrastructural measures through CFW, agricultural inputs for farming households, support to artisanal fishers, rehabilitation of landing and market infrastructure, and cooperation with local authorities and cooperatives.[26] Together, these

examples support the notion that food security gains are more likely when consumption support is connected to productive opportunity and delivered through a coherent package, rather than as cash and/or livelihoods interventions alone. At the same time, the CARE evidence also shows that durable gains depend on appropriate timing, seasonality, market analysis, and the cost of inputs.

In addition, linking households to existing systems such as social protection programmes and government services is frequently argued to be important for maintaining household food security alongside livelihood initiatives[27], but in Yemen there is little current evidence for this claim. The available evidence around social protection and government services remains stronger on programme design and coordination than on independently measured household food security outcomes.

3.1.4 Contextual Factors Affecting the Sustainability of Transition Approaches

A consistent finding across the evidence is that broader contextual factors such as market, environmental, and social conditions heavily contribute to food security gains. Market access constraints, high input costs, lack of capital, weak infrastructure, frequent shocks and climate-related pressures recur as major barriers that prevent households from converting short-term assistance into stable food security and income.[28] This means that interventions need to be implemented with strong attention to market conditions, affordability of inputs, climate change, and the practical feasibility of maintaining livelihoods after assistance ends if they are to improve household food security and stability in a sustained way.[29] Debt also appears as a source of instability for some households, particularly where gains are absorbed by existing obligations or where control over resources within the household is uneven, for example between women and men.[30] Evidence on seasonality is more limited than evidence on modality and sequencing, but the available information suggests, unsurprisingly, that implementation timing in relation to agricultural cycles can affect programme performance and the sustainability of food security outcomes.[31]

While not explicitly described in any of the documents reviewed, BRIGHTLY staff familiar with the context described how administrative and access constraints also shape the evidence base itself, as permissions, bureaucratic impediments, insecurity, and movement restrictions can limit the feasibility of field research, including market assessments, and reduce the extent to which contextual conditions can be analysed consistently across location. Displacement and fragile access conditions also shape what households can realistically sustain, although the evidence under this theme remains more suggestive than conclusive on how these pressures alter comparative food security outcomes across different interventions.

3.1.5 Synthesis of Findings and Priority Knowledge Gaps for Transition Approaches for Food Security and Stability

Across the evidence base, the most consistent findings relate to short-term stabilisation (especially via cash) and to the potential added value of multi-component packages when delivered coherently and with attention to context. The main unanswered questions concern how long improvements in food security persist after support ends, what duration and sequencing of assistance are most effective for different household profiles, what indicators to use for transitioning households, how seasonality and displacement affect the sustainability of gains, and how far systems-linked approaches can translate into measurable household food security outcomes rather than broader enabling effects alone. These are the topics where the evidence is weakest, most contradictory, or least informative, making them the clearest priorities for further investigation under this theme.

3.2 Livelihoods Pathways in Transition Programming

As noted above, this review explores transition programming in Yemen that seeks to move households from short-term humanitarian relief towards more secure and sustainable livelihoods.[32] The reviewed documents suggest that livelihoods programming in Yemen draws on a set of well-established interventions[33] , with few examples of new or experimental modalities. These approaches show positive short-term benefits for households, particularly through improvements in income, productivity, and, in some cases, savings, although the evidence remains much weaker on longer-term impact, durability, and sustainability.[34] The evidence highlighted the difficulty of implementing effective livelihoods programming amongst weak market conditions and in a restrictive enabling environment, as noted previously.[35] Climate adaptation is often integrated only partially or indirectly into livelihood support, although some larger, multi-year resilience programmes treat it as a more central design feature.[36]

3.2.1 Common Livelihood Interventions

Small business support: support for micro and small business development is one of the most widely implemented livelihood strategies, typically combining start-up cash grants with business and skills training, and sometimes market linkage and broader market systems strengthening activities.[37] Beekeeping, sewing, and livestock breeding are the most common type of small businesses, supported by several of the projects reviewed. Although most projects cite market analyses, the evidence suggests that detailed supply and demand assessments are uncommon, raising questions about possible market over-saturation, particularly in the longer-term. Evidence from ERRY II demonstrates high short-term business survival, with most supported enterprises still operational after three months.[38] Evaluations also show modest but notable increases in business capital and income over one year, despite

significant economic volatility. The BRIGHTLY programme similarly shows strong early outcomes: most participants reported improved income, productivity, and production, and many attributed these gains to the practicality of training and follow-up support.[39] Some documents highlight the importance of working with local and central government authorities to establish a positive and sustainable economic environment.[40] Yet across all initiatives, documents highlight that limited access to markets, and high input costs consistently constrain the longer-term viability of microenterprises.[41]

Vocational training and apprenticeships: these are also common livelihoods initiatives that help participants acquire practical skills that align with existing economic opportunities. ERRY trained hundreds of apprentices and technicians in solar installation and maintenance, aligning skills development with emerging opportunities in renewable energy. However, the absence of systematic outcome tracking means there is little evidence on whether these apprenticeships translated into employment or income gains. One document noted the limited technical capacity of TVET institutions.[42] UNDP's vocational and business training project highlighted increased self-reported employability and high levels of perceived income gains, though it also revealed risks of market oversaturation where participating households received identical support.[43]

Agricultural, fishing, and livestock assistance: this forms another major component of livelihoods programming, often aimed at strengthening food production and resilience. However, these interventions may inadvertently exclude the poorest households who frequently lack essential assets that are needed to participate, such as land.[44] Programmes such as ERRY III provided farming households with inputs, irrigation support, value chain development, and climate-smart agriculture training. Some programmes, including BRIGHTLY, coupled agriculture and fishing support with cash assistance ("cash plus"), which they deemed critical to achieving positive livelihoods outcomes.[45] Many households reported generating new income streams through livestock and dairy packages within a short period from start-up. Productivity gains, including increased milk production, weight gain in livestock, and larger herds, were also documented. However, project documents state that market access barriers limited the scale and durability of these improvements, and the review team could not determine if these productivity and income gains lasted after programmes ended.

3.2.2 Cross-Cutting Approaches for Livelihoods Interventions

Climate resilience*:* although extreme weather events are common in Yemen,[46] climate resilient or informed approaches are not systematically integrated into livelihoods programming. Many projects such as ERRY III and the UN-project "Integrated Water Resource Management to Enhance Resilience of Agriculture (ERA) and Food Security" included elements to strengthen livelihoods' resilience to climate shocks, particularly through climate smart agricultural interventions (e.g., drought-tolerant seeds), irrigation improvements, water resource management, and renewable and solar energy initiatives.

Challenges encountered related to weak institutional capacity (e.g. among Water User Associations), lack of qualified suppliers and contractors, and scepticism from farmers who were unfamiliar with climate smart methods.[47] A new three-year programme called RESOLVE (Resilient Economies and Sustainable Livelihoods for Empowerment in Yemen) has recently been awarded by the European Union and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation that includes an outcome on the widespread adoption of climate-smart agriculture practices and ecosystem based adaptation, highlighting donors' openness to funding longer-term programming to build climate resilience. Another newer initiative in the country is the World Bank and FAO-led Food Security Crisis Preparedness Plan[48], which has potential to mitigate predictable climate-driven (and other shock induced) food crises through timely emergency assistance. Given the country is projected to experience more radical climate extremes[49], it is surprising that climate considerations are not systematically integrated across programmes, including early warning and anticipatory action initiatives, as well as crisis modifiers, which remain limited.[50]

Integrated packages: the evidence suggests that bundled or integrated livelihoods packages produce stronger outcomes than single-component interventions.[51] Under ERRY III, households receiving a combination of training, assets, and business coaching were twice as likely to report stable income as those receiving only one type of support. Most of these households also reported monthly income increases. Still, more than one-third remained without stable income by the endline, which, according to the project's final evaluation is linked to persistent external challenges, including inadequate market linkages, high input costs, and insufficient capital.[52]

Women's economic empowerment: as explored in greater detail in the section *"Differential outcomes and resilience factors across populations",* gender dynamics shape the accessibility and effectiveness of livelihoods interventions across Yemen. While men participate more frequently in on-farm agricultural activities, women are more likely to engage in non-farm, home-based, or small enterprise activities that offer flexibility and align with social norms. In the ERRY project, women accounted for 55% of microbusiness owners and employees, and expressed aspirations to play a stronger economic role within their households. However, although around 50% of ERRY-supported microbusinesses reported making a profit, the majority of profitable businesses were headed by men. ERRY documentation suggests this disparity may be due to the types of businesses women tended to operate - primarily home-based meat and poultry enterprises with limited production capacity - as well as women's comparatively lower levels of experience in marketing and business management.[53] Many of the programmes reviewed included livelihoods activities that specifically targeted women with the aim to include them in income generation activities and empower them more generally. Documentation highlights that a breadth of support is required to enable women to meaningful engage in livelihoods activities, including technical and marketing training, confidence building, negotiation skills, grants, and sustained mentoring.[54] [55] Moreover, programming should engage the whole family (and broader community), not just women, to work towards changing gender norms to economically empower women.[56] A review of women's

economic empowerment initiatives highlights that this approach can create allies and help mitigate abuse of female beneficiaries by male family members.[57] However, the documents reviewed identified no such initiatives.

Savings and financial inclusion: these initiatives are common and focus on introducing savings habits, expanding access to financial services, and strengthening financial literacy. Programmes such as ERRY II and III offered training in entrepreneurship, financial planning, marketing, and inventory management to prepare participants for microfinance opportunities and small business growth. Documentation from the SIERY programme noted that project participants struggled to access formal loans from local banks and credit providers due to strict documentation and guarantor requirements. The ERRY programme introduced an innovative digital platform to link microbusinesses with financial and non-financial services. However, this review is unable to determine if these platforms continue to function and/or if they are effective. Savings-focused interventions, including Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) are rare with documentation pointing to only two programmes that have used them, but when applied, appear to strengthen financial behaviour despite the challenging context. In the Social Fund for Development (SFD)–Social Welfare Fund (SWF) graduation programme, participants were encouraged to save regularly through formal or informal mechanisms [58]. Although political instability disrupted much of the programme's implementation, available data show that savings levels and deposit behaviour improved among treatment households. These gains, however, did not translate into increased consumption, suggesting that while savings habits can shift, broader welfare improvements require additional support. SFD established VSLAs along with the BRIGHTLY consortium under the Food Security Safety Net Programme, and attracted considerable participation, enabling small-scale borrowing[59], but the review team could not locate data to confirm whether these groups improved household income or resilience, nor which types of households benefit most from them. Meanwhile, attempts to expand digital financial services such as UNICEF's and SFD's mobile money pilots faced mixed results. UNICEF's pilot led to very low uptake.[60] SFD's more recent pilot, however, was more promising, with most project participants using e-wallets for payments[61], possibly suggesting the maturing of Yemen's digital payment ecosystem. Overall, financial inclusion programming appears foundational but shows little measurable impact on incomes or resilience beyond improved literacy and financial behaviours. Furthermore, the evidence suggests that poorer households are better able to access informal mechanisms such as VSLAs rather than formal financial services, and that private-sector actors will need sensitization and incentivisation to make suitable products available to them.

3.2.3 Synthesis of Findings and Evidence Gaps for Livelihoods Pathways in Transition Programming

The evidence shows that livelihoods interventions in Yemen consistently produce short-term gains in income, production, financial behaviours, and business activity. Bundled approaches tend to deliver stronger and more durable results, particularly when they strengthen both household capacities and market linkages. However, these gains are often fragile due to persistent structural barriers across markets, finance, infrastructure, and the broader enabling environment.

Market analyses are also not always sufficiently detailed to prevent market saturation, which can further limit income generation. In addition, there is still limited evidence on how long livelihood gains last after programme support ends, or which combinations of interventions, such as cash, skills training, asset transfers, coaching, and savings, are most effective for different household profiles, including the poorest households and women. Evidence is likewise scarce on how displacement, market constraints, and climate shocks affect the long-term viability of livelihood pathways.

These gaps highlight the need for further evidence on which combinations of interventions are most effective for the poorest households and for women; the minimum requirements for market analysis to inform effective livelihoods support; and the extent to which conflict, displacement, market constraints, and climate shocks shape long-term livelihood outcomes.

3.3 Indicators of a Successful Transition

As noted under the initial definitions, in the protracted crisis context of Yemen, and of the BRIGHTLY programme, **transition** is understood as a gradual and context-dependent process through which households reduce dependence on repeated humanitarian or short-term assistance and move towards either social protection mechanisms or livelihoods support. This process is preceded by several months of consumption support. Following this period, a defined set of indicators is used to determine whether a household is ready to transition into livelihoods programming or should receive further support through continued cash assistance or referred to social protection systems. In order to assess whether a transition has been successful, programmes need to decide which indicators to use and define the timeframe over which success should be measured.

Indicators can thus help answer two separate, albeit interrelated, sets of questions:

- Whether households that have received consumption support are ready to transition to livelihoods programming
- Whether households which transitioned to livelihoods programming maintained some degree of economic resilience over time

This section contains an overview of the indicators used in Yemen to answer these two sets of questions.

3.3.1 Indicators to assess whether households are ready to transition from consumption support to livelihoods programming

The BRIGHTLY programme is designed on the premise that households should achieve a degree of food security stabilisation before moving into livelihood activities, although in practice BRIGHTLY also allows for differentiated pathways, including earlier entry into CFW or livelihood support for some households. The programme relies heavily on food security indicators (such as FCS and CSI) to assess whether a household is ready to move from short-term assistance into livelihoods support.

The evidence reviewed points to a wider group of factors that may support transition, but these are more uneven in both strength and interpretation than core household outcome measures. For example, evidence from ERRY III further suggests that better access to social safety nets, improved public services, and expanded asset ownership may also strengthen households' resilience and support transition. Evidence from the ERRI II and ERRY III programmes indicates that successful transition becomes more credible when food security gains are accompanied by evidence of more reliable income and a continued reduction in reliance on harmful coping strategies.[62]

Overall, the household level indicators used to assess income stability are less clear than those used for food consumption.[63]

3.3.2 Community and market level indicators

Improved access to services, community assets, and local infrastructure appears particularly relevant in programme models that combine household-level support with roads, schools, water systems, health facilities, or solar energy, including via CFW schemes, suggesting that transition can be strengthened when households operate in an environment that better supports recovery.[64] Financial inclusion, savings, loans, and women's decision-making also recur in the evidence as enabling conditions that support stronger income generation, agency, and business continuity – rather than as consistently demonstrated indicators of transition in their own right.[65] BRIGHTLY-related reporting points in the same general direction, particularly in highlighting women's participation, financial inclusion, and market linkages as supportive conditions for stronger livelihood outcomes, but the current evidence does not yet establish clearly whether these factors independently predict durable movement away from humanitarian dependence.[66] This suggests that readiness to transition is better assessed through a combination of core household outcomes and enabling conditions, rather than through any single supporting factor on its own.

It's also worth noting that while in theory these indicators should help to ascertain whether a household is ready to transition into livelihoods programming or should instead be referred to social protection

systems, de facto the second option is very constrained, as longer-term social protection pathways remain limited in coverage and functionality.

3.3.3 Indicators to help assess whether households that transitioned to livelihoods programming maintained some degree of economic resilience over time

Across the documents reviewed, the indicators most used to assess transition progress are:

- Food Consumption Score (FCS),
- Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS),
- The Reduced Coping Strategies Index (CSI).
- Reduced reliance on negative coping strategies.[2]

Assets, access to services, financial inclusion, and decision-making power appear less frequently.[67] Despite the fact that asset accumulation is presented as associated with stronger livelihood prospects, improved productive capacity, and reduced losses, the general evidence, including from the aforementioned SFD-SWF graduation programme, shows gains in assets or savings without equally clear evidence of sustained rises in consumption or income. This indicates that asset ownership and savings alone cannot be treated as sufficient evidence of successful transition.[68]

In terms of timeframes for measuring lasting impact, many of the programmes assessed these outcomes during the final evaluations. The same outcomes may have been assessed earlier through monitoring, but the data was not externally available. One of the few rigorous evaluations conducted in Yemen in this timeframe – comparing the outcomes of households benefitting from multi-faceted programme for ultra-poor households with a control group[69] - found modest positive results four years after the start of the program. In this evaluation, it was found that participating households had a higher level of assets and savings, but this increase in wealth was substantially less than the value of the transfers received by the household four years earlier. While it would be valuable to have more data on long term outcomes after the support has ended - e.g. 6 months, 12 months, 24 months after the project – this is very rarely done in Yemen and globally, as it would be challenging both financially within project funding cycles and methodologically, as it would ideally require measuring counterfactuals.

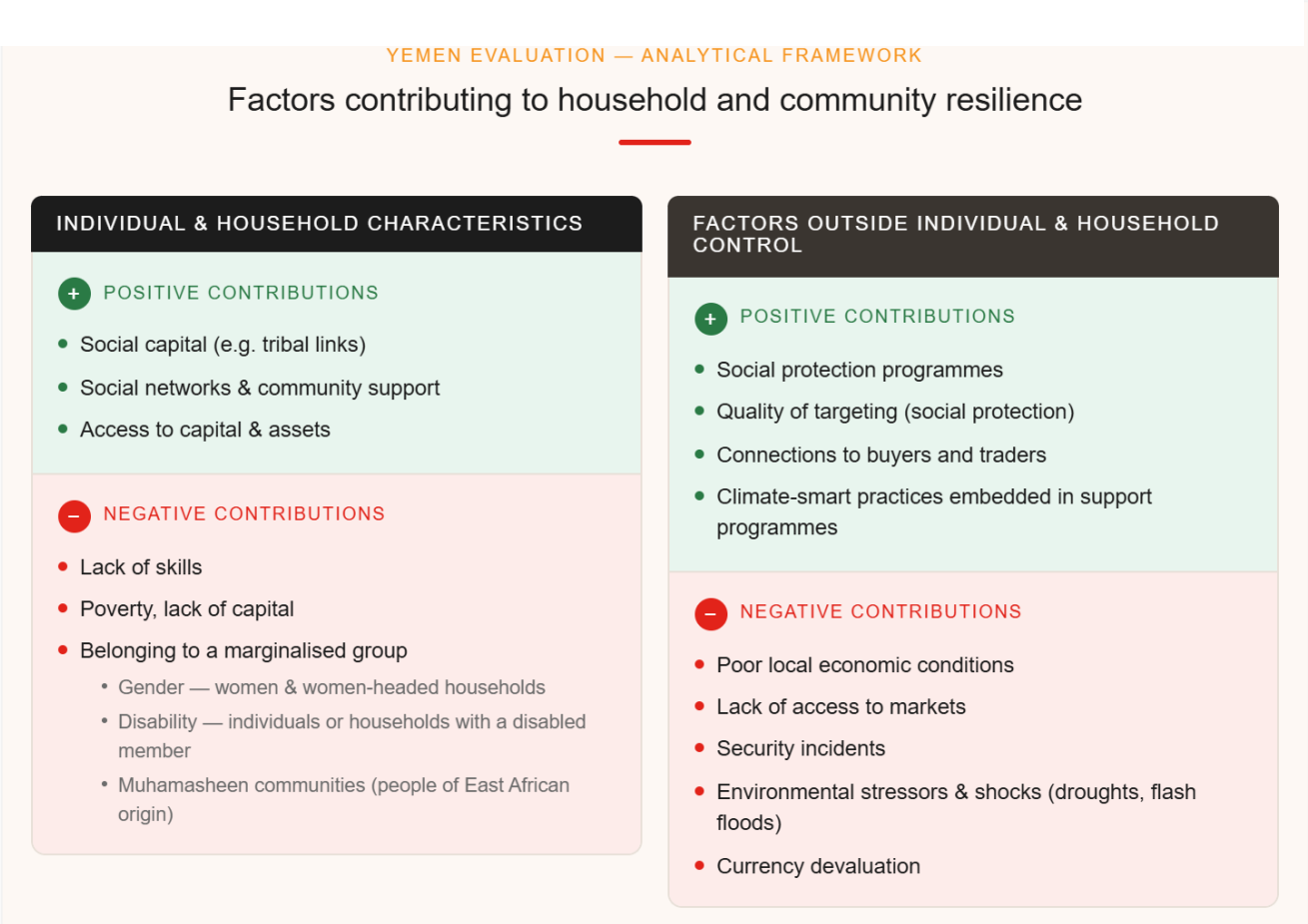
[2] These 3 indicators were used, for instance, in WFP's Emergency Food/Cash Assistance to Recovery, FFA and Cash-for-Work; in ERRY III by UNDP/FAO/WFP/ILO, 2022–2025); in UNICEF's Multi-year Nexus Livelihoods & Resilience Programme; and in FAO / FSAC – Conditional Cash Transfers, Cash-for-Work and Food Assistance for Assets Livelihoods Programming

3.4 Differential Outcomes and Resilience Factors Across Population & Vulnerability Groups

The documents reviewed identified several recurring characteristics that make individuals and households less economically resilient in Yemen. In 2020, a CaLP study identified several structurally disadvantaged priority groups in Yemen for humanitarian and social protection actors.[70] These included (1) those in active conflict locations, (2) people with disabilities; (3) female headed households; (4) *Muhammasheen (*Yemenis with ancestral ties to Africa – see more detailed definition in the definition section and further down); (5) those with weak tribal connections. The study recommended agencies to *"focus on such structurally disadvantaged populations, as "such a focus would support social protection actors in delivering a more targeted and measurable outcome, [*while*] focus on the 'usual' social protection caseload, that is, everyone under the poverty line, wouldn't be able to generate impact in a context such as Yemen with very high levels of need."*[71]

The research team reviewed all mentions of factors affecting economic resilience, and categorised them according to two axes: first, whether they had a positive or an economic impact; and second, whether they were at the individual/household level, or at a larger scale. This is presented in Figure 4, below.

Figure 4: Overview of the factors mentioned in the reports reviewed as having an impact on resilience



While these characteristics are presented separately, they intersect and compound each other: for instance, a women can be disabled, displaced, and/or from the Muhamasheen community: Women and children are estimated to constitute 70 to 79 per cent of the total number of displaced persons, and with an estimated prevalence of approximately 20 to 30 percent female-headed households among displaced populations.[72] In all these instances, the affected individuals face multiple layers of intersectional challenges in generating a livelihood – this can in turn potentially magnify other risks, such as protection and health.

For many of these groups, such as disabled individuals and women, there is evidence demonstrating conscious efforts to include them in programmes**.** Despite such efforts towards inclusion, the evidence was mixed – and empirically shallow, as to whether the programmes, particularly those aiming to build economic resilience, succeeded in addressing underlying biases, practices and structural barriers that perpetuate discrimination, thus ensuring longer term impact. If we treat poverty as a vulnerability criterion, a recent BRIGHTLY report noted that *"households that started with higher FCS tended to improve less (or decline more) than those lower FCS scores, and that greater benefits accrue to the most food insecure, suggesting individualised targeting approaches may be more effective".* Other reports describe livelihood interventions geared to marginalised groups as successful, but provide limited supporting evidence,[73] while others noted that some activities did not reach most marginalised, such as illiterate rural women.[74] Overall, there are gaps in evidence on the outcomes of these efforts to target intervention at marginalised groups.

3.4.1 Women and Women-headed household

Barriers to women's economic participation sit within a wider context of gender inequality characterised by high illiteracy rates, limited access to education, lack of skills development, early marriage, high fertility, restrictive social norms, and the absence of affordable childcare or transport options suitable for women: Yemen remained at the bottom of the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index from 2006 to 2020. In 2021, it ranked 155th out of 156 countries, with Afghanistan in last place. The 2021 edition was the final year in which Yemen was included; it has been omitted from later reports because the conflict has made data collection difficult.[75]

The loss of male breadwinners and the resulting increase in female -headed households, together with the economic crisis, have **contributed to a rise in women's participation in income-generating activities** in Yemen. Even when formal work is unavailable, women have turned to home-based handicrafts and small businesses, often using social media to reach female customers. Although driven largely by necessity, these shifts have strengthened some women's standing within their families and communities, with many reporting greater influence over household decisions. As noted in the 2022 Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Yemen Crisis, the impact of the economic crisis, which

demands women's increasing involvement in earning income to deal with worsening poverty and reduced male incomes, is in a direct contradiction with the ideological restrictions of the main groups in power, with negative consequences such as the worsening of gender-based violence.[76]

Female headed households are often included in social assistance programme activities, including cash and cash for work, but in the latter they are less represented than men due to the nature of the work performed. Cash for work was mentioned in 29 documents, and mostly consisted of infrastructure related rehabilitation, agriculture, and animal husbandry. However, at least one programme, the World Bank's Yemen Emergency Crisis Response Project (YECRP), which overall reached approximately 22.8% women among paid employment participants, included cash for social services and cash for home-based work (producing *Bakhoor* -Arabian incense). Evaluations sometimes report varying findings on Cash for Work and women's participation. For instance, a 2021 *Final Evaluation of the Social Protection for Community Resilience Project* found that women made up 27% of direct Cash for Work participants. However, qualitative evidence showed that in some targeted villages—particularly in the Southern Region—customs and traditions restricted women's involvement. In urban areas, physically demanding, public cash-for-work activities (such as pavement rehabilitation) were considered unsuitable for women, limiting their participation as direct beneficiaries. As a result, women were mainly included only as indirect beneficiaries, and women's empowerment was not substantively addressed.

Women are also included in vocational trainings, with reported percentages ranging between 10%[77] and 45%, but more often towards the upper values. However, while data is generally disaggregated by sex at the output level (i.e., number of women trained, women entrepreneurs supported, etc), the research team could not find sex disaggregated data comparing outcomes by sex. This is to be understood in the context of limited outcome data, and mirrors a general methodological challenge in drawing meaningful comparison when men and women tend to set up different types of livelihoods activities; it nevertheless remains a possible area for analysis. Some reports describe how these rapid changes in gender roles, combined with shrinking job opportunities for men—particularly in the aid sector—have also created tension. For instance, an evaluation noted how participants felt that women were now favoured or targeted more frequently by humanitarian programmes, leading to resentment. Moreover, women's increased economic participation has not reduced their domestic workload. For most, paid work has been added to, rather than replaced, their household responsibilities.[78] BRIGHTLY experts suspect this, in turn, is likely to have shifted tasks towards children within the household depending on household make up and the gendered nature of task.

Beyond being economic agents and generating income for the household, a study noted how Yemeni women continue to "*play a significant role in promoting resilience through connecting to neighbours and social networks that contribute to social capital.*" Yemeni women and their social networks have been

critical in strengthening the capacity of their households to withstand numerous and concurrent shocks.[79]

3.4.2 Disability: individuals with a disability and households with a member who has a disability

The number of individuals living with a disability has been estimated to be 15% of the overall population, as per the latest Humanitarian Needs Overview (March 2026).[80] Across the reviewed documents, there was broad agreement that people with disabilities, as well as household with disabled members, experience systemic disadvantage. These disadvantages take various forms: people with disabilities are less likely to contribute to household income; households require higher income to cover disability-related care needs; specialised services are limited; and cultural stigma persists. At the same time the conflict, including civilian casualties, is increasing the prevalence of disability[81]. Beyond the immediate humanitarian assistance provided after a shock, individuals and households with disabilities may need ongoing, structural, and longer-term support. Eleven[82] of the 35 documents reviewed mentioned disability inclusion; this took different shapes, including people with disabilities indirectly benefitting from the programme, disabled individuals being consulted, description of disability as one of the targeting criteria for cash/social protection; and examples of inclusion of disabled individuals in livelihoods activities, such as skill training, business schemes. These latter instances largely lacked evidence on the economic outcomes and were anecdotal.[83] While the percentage of people with disability being included in livelihood activities was rarely specified, SIERY, stated that percentage of disability in the economic component was likely about 5% or 6%.[84]

One unpublished evaluation provided some quantitative insights. At baseline, people with disabilities (PwD) had FCS levels around 8.3 per cent lower than those without disabilities and relied on a greater number of coping strategies to manage food shortages. The evidence indicated that cash transfer and livelihood support modalities did not function differently for people with disabilities; both approaches appeared to benefit people with disabilities to a similar degree as people without disabilities. Two non-exclusive interpretations were suggested: first, that implementing partners' efforts to ensure inclusivity have been effective in enabling people with disabilities to benefit from FSSN; and second, that neither cash nor livelihood assistance is narrowing the gap, as comparable programme effects still leave people with disabilities worse off overall.[85]

3.4.3 Children, Youth and Young People

Yemen is one of the youngest countries in the world, with approximately 75 percent of the 30 million population are under the age of 30.[86]

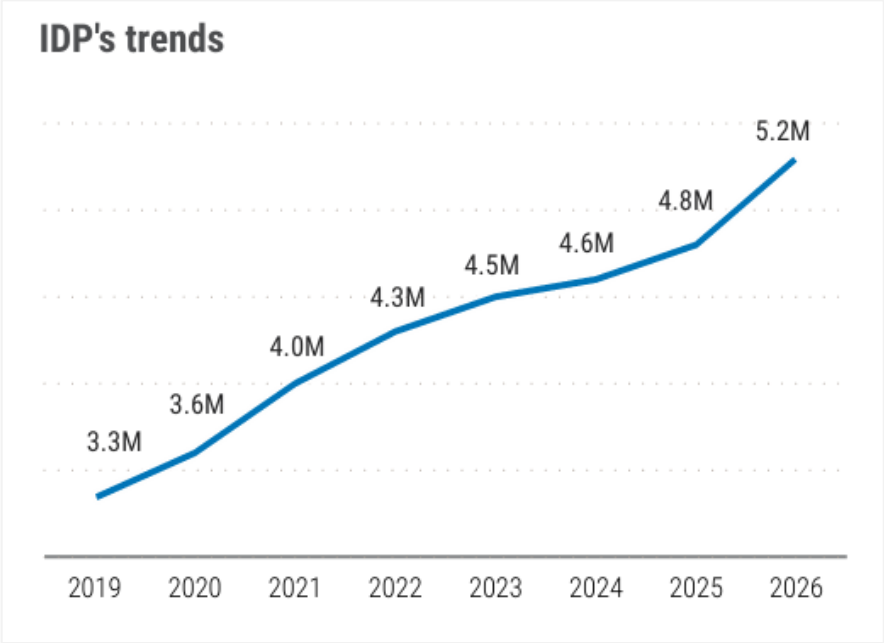
The umbrella term "youth" used in the documents reviewed refers to young men and women – but without a standard age range.[87] According to OCHA's Humanitarian Needs Overview 2024, 1 in 4 youth aged between 15 and 24 years were unemployed, with female youth worst affected (36 vs. 25 per cent unemployed)[88]. The International Labour Organization (ILO) noted that "*Persistent youth unemployment and underemployment carry very high social and economic costs and threaten the fabric of our societies. Failure to generate sufficient decent jobs can result in long-lasting "scarring" effects on young people*."[89] For young men — particularly those from poor, displaced, or rural households — joining an armed group has become one of the most accessible and reliable income sources available. As noted in a recent report, "*In Houthi controlled areas, fighters' salaries are often the only consistent source of pay. In regions formally controlled by the internationally recognized government, fighters' salaries are higher than the average public sector wages, which are often not paid regularly*."[90] Young men are therefore a target group for livelihoods support, and are included in programmes: they appear primarily under the umbrella of "vulnerable" rather than as a distinct target group**.** The ERRY Programme, for instance, targets vulnerable groups including women, youth, IDPs, and marginalised rural households, and mentions as programmatic approaches the *investment in youth-specific economic and leadership pathways, with a focus on green jobs and digital tools*[91]*,* and mentions as achievement the training of over 7000 youth and women, but not separating these groups. This appears to be a pattern in the evidence reviewed*:* many documents report outputs — apprentices trained, enterprises launched, toolkits distributed, SMEs supported, etc, alongside success stories. As with household level interventions detailed above, longer-term outcome-level evidence such as sustained income, resilience to shocks, and businesses longevity is almost entirely absent from public reporting.

A report described "*a massive decline in vocational and skills training outside the major towns due to the ongoing conflict. Outside of the UN and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) community, few public or private sector organizations offer vocational and entrepreneurial skills training. Where they exist, youth and women are constrained by costs and other social restrictions to travel to the training centres. Studies on youth unemployment have revealed a growing trend of skills mismatch, whereby potential labour does not possess the skills demanded by the enterprises. The skills mismatch includes vocational and entrepreneurial skills and soft skills, such as communication, ethical, life and social skills (how to build a business network). The predominantly youthful population also lack the entrepreneurial culture, the technical and artisanal skills and capacity to form and develop their own small businesses. The net effect has been large scale underemployment and unemployment for the bulging youthful population*."[92] Overall, youth are rarely an explicitly targeted group, and rigorous effectiveness evidence is thin.

3.4.4 Internally Displaced Persons

The number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) has been steadily increasing in Yemen over the years, with the latest figures suggesting their number may be approximately 5.2 million people, as shown in **figure 4.**[93] Livelihoods represent a significant barrier to durable solutions for IDPs**:** several reports[94] identified economic considerations as the main drivers of IDPs initial displacement, and described access to livelihoods as a key barrier to return. These studies claimed that livelihood support has been significantly under-resourced, despite being consistently cited by communities as one of their priority needs.

Figure 5: IDP trends as of March 2026(source; UNOCHA Humanitarian Needs Overview



IDPs have been considered a vulnerable group across programmes, and as such, they have been included in almost all programmes reviewed. 31 of the documents coded mentioned IDPs as a supported category. IDPs receive a mix of economic support modalities: The programmes span the range from pure MPCA (Cash Consortium of Yemen[95], UNHCR in 2023) to integrated resilience packages combining cash-for-work, business skills training and SME grants (ERRY II/III,[96] Durable Solution Project).[97]

While evaluations of MPCA programmes targeting IDPs provided data on outcomes (showing a reduction in harmful coping strategies and improved expenditure on immediate needs), there was no evidence on longer-term economic resilience. Furthermore, there was no IDP-disaggregated data, either at the output or outcome level: while most programmes reviewed included displacement as a vulnerability (and hence, inclusion) criteria, none of the programmes reviewed reported a breakdown of the percentage of beneficiaries who were IDPs within specific economic modalities (cash, grants,

training, cash-for-work). Output level data may exist and may be included in reports that implementing agencies share with their donors but is not publicly available.

3.4.5 Muhamasheen communities

Muhamasheen is an ascriptive term from Arabic that means "the marginalized" - refers to a group of Yemenis who were traditionally called Al-Akhdam (meaning "the servants") and have resided in Yemen for centuries but have ancestral ties to Africa.[98] 15 of the 35 documents reviewed mentioned them, noting that, as a group, they are disproportionally affected by the conflict: they are subject to forced recruitment from all parties and face barriers with regards to health care, education, housing and documentation as well as access to aid and essential services.[99] Migrants and refugees, mostly from Ethiopia and Somalia, are also more likely to experience exploitation and violence.

It's hard to get a sense of how many Muhamasheen are targeted by economic security programmes. According to a 2020 document reviewed for this study, in 2017 Muhamasheen households represented approximately 15% of people targeted for social protection interventions by WFP and receiving in-kind, food, cash or vouchers assistance.[100] According to a different document, in 2022 around 73,500 individuals from the Muhamasheen community benefited from cash transfers linked to the Integrated Model of Social and Economic Assistance and Empowerment (IMSEA) programme.[101] Muhamasheen are explicitly referenced in targeting frameworks[102] and were included in UNICEF-led financial inclusion initiatives. In livelihood programming, the multiagency UN ERRY I, II, and III programmes also identify Muhamasheen in project design and targeting rationale. However, while sources such as the ILO page for ERRY II list various livelihoods activities and note the inclusion of Muhamasheen, they do not provide disaggregated data specific to this group.

None of the reports reviewed disaggregated livelihood outcomes specifically for Muhamasheen beneficiaries – again, as with IDPs, it is possible that the programmes that include Muhamasheen may have more granular data available – but this may not in publicly accessible reports or evaluations.

3.5 Broader Community Level Impacts of Livelihoods Transition Programming

With the exception of most CFW and food-for-assets (FFA) activities, most transition and livelihoods programmes do not explicitly consider or systematically assess community-level impacts (such as increased market activity and labour opportunities due to economic stimulus; uptake in improved farming practices or savings behaviours beyond direct project participants; or strengthening of informal safety nets), and available evaluations provide only limited and often indirect evidence of such effects. While many interventions include activities with the potential to influence community systems, markets,

or service access, these outcomes are typically not measured, and findings remain suggestive rather than conclusive. The evidence on this theme is notably limited, with only a small number of documents offering relevant insights, mostly in relation to FFA and CFW.

Access to services and community assets: CFW and FFA interventions played a notable role in rehabilitating or creating shared community assets, operating through labour-intensive community works. According to programme documentation, these activities focused on maintaining or restoring essential market and service infrastructure, such as rural access roads, water systems, school, and health facilities.[103] The intention behind these modalities was to create or maintain key community assets that were functional, accessible, and able to meet local demand.

Evidence from the ERRY project indicates that these community works helped restore or bring back into use assets that had deteriorated, thereby reducing physical barriers to essential services. Roads rehabilitated under these schemes reportedly improved the ease of reaching nearby markets, public services, and water points, while water-related works reduced the time and effort required for water collection.[104] Outside of CFW initiatives, ERRY supported micro-enterprises in the solar energy sector. All of these interventions anecdotally increased the convenience and reliability of accessing basic services for community members beyond participants receiving direct support.[105] However, the findings come primarily from qualitative accounts, and systematic measurement of longer-term community-level outcomes is limited. It's also worth noting that some documents highlighted the lack of funding for the maintenance and repair of assets in the medium-to-longer term, despite the establishment of community-led committees that were mandated with procuring funds for maintenance, raising questions on the sustainability of community impacts.[106]

Market system and private sector strengthening: documents suggest that interventions that created and/or improved infrastructure (e.g. seed banks), supported local dairy and agro-processing or value-addition initiatives, and increased capacity of extension officers (e.g. agriculture workers) may have eased access to markets, increased production, and improved circulation of goods for the population beyond the project's direct participants. ERRY reported that 48% of households reduced their reliance on humanitarian aid, particularly in areas where community assets were rehabilitated (e.g. the construction or rehabilitation of roads, irrigation systems, and agriculture facilities), pointing to the broader market and food systems impacts that are possible. Likewise, SIERY documentation suggests that support to vocational training providers via the provision of equipment and training of staff could have wider and longer-term impacts on the quality of training provided to students, however this was an assumption and not backed by monitoring data.[107] The review found no robust evidence demonstrating broader market or production shifts or longer-term multiplier effects at community level. On the other hand, some documents pointed to risks of market oversaturation. For example, a final evaluation of the UNDP Vocational and Business Skills Training and Support programme found that targeting too many project participants within one

village with similar trainings and inputs for food processing and small businesses increased the supply of certain food products (e.g. dry fruit, jams, pickles, etc.) and increased competition to meet a limited demand in local markets . According to programme documentation, this decreased the product price and the sustainability of the newly developed small businesses. However, the document did not indicate if or how existing businesses and the wider market and consumers were impacted by the increased supply.

Employment and economic spillovers: support to micro-enterprises created some employment beyond direct project participants, but evidence is limited. ERRY-supported micro businesses created employment opportunities not only for business owners but also community members who were not directly targeted by the interventions. Documentation states that on average, 1.3 workers were employed by each micro-business.[108] Humanitarian cash transfers may also have positive secondary economic effects: one analysis of MPCA showed that every US dollar of MPCA led to an over USD 2 increase in local economic activity.[109]

Social cohesion and community relations: ERRY reported perceived reductions in tensions around shared resources (e.g. water) or services, possibly linked to the construction of infrastructure via CFW and FFA interventions as well as the establishment of Water User Associations that sought to improve water management and promote sustainable practices in agriculture. The Associations were trained in water management, irrigation techniques, and conflict resolution related to water and land disputes. The observations were qualitative and suggest the potential impact of integrated water governance, conflict sensitivity, and improved infrastructure through CFW/ FFA.

Gender and social norms: a handful of case studies and individual testimonials[110] show that women's participation in economic activities can influence community perceptions on women's roles and empowerment. However, these examples seem to represent isolated narratives, and not necessarily evidence of broader norm shifts which could be demonstrated through more robust monitoring and evaluation techniques.

3.5.1 Synthesis of Findings and Evidence Gaps on Broader Community Impacts

The evidence indicates that many transition and livelihoods interventions may generate unintended positive effects for the wider community, as well as some possible negative effects on markets. However, the available evidence is limited, and what does exist is largely anecdotal. Outside of the broader infrastructure gains resulting from CFW activities, there is little substantive evidence on whether livelihoods programming has impacts on the following: market system strengthening, employment levels, improved practices and behaviour, social cohesion, and informal safety nets, and gender norms.

Furthermore, the evidence does not point to how broader community impacts contribute to individuals' successful transition from humanitarian assistance to livelihoods activities.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the evidence base on cash assistance and livelihoods support in Yemen points much more clearly to short-term stabilisation than to successful transition. The strongest and most consistent findings relate to improvements in household food consumption, dietary diversity, and reduced reliance on negative coping strategies in the months immediately following assistance. These outcomes represent the most robust and coherent area of evidence across the literature. Transition itself, however, remains conceptually under-defined in much of that literature. Although it is often described as implicit, non-linear, or differentiated, few programmes articulate a minimum analytical model that clearly distinguishes short-term stabilisation, partial recovery, and more durable livelihood pathways. This makes it difficult to judge when observed gains amount to meaningful transition rather than temporary improvement.

Evidence on non-food-security outcomes – particularly longer-term ones - remains more limited and uneven, because such outcomes are measured less systematically and less comparably than short-term food-security indicators. Some programmes report short-term improvements in income, savings, asset accumulation, production, or psychosocial wellbeing, yet the indicators used vary considerably across studies, measurement periods are often short, and some findings rely on self-reported or anecdotal evidence rather than consistent outcome tracking. As a result, the evidence is much weaker in showing whether these gains are comparable across programmes, sustained over time, or sufficient to indicate movement towards greater self-reliance.

When it comes to duration of impact, there is very little evidence on the long-term impacts and sustainability of either cash assistance or livelihoods interventions, which makes it difficult to assess whether any transition, where observed, is durable. Few studies follow households beyond the immediate post-intervention period, and even fewer examine whether gains in food security, income, or livelihood activity are maintained once assistance ends. This limitation is especially important in Yemen, where structural constraints, including frequent shocks, weak markets, high input costs, debt, climate pressures, fragile services, and limited social protection functionality, continue to undermine households' ability to sustain progress after support tapers off.

Evidence is also especially limited on which combinations or packages of interventions are most effective for different types of households. In particular, there is insufficient clarity on what works best for very poor households and on how to support them appropriately along different pathways. Similar gaps

remain for women, people with disabilities, youth, internally displaced persons, Muhamasheen communities, and other marginalised groups. Although their heightened vulnerabilities are widely recognised, few documents provide disaggregated analysis or examine how interventions affect these groups differently over time. Stronger evidence is needed on the distinct barriers facing different groups, and on whether some households require more comprehensive, longer-term, or differently sequenced support than others.

Similarly scarce evidence explicitly addresses transition as a programme objective in its own right. Most programmes are not framed around clearly defined transition pathways, and few specify what would constitute a successful or sustainable transition in operational terms. As a result, there is limited guidance on when programmes should shift modality, when support can be reduced without causing renewed instability, or what thresholds should be used to distinguish basic stabilisation from more durable progress. In practice, the evidence shows improvements in food security and, in some cases, income, but it does not yet provide a clear analytical basis for determining when households have moved from temporary recovery towards a more sustainable pathway. In the current Yemen context, such durable pathways appear realistic only for a more limited share of households than programme language sometimes implies.

These challenges are not unique to Yemen. While in stable settings there is consistent, and robust, evidence for graduation models (which ultimately have higher costs per household due to the longer term and more intense investment required), evidence from humanitarian contexts is much more limited. A systematic review covering studies from 2002–2024, searching eight databases and the grey literature of eleven major implementing agencies, screened 575 records and found that most reviewed studies had shortcomings in terms of research rigor. Findings could not be quantitatively synthesized due to the inconsistency of outcome indicators, and while the evaluations generally presented outcomes as positive, the reviewers found little systematic or high-quality evidence for the programs' effectiveness or implementation in displacement settings. They also noted that none of the reviewed studies explicitly assessed whether any meaningful reduction in aid dependency was achieved, despite self-reliance and resilience being stated aims of most UNHCR graduation programme. The review concluded by highlighting the need to address counterfactuals, long-term outcomes, and implementation concerns.[111]

Overall, the evidence highlights clear short-term benefits, but also substantial conceptual and empirical gaps that constrain effective programme design, adaptation, and long-term planning. Addressing these gaps will require more rigorous, longitudinal, and inclusive research, alongside clearer distinctions between stabilisation, partial recovery, and more durable livelihood pathways. It will also require a stronger common framework for understanding transition, measuring readiness, and assessing sustained outcomes across different household profiles.

The table below translates the evidence gaps identified in this review into actionable recommendations for further research for the BRIGHTLY Consortium and other actors implementing graduation-type and livelihoods programming in Yemen.

Table 1: Evidence Gaps and Suggested Research Priorities for BRIGHTLY

Evidence area	Findings	Specific evidence gap	Implication for BRIGHTLY	Suggested Research Recommendation
Sustainability of outcomes after support ends	Findings show relatively stronger evidence that cash improves short-term food security, and that multi-component packages can improve income and productivity. However, long-term sustainability is not well measured.	It remains unclear whether gains in food security, income, and livelihoods are sustained after assistance ends.	This limits BRIGHTLY's ability to determine whether it is supporting real transition or only temporary stabilisation.	The programme could: Explore the feasibility of establishing a post-exit tracking system for households receiving cash and livelihoods support. Review literature on tracking as part of future research in fragile contexts to identify appropriate intervals, duration and advocating with funders to support it. Consider collecting data from comparison groups to assess whether gains are sustained over time. The tracking should use the same core household indicators measured during support, e.g. food security, income stability, coping behaviour, and continued engagement in livelihood activities.

Optimal duration and frequency	Findings suggest that transfer frequency matters. BRIGHTLY's comparative analysis indicates stronger short-term food security and coping outcomes under 15-day transfers than under monthly transfers, even where the total transfer value remained the same. This seems to be a unique and granular finding compared with the broader literature.	A plausible short-term explanation exists for why more frequent transfers produce better food security outcomes, including more stable and continuous access to food, fewer end-of-cycle shortages and negative coping, and more regular spending on diverse and perishable foods. However, evidence remains limited on whether these gains last after assistance ends, whether they improve saving and investment over time, and whether the same pattern holds across different household profiles and contexts – however it is almost impossible to carry out market analysis in DFG areas,	This affects transfer design, targeting, cost-efficiency, value for money, and decisions about when households can realistically move beyond cash without renewed instability.	In the last phase of the programme, BRIGHTLY could consider: Conducting a small cost efficiency analysis to compare cost of different frequency of disbursement; and/or Deepen the analysis (e.g. through qualitative research) on why the frequency of payment has such a significant impact on food security.

		so there will be significant variation between different areas of Yemen		
Sequencing versus layering of support (Sequencing is one intervention after another, while layering is the provision of multiple interventions simultaneously)	Findings indicate that linked and multi-component interventions are more effective than isolated inputs, but evidence comparing sequencing and layering remains limited.	There is insufficient evidence on when simultaneous support is more effective than phased support.	This directly affects BRIGHTLY's operational model and package design, particularly decisions on when support should be sequenced and when some degree of overlap may produce stronger household outcomes.	BRIGHTLY could consider comparing implementation models across comparable locations or target groups, such as cash followed by livelihoods support versus cash combined with livelihoods support, in order to determine which sequencing approach is most effective for improving food security, reducing negative coping, and supporting more stable livelihood outcomes over time.
Indicators of readiness for transition to livelihoods assistance	Findings suggest that indicators such as FCS, HDDS, and coping measures are sometimes used as practical proxies for food-security stabilisation, but income stability and self-reliance thresholds are less clearly defined.	There is no agreed or standardised framework for judging readiness to transition from cash or immediate assistance into livelihoods support,	This creates inconsistency in decisions about who is ready to move into livelihoods support and when, and risks households becoming more food insecure.	BRIGHTLY could conduct further research on indicators of readiness for transition into livelihoods support, including a review of relevant documentation beyond Yemen, in order to determine which criteria should be used consistently to decide when households are ready to move from cash or immediate assistance into livelihoods support. Based on

				this, they could develop a common programme-wide transition readiness framework for BRIGHTLY and consult relevant stakeholders including communities and share it externally.
Which livelihoods package works best for different socioeconomic and marginalized groups, including the poorest households, women, youth, persons with disabilities, IDPs and Muhammasheen households	Findings indicate limited evidence on whether different groups benefit differently from livelihood packages and why, and whether different combination of livelihoods support (e.g. cash, training, assets, coaching, savings, etc.) are most effective for different household profiles and marginalized groups.	There is limited disaggregation available on the individuals and households receiving livelihood support. It is unclear which intervention models work best for women, youth, and marginalized populations.	This limits programmatic impacts, weakens the ability to identify possible barriers to success, demonstrate inclusive transition, and risks excluding the most vulnerable. On a programmatic level, BRIGHTLY should ensure interventions are based on a thorough understanding of vulnerabilities (e.g. use Household Economy Analysis (HEA)[3] studies to inform the design of packages for very poor households).	Introduce mandatory disaggregation standards in all BRIGHTLY tools. Consistently analyse, compare and contrast outputs and data for different household profiles. Based on the above, conduct further research to better understand specific barriers that different groups may face (e.g. a thorough gender analysis).
Market-based livelihoods	Findings consistently highlight market-level constraints, but there is very limited analysis done on supply vs demand to determine the	There is no clear evidence on what works best to respond to these constraints	This could limit the wider impacts of BRIGHTLY programming and the sustainability of household-level income-generating activities.	BRIGHTLY could carry out ongoing market monitoring and analysis during project implementation to understand market dynamics during project implementation, using findings to provide

[3] HEA is a livelihoods framework that identifies and quantifies households' food, income, and expenditure sources, and calculates their ability to meet their food and non-food needs. It models scenarios and interventions to help inform programme and policy design, as well as early warning systems.

	feasibility of different livelihood and business options, and little support to entrepreneurs to diversify their chosen businesses to consider the extent of local demand. These are not systematically integrated into programming			accurate advice and guidance to entrepreneurs and live adaptations of livelihood activities and sectors.
Climate resilient livelihoods	Documentation regularly highlights climate risks in Yemen and the need to integrate climate sensitivity throughout livelihoods programming. However, climate risks do not appear to be systematically integrated into programming.	There is limited evidence on what climate resilient livelihoods approaches are most effective in the Yemini context.	This could limit the effectiveness of BRIGHTLY's livelihoods interventions that are affected by climate shocks (particularly agricultural livelihoods) and the programme's longer-term impact.	Where BRIGHTLY is supporting climate resilient livelihoods approaches, best practices should be documented and learning shared. Where this is not being done, BRIGHTLY could conduct a review of existing evidence, guidance and best practice from similar contexts to Yemen to inform future livelihoods programming.
Broader community impacts	Findings show there is limited evidence on both positive and unintended negative impacts of livelihoods programming on varying outcomes for communities, but points to	It is unclear what broader community-level impacts livelihoods and transition programming should be aiming to achieve.	This could limit BRIGHTLY's impact or ambitions to contribute to increased community resilience.	BRIGHTLY could define a wider range of community outcomes the project contributes towards (e.g. increased market activity and labour demand due to economic spillovers and multiplier effects; the uptake in improved farming practices or

	possible food system strengthening and economic spillover effects.			savings behaviours beyond direct project participants; strengthening of informal safety nets, improved local management of shared resources and assets, etc.) and begin monitoring these outcomes. For future programming, the specific broader community impacts that are required to support individual household transition should be defined.
Quality and consistency of the evidence base	Finding suggests that much of the existing evidence is descriptive, with inconsistent definitions of transition and resilience, and varying – but generally low - methodological rigor.	There is no single learning forum that engages the UN, international organizations, Yemeni organizations, donors and other humanitarian stakeholders. There are no commonly agreed indicators, tools, and reporting approaches adopted by different actors in Yemen.	This makes it difficult to compare findings and learning from BRIGHTLY with other livelihoods/graduation-type models in Yemen and globally	BRIGHTLY could review global definitions, indicators, and reporting tools and pilot a robust way of measurement as a model for other actors in Yemen.

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ANNEX 2: CODES USED FOR THEMATIC CONTENT ANALYSIS

Code	**Comment**/definition	Number of references
*Cash Plus		38
*CROSS-CUTTING	Barriers to Participation; Enablers of Success; Programme Implementation; Strengths; Implementation Gaps; Community Perceptions; Sustainability Prospects; Unintended Consequences; Safeguarding Issues; Protection Concerns; Quality of Targeting; Coordination with Other Actors	157
*EQUITY & INCLUSION - DIFFERENCES IN OUTCOMES	Relates to heading Differential Outcomes and Resilience Factors Across Population & Vulnerability Groups	62
*Financial inclusion		26
*LIVELIHOOD PACKAGE - effectiveness		158
*LIVELIHOODS VS UCT	Did the intervention lead to perceived added value of livelihood package? Did the intervention lead to short-term vs long-term benefits? Did the intervention lead to preference for UCT or livelihood support? Did the intervention lead to economic outcomes (livelihoods vs UCT)? Did the intervention lead to psychosocial outcomes (livelihoods vs UCT)? Did the intervention lead to vulnerability considerations for UCT? Did the intervention lead to barriers to participation in livelihoods? Did the intervention lead to sustainability of livelihood outcomes compared to UCT?	36
*RESILIENCE- contributing factors		136
*SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION - Indicators		122
*Sustainability of Results		88
*Village Savings and Loans		6
*Women Empowerment in Business		7
Cash-for-work		123
Children and Youth		6
COORDINATION BETWEEN ACTORS		11
Disability		20
DOCUMENT EXCLUDED FROM SYNTHESIS	excluded either because it gave an overview of the problem, but no evidence on approaches to tackle it; or it was too top line to extract any clear lesson, or else	4

● EFFECTIVE PROGRAMMATIC APPROACHES - in improving economic conditions and access to services	Economic conditions outcomes include employability, local market functioning, multipliers effects; access to services refers to education, health, WASH)	7
● EFFECTIVENESS - Livelihoods VS UCT		5
● FOOD SECURITY - stabilizing food security (to prepare for transition)		6
● FOOD SECURITY AND INCOME STABILITY - socio-economic characteristics of those who achieve it	What are the socio-economic characteristics of those who achieve food security and income stability?	3
● Gender/Women		29
○ IDPs		41
● Infrastructure		4
● LIVELIHOOD OUTCOMES AND DIFFERENTIATED OUTCOMES FOR MARGINALISED GROUPS - women, Men, IDPs, or persons with disabilities...	7. Are there differences in outcomes for women, Men, IDPs, or persons with disabilities? What other factors contribute to resilience?	35
● LIVELIHOOD PACKAGE - Agriculture		5
● LIVELIHOOD PACKAGE - effective components	Merged from 6. Which components of the livelihood package are most effective? and LIVELIHOOD PACKAGE - EFFECTIVE COMPONENTS Suggest to merge: "Livelihood package - effective components" and "*Livelihood Package - effectiveness"	6
● LIVELIHOOD PACKAGE - livestock		4
● LIVELIHOODS for Food Security Outcomes		7
● METHODOLOGY		6
● METHODOLOGY - medium evidence		4
● METHODOLOGY - Weak evidence		4
● Muhamasheen		18
● OTHER		16
● PROGRAMMATIC APPROACHES - Broader community level impacts	Broader Community-Level Impacts of Programmatic Approaches. Covers: immediate and long-term community effects on employability, markets, multipliers, and access to services.	9

ANNEX 3: PROJECTS REVIEWED

Note: The table is not an exhaustive list of all relevant programs in Yemen; and the data is not fully comprehensive and based on a rapid scan of publicly available information.

Programme	Implementing Organization	Duration	Donor(s)	Budget	Reach (Direct Beneficiaries)	Main Interventions (for the Economic Resilience Component)	Locations
Yemen Transition and Recovery Programme	**IOM**	~2016–present (phased)	European Union, Germany, others	Euro 18 million (initial phase)	Tens of thousands (project-based)	CFW, business and vocational skills training, grants to SMEs and individuals to start or expand IGAs, agriculture support, supporting value chain development, infrastructure rehabilitation, social cohesion	Aden, Lahj, Abyan, Taiz, Hadramout
Emergency Cash Transfer Programme (ECTP)	**UNICEF**	2017–present	World Bank	USD 445 million	~1.5 million households (~9 million individuals)	Unconditional cash transfers through national social protection system (SWF)	Nationwide
Resilience Programme in Yemen (KfW) ("Resilience Programme for employment-intensive Measures Phase I" and "SFD XII Employment Promotion", "Resilience Programme for Employment-intensive Measures II")	**Social Fund for Development (SFD) and**	2017-2020 2019-2021	BMZ	USD 15 million	23,560 households	CFW ("Labour Intensive Work Programme")	Almost nationwide
Transitional Assistance Programme	**GIZ**	10/2019–03/2025	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development	Not consolidated publicly		Cash-for-work, infrastructure rehabilitation, raining and inputs, agriculture, fishing, off-farm income generation (including for youth), social cohesion	Ibb, Dhamar, Hadhramaut
Vocational and Business Skills Training Project	**UNDP**	November 2020 - June 2022	KSRelief	USD 3 million	1039	TVET, entrepreneurship support, SME development, business start-up support	Multiple governorates
World Food Programme Livelihoods and Resilience Programme	**World Food Programme**	Ongoing	Multiple donors (incl. EU, Germany, others)	Part of broader WFP Yemen portfolio (USD 1 billion+ annually overall)	Millions (varies yearly)	Food assistance for assets, climate-resilient agriculture, livelihoods support, asset creation	Nationwide

Programme	Implementing Organization	Duration	Donor(s)	Budget	Reach (Direct Beneficiaries)	Main Interventions (for the Economic Resilience Component)	Locations
Enhanced Rural Resilience in Yemen (ERRY I–III)	UNDP	2016–2023	European Union	~Euro 70+ million (combined phases)	~2 million+ reached across phases	Cash-for-work, SME support, agriculture, vocational training, local governance support	Multiple governorates including Hadramout, Lahj, Abyan, Hodeidah
Supporting Institutional and Economic Resilience in Yemen (SIERY)	UNDP	2020–2025	European Union	EUR 69.8 million	~35,945 for jobs and livelihoods ~1.5 million beneficiaries for broader infrastructure	Main livelihoods interventions: support to small and medium enterprises (skills development, capital support), linkage with microfinance institutions Broader interventions: local governance strengthening, service rehabilitation, economic recovery, district planning	Taiz, Aden, Lahj, Hadramout
Building Resilience through Integrated and Gendered Humanitarian and Livelihoods Programming (BRIGHTLY)	CARE-led consortium with NRC, Oxfam, Save the Children, YFCA and 9 Yemeni local organizations	2022–2026	Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office	~GBP 70 million		Cash assistance, agriculture and livestock, small business, apprenticeships, VSLAs, systems strengthening, gender-focused resilience programming	Multiple governorates (nationwide targeting through partners)
IMSEA (Integrated Model of Social and Economic Assistance and Empowerment)	UNICEF	2021–2025	Multiple donors	Not clearly published	Not clearly published	Integrated cash + livelihoods + coaching + financial inclusion, Education support	(Sana'a), Aden, Ibb, and Taizz governorates
Food Assistance for Assets (FFA)	WFP	2019- 2023	multiple donors	Part of Yemen portfolio	Millions (varies yearly)	CFW- Asset creation, community infrastructure, cash/food for assets, Market access improvement through infrastructure	Nationwide
Rebuilding Livelihoods and Capacities of Conflict-Affected Small-Scale Fisheries Households in Aden and Hadhramout Final Evaluation	UNDP with the Youth Leadership Development Foundation (YLDF)	2021 - 2022	Government of Japan	USD 3.5 million	Business skills & entrepreneurship training: 1,150 women and youth Skill trainings (net maintenance, boat repairs etc) 400 beneficiaries Cash grants to establish micro-enterprises) 500 In kind items distributed (Fishing	Enhance fishing production; support fishing related micro-enterprises: Business skills & entrepreneurship training; Skill trainings (net maintenance, boat repairs etc); Cash grants to establish micro-enterprises); Distribution of fishing related assets (Fishing boats/boat engines/fishing nets/GPS/sonar devices	Aden; Hadramawt

Programme	Implementing Organization	Duration	Donor(s)	Budget	Reach (Direct Beneficiaries)	Main Interventions (for the Economic Resilience Component)	Locations
					boats/boat engines/fishing nets/GPS/so Sonar devices: 1200 fishers		
Sustainable Fisheries Development (SFISH) in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden	UNDP	2022-2026	World Bank	USD 41,150,000		Enhancing fishing production through assets, trainings, post-harvest storage, use of technology, small enterprises; Restoration of fishing infrastructure; Support to fishery governance; Focus on women and youth engagement	Aden, Al Mahrah, Hadramout, and Taiz
Final Evaluation of the Social Protection for Community Resilience Project	UNDP	1 July 2017/ 31 March 2021	European Union	USD 28,032,500	Target 126,000; actual 37,589 (for cash for work)	Cash for work linked to work and life skills Restoration of community asset restoration for basic services Financial Inclusion (education and access) Improve access to essential social services –health and psychosocial support.	Taizz, Saa'da, Hodeida, Hajja, Aden, Abyan, Lahj and Shabwa (for cash for work component - 5 additional governorates received Health infrastructure rehabilitation support)
Integrated Water Resources Management to Enhance Resilience of Agriculture (ERA) and Food Security	UNDP	2023-2026	BMZ and KfW	USD 16,094,420	~21,000+ households	Agriculture and food processing support (including women's food gardens) Development and rehabilitation of water infrastructure; Building capacity of relevant government offices and committees	Lahj and Taiz
Emergency Social Protection Enhancement and COVID-19 Response Project	UNDP	2020-2024	World Bank	USD 73,337,915		Cash transfers (for health and nutrition), CFW Support to small businesses in food production and distribution: technical assistance and links to micro-financing institutions	Nationwide
CFW Programme	Islamic Relief	Around 2021-2022	SIDA		2000 households	CFW	Hudayda and Lahj

Programme	Implementing Organization	Duration	Donor(s)	Budget	Reach (Direct Beneficiaries)	Main Interventions (for the Economic Resilience Component)	Locations
Promoting resilience and social cohesion through an integrated response to vulnerable communities in Yemen	ACTED-led consortium with CARE, DRC, IRC, NRC, and Search for Common Ground.	April 2020-November 2022	European Union	Euro 20 million	Not clearly published	Livestock and agriculture support, establishment kitchen gardens, training and toolkits to beekeepers. Vocational and business management trainings designed to diversify livelihoods and favour value chain development. Cash Assistance	Lahj and Dahmar
Cash Consortium of Yemen Multi Purpose Cash Assistance Programme	DRC-led consortium with ACTED, NRC, Mercy Corps, Solidarités International and IOM	2020-2023 (or longer?)	European Union	N.A.	58,606 households as of 2024	Cash assistance; support the transition to longer-term resilience programs through referrals.	Multiple governorates (nationwide targeting through partners)

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