

FROM DEPENDENCY TO DIGNITY HOW SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS HELPED ONE **WOMAN** REBUILD HER FUTURE



For years, every day began with the same uncertainty for Ishraq Ali Ali. Living with her husband and family in Al Dhale'e Governorate, she never knew whether there would be enough income to feed her family or meet their most basic needs. Like many vulnerable households in rural Yemen, the family depended on irregular daily labor that provided little security and even less hope for the future.

Without a stable source of income, Ishraq found herself relying on relatives and neighbors to help her family get through difficult times. The financial strain gradually affected every aspect of her life. She stopped participating in community gatherings, lost confidence in herself, and struggled to imagine a future beyond simply surviving.

“Before this project, we depended on temporary work, and we had no steady income we could count on,” she recalls. “I was always anxious because I didn’t know how I would provide for my family’s needs. Every day was filled with worry.”



Ishraq feeding her newly acquired livestock using the practical animal husbandry and feeding techniques she learned through the training.

Everything began to change when Ishraq joined the Building Sustainable Livelihoods project, implemented by Yemen Family Care Association with funding from CRS. The project supports vulnerable households in Al Dhale'e to move beyond short-term assistance by building sustainable sources of income through skills development, financial support, and ongoing technical guidance.

The journey started with three rounds of conditional cash transfer, each valued at USD 90, enabling Ishraq to meet her family's

immediate needs while participating in the project's training activities. She then attended entrepreneurship training, where she learned the fundamentals of managing a small business, financial planning, and informed decision-making.

“When I joined the program and attended the trainings, I began to understand how to organize my business and manage my money properly,” she says. “For the first time, I felt that people believed in me and trusted that I could succeed.”

Building on these new skills, Ishraq completed specialized livestock training, where she gained practical knowledge in animal husbandry, breeding, feeding, and disease prevention. After successfully completing the training, she received a USD 500 livelihood grant, which she invested in purchasing five sheep. Today, two of the sheep are pregnant, and her flock is expected to continue growing, creating a stronger foundation for her family's future.

To further diversify her income, Ishraq also participated in home gardening training. Equipped with seeds, tools, and practical agricultural knowledge, she established a small home garden that now supplies fresh vegetables for her family while generating additional income from surplus produce sold in the local market.

“ The home garden provides healthy vegetables for my family, and I can sell the extra produce to neighbors or in the market, Now I have another source of income alongside my livestock project.”

She says



The growing herd of livestock purchased through the livelihood grant, providing Ishraq and her family with a sustainable source of income.

Throughout the process, Ishraq received regular technical mentoring that helped her strengthen her business management skills, monitor the progress of her livestock enterprise, and make informed decisions about growing her livelihood.

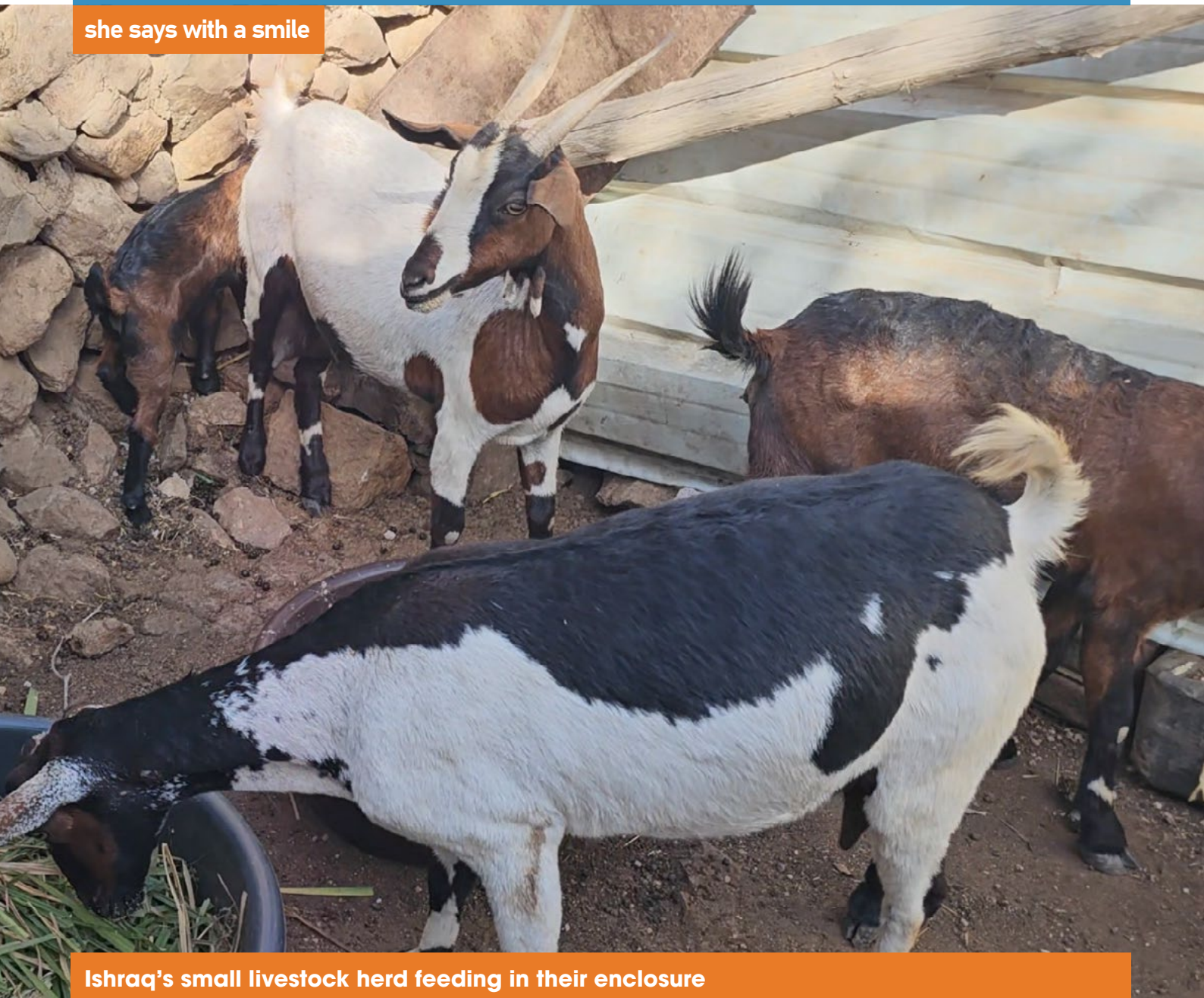
Today, Ishraq no longer depends on irregular labor or assistance from others. Her livestock enterprise provides a reliable source of income, while her home garden contributes to both household nutrition

and financial stability. Together, these activities have enabled her family to meet their basic needs with greater confidence and resilience.

The transformation extends beyond economics. Regaining control over her livelihood has restored Ishraq's confidence and renewed her sense of purpose. She now makes decisions about her business independently and is already planning to expand her enterprise in the future.

“ Today I have my own livestock business, I am confident in myself and hopeful about the future. This project changed my life and gave me back the hope I had lost. ”

she says with a smile



Ishraq's small livestock herd feeding in their enclosure

Ishraq's experience demonstrates how combining short-term assistance with practical skills training, productive assets, and continuous mentoring can help vulnerable households move toward lasting self-reliance. Rather than providing temporary relief alone, the project invested in her capacity to build sustainable livelihoods that will continue supporting her family long after the intervention ends.

Today, the flock of sheep grazing outside Ishraq's home represents much more than livestock. It represents security, opportunity, and the confidence to build a better future—one step at a time.