Does our work generate protagonists?

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Background

This year’s Annual Meeting focused on ways of linking AVSI’s Strategic Plan to our work and determining how far AVSI in Uganda generates protagonists as a result of its interventions.

AVSI promotes the dignity of the human person and therefore results as such become evidence of progressive transformation.

Sub-themes

Generating protagonists.
Linking the AVSI Strategic Plan to our work.

Purpose

The event purpose was to reflect on:
• What we do
• How we work.
• Who we work with: donors and partners.
• Who we work for: beneficiaries.

What mattered most this year

AVSI Foundation’s new president, Patrizia Savi made her first visit to projects in Uganda.

Overview of AVSI projects in Uganda

AVSI is undertaking a process of reviewing its Strategic Plan. This meeting succeeds a recently related discussion in Milan.

“Do your work as a vocation and you are most likely to become a saint. Do it as a job and you will likely miss the mark” – John Makoha, AVSI Foundation Country Representative.

Coverage

AVSI is present in 67 of Uganda’s 117 districts, with recent extension to Arua and Karamoja region.
Headquarter in Kampala. Field offices include: Arua, Gulu, Kitgum, Kamwenge, Kotido, Lira, Mbale, Mbarara, Pader, Palabek.

Beneficiary reach

1.5 million people.

Others, essential:

• A new position of Program Director was introduced on the Organogram.
• A moment of silence was observed in remembrance of a former Human Resources Manager, Charles Ombanya.

What we do

AVSI intervention sectors:

AVSI intervention sectors:

Education  Food Security and Nutrition  Agriculture  Healthcare  Protection  Psychosocial support and care

Economic strengthening  Water sanitation and hygiene  Energy and environment  Urban development  Emergency

How we work

• Through direct implementation and partnerships, including civil society, district local governments and communities.
• We have moved from handouts to building capacity and graduating protagonists while paying special attention to resilience.
• We have a commitment to learning, through monitoring and evaluation working groups and communication.
• We are interested in replicability and innovation - many of our projects are a result of another.

Who we work with: donors and partners: AVSI projects in Uganda

AVSI has 18 running projects in Uganda with a combined budget of Euro 91,372,427 (noting that SCORE project closes in 2018 and has a budget of Euro 37.3 million).

Who we work for:

AVSI works with direct beneficiaries: children, women and girls, Persons with Disabilities, Civil Society Organizations, Private Sector – a lately powerful partner in development, Local governments, Emergency; and takes part in higher level technical working groups and policy design at district and national levels to influence quality and standards. Examples of such are Agriculture Sector Skills Council, National Child Protection working group, National Monitoring and Evaluation working group, National OVC coordination committee, UNHCR national interagency committee meetings, and UNHCR Education, UNHCR Protection, Forum for education, USAID Implementing Partners Nutrition and USAID Economic growth technical working groups.

“Our work brings meaning to relationships”
Your work represents the core and origin of the experience of AVSI Foundation. My visit to Uganda was a deliberate choice—Patrizia Savi, AVSI President, while commending the competence with which AVSI Uganda staff continue to implement projects.

On the field visit

AVSI President and Uganda’s Minister for Disaster and Preparedness

AVSI President visited Palabek refugee settlement in Lamwo District, St Joseph’s hospital and Meeting Point Kitgum— an AVSI Founding member.

In Palabek refugee settlement, Patrizia Savi discussed AVSI’s role in the refugee crisis in Uganda with Minister for Disaster and Preparedness, Hon. Hillary Onek who appreciated the AVSI method of work and related it to his own growth and humanity. She also visited a school without walls where learners continue to attend school because of the love they receive from the teachers.

Summary presentations

Operations and Financial, Peter Galibwa

To show the economic trends to assist in strategic planning.

Recruitment: 520 staff by November 2017. Kitgum being largest with 222 staff.


Running projects by 2017: 18 projects, with a combined budget of Euro 91,373,427 (noting that SCORE project closes in 2018 and has a budget of Euro 37.3 million).

Project proposals submitted in 2017: Seven with a total budget of Euro 7,014,541.

Income by donor in 2017:

- USAID
- EKN
- OTHERS

Income and expenditure trend since 2010: AVSI Uganda was at its peak in 2014, however it operates on an average annual budget of USD 12 million.

Synopsis of 2017 Milan Annual Meeting

Patrizia Savi, AVSI Foundation President

During the first week of October a meeting of the worldwide management committee took place in Milan to draft the Strategic Guidelines for the period 2019 to 2023.

Aware of the strengths of AVSI’s history and tradition, the epochal change that is taking place is urging for a change in the way AVSI works, and that requires a reflection on the way forward and on the adequacy of AVSI’s actions in answering the needs.

Views on current trends and contexts were solicited from Elisabetta Belloni (Secretary General of the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs), Stefano Manservisi (Director General for International Cooperation and Development of the European Commission), and Father Julian (President of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation).

Plenary discussions and working groups were instituted to investigate four main areas: Who AVSI is; What we do; Who we work with and Who we work for.

The outcome of these meetings was summarized into the draft Strategic Guidelines 2019-2023, which will be integrated into the discussions of Uganda’s Annual Meeting 2017 as well as the subsequent regional meetings in other countries.

Regional annual meetings shall be completed by June 2018, and the outcomes from the meetings will be summarized in a final document that will be submitted to the AVSI Board of Directors and Founding Partners’ meeting for approval.
AVSI Global Overview

Giampaolo Silvestri, Secretary General

The proposed mission will assist us to define what we want to realize through the course of our action. The focus is on education, not only as a sector, but as an instrument.

Projects should be considered as instruments. Moreover the need for communicating and sharing results is important in order to create positive change.

Mauro Giacomazzi adds: this definition was born out of the desire to start from the core of AVSI's work: "people for development". For AVSI, development starts from the discovery and recognition by the person of his/her own value, which always starts with an encounter within the community.

Method:
In project implementation, AVSI uses the following approach:
- To start from the value of the person, who is never defined by the circumstances in which s/he lives.
- To consider the person always in his/her family and community context.
- To do with: accompany and let ourselves be accompanied, recognizing that we all share the same human experience.
- To involve all stakeholders: encourage the participation of beneficiaries, providers, partners, donors, and the private sector.
- To learn from experience and capitalize on the lessons learned.

Thematic Working Group discussions:
Participants separated into four working groups to discuss the purpose of the meeting:

> What do we do?
> How we work;
> Who we work with: donors and partners;
> Who we work for: beneficiaries.

What do we do? | Rita Larok and John Paul Nyeko

In line with SDGs, AVSI generates development through education as a main approach in the following sectors:

Education:
- Offers bursaries and scholarships for OVCs, in both formal and informal education.
- Constructs school infrastructures and improves school facilities (mainly in refugee settings).
- Builds capacity of teachers, parents, support staff, learners, community, and institutions.
- Contributes toward policy development through advocacy for market responsive models (SKY project influencing policy at Skilling Uganda Authority).

Protection:
- Carries out interventions focused on gender norms and gender-based violence.
- Creates awareness on protection and legal issues through dialogues, sensitization and outreaches.
- Reintegrates children to their families (FARE project).
- Strengthens child protection systems and mechanisms (SCORE project).
- Contributes toward policy development through advocacy.

Health:
- Physical (provision of mobility appliances), and mental rehabilitation (GROW project).
- HIV programming (EMTCT, HCT).
- Promotion of maternal and child health.
- Construction of infrastructures and provision of medical equipment.
- Referrals for medical care.
- Sexual and reproductive health.
- Create awareness about nutrition issues and offer nutrition support services.

Livelihood:
- Saving groups.
- Consumption smoothing.
- Apprenticeships.
- Market oriented skills (community skills, financial skills, SPM).
- Market linkages.

Agriculture:
- Provides agricultural inputs.
- Agriculture extension services.
- Capacity building of agri-extension workers.
- Agri-skilling.
- Private sector development.
- Mind-set change toward agriculture.

Energy and Environment:
- Clean cook stove project (promoting and selling clean-energy stoves).
- Promotes productive use of energy mini-grid (in Kalangala).
- Creates awareness for preservation of trees.
- Promotes climate smart practices (SKY project).

Do we innovate/replicate?
- We innovate, however we do little on publication (both internally and externally).
- We replicate and scale up (the previous OVC program gave birth to SCORE, then FARE, DSP).

Do we provide services or implement development projects?
- We implement development projects even though sometimes we provide services and in the process we create development.
- Service provision is a means to create development.

What can we do for the future 2019-2023?
- Increase the development of cooperatives and groups.
- Scale up organic farming.
- Climate risk management.
- Learning, adaptation, replication.
- Communicate processes and results (internally and externally).
- Oil and gas sector (take advantage of opportunities).
- Urban development.
- Scale up the integration of ICT in programs

Remarks:
We implement programs such as saving groups, clean hygiene in the urban area. However urbanization is increasing and we need to target more of the urban population.

The oil and gas sector, and refugees, are politicized sectors with risks involved, however AVSI has several strengths for instance opportunities created for small holder farmers to provide food to workers in the oil and gas sector.
Who do we work with? context, donors and partners | Samuele Rizzo and Jordan Canocakacon

AVSI works with stakeholders, including:

Central government:
- To contribute to national development plan and policies.
- For sustainability of projects.
- To fill the funding gap.
- To help the government learn from the policies in place.
- To supplement government work.

Local government:
- To provide direct linkage to beneficiaries (MoUs with districts to formalize engagements).
- To collaborate and network with other NGOs for effective service delivery.
- To build the capacity of local governments.

Community-based organizations

Founding Members (LGHIE, COWA, MPI, etc.)

Faith-based organizations.

Private sector:
- To transfer skills.
- For corporate social responsibility.
- To influence decision-making at some level.

UN agencies
- For funding.
- To uphold frameworks and standards.

Development partners.

Donors (USAID, ERN, Italian Cooperation, etc.).

Community beneficiaries (Farmer Field School groups).
- Expert beneficiaries that transfer skills in the community.

Financial Sustainability:
- AVSI engages in the following practices:
  - Diversification of funding: both conventional donors and private donors.
  - Co-funding and cost-sharing.
  - Visibility through documentation and communication (especially to show our innovations, such as the Furaha Graduation Model, Earn as you Learn Model).
  - Nurturing relationships with our donors.

How do we choose the sectors that we work in?
- Organization experience and capacity.
- Conditionality versus AVSI core values.
- Consortium capacity.
- Government strategic direction.
- Needs responsiveness (end of project evaluation, needs assessment, etc).

Remarks:
AVSI’s common trend is capacity building of beneficiaries who are growing into partners, making AVSI’s methodology a whole process because these partners are decision to transfer skills to others.
On Kamwenge Graduation Pilot Project

John Makoha and Rita Larok

Kamwenge graduation pilot project is a result of the successes of the SCORE project. This project model was mostly recommended by the donor.

Project outline:
- Lead agency: AVSI Foundation.
- Partners: Trickle Up and IMPAQ.
- Duration: 7 years: October 1, 2017 - September 30, 2024.
- Target: 13,200 HHs, 50/50 host and refugees in two cohorts.
- Coverage: Kamwenge District, Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement.
- Budget: USD 36,700,000.
- Donor: USAID/Uganda, Office of Food for Peace.

The first year will be dedicated to carrying out research and studies, while in the subsequent years the beneficiaries will be divided into two cohorts: the first cohort will receive the intervention in the first three years, the second cohort in the final three years in order to build on the lessons learned with the first cohort.

Goal: Extremely poor refugee and Ugandan households in Kamwenge graduate from conditions of food insecurity and fragile livelihoods to self-reliance and resilience.

Purpose 1: Improved food security and nutrition status of household members.
Purpose 2: Improved household economic status.
Purpose 3: Increased resilience of household members and communities.

Approach:
- Graduation and Resilience Model.
- Adaptive Management (Refine, adapt, implement).
- Climate risk management.
- Household development plan.
- Women Plus (AVSI-made innovation that considers a woman plus her household).
- Gender inclusion.
- ReHOPE strategy (resilience).
- Research and learning.
- Coaching and coaches (both with individuals and in groups).
- Consumption smoothing (a family receives a cash hand-out and keeps receiving it until it stabilizes to conduct an income-generating activity), savings, asset transfer

Noteworthy quotes:

A person moves only when they have to do something that touches their heart - Mauro Giacomazzi, Education Advisor, AVSI Foundation.

My mom stood up for me, she cheered my decision to get these skills – a choice that came from my heart. That motivated me. It raised my confidence because I realized I was not alone – Vanessa Ayo, SKY project youth.

There are lots of people like me, young mothers, single mothers, people who have lost hope, but I want to encourage them. I want to share the knowledge that I have to give them hope - agriculture is the way forward, it just needs love and passion – Belinda Nankinga, SKY project youth.

I can no longer pass by a malnourished child without giving advice to the mother. Wherever we are, we are protagonists. - Joanita Ssebayiga, AVSI Foundation

Does our work generate protagonists?

Mauro Giacomazzi

The greatest component of the development is the subject itself:

What is a subject? What constitutes it? The subject, to put it simply, is its self-awareness, the awareness one has of itself. The power of the subject, or lack thereof, depends on how aware a person is of herself, her value, her infinite destiny, her desires that exceeds all limits. There's nothing more important than this, anywhere in the world - Julian Carron

What our protagonists said:

Belinda's testimony
I am grateful to have been part of the SKY project: my children will not go hungry again. I am no longer seated at home waiting for life to take over. I am taking things into my own hands and being proactive. When I face challenges, I push myself to look for solutions: I look at the markets, I network with people, and I know that I will make it. And to me, this is the best success I ever got.

Vanessa's testimony
I look forward to sharing my expertise with my peers. I want to create awareness so that they can do something meaningful for themselves. I am confident that I will bring change to my family when I will start a project with the skills I have gained.

Belinda Nankinga and Vanessa Ayo received training in horticulture from the SKY project.

Their experiences show how SKY project creates self-awareness and how passion for farming is the common denominator for all our partners. As a result some of our beneficiaries are growing into our partners, which is a beautiful part of the project.
Judith’s testimony  
I am happy to give back. I support four orphans with their education.  
Having gained support from the project, Judith says her experience with the DSP influences her decisions in life.

David’s testimony  
Growing up, I was beaten. I carried on the habit to beat up children to “discipline” them and to “help” them improve their performance. But not even once did our school perform well.

When I learned to treat them in a positive way, for the first time in 2016 our school qualified for the National music dance and drama festival – we were sixteenth in the whole country – David Okumu, Teacher, Anaka P.7. School.

Anaka P7 School now shares the experience of successful effects of SCORE project’s “good school” approach.

Beatrice’s testimony  
The counseling and trainings Beatrice received are helping her keep her children together. They have made strides and can at least have a complete meal a day. Beatrice’s story falls within FARE project’s “prevention” component - working with families at high risk of separation.

AVSI’s global viewpoint  
Giampaolo Silvestri and Nada Perovic

- Socio-economic projects remain predominant for AVSI and are aimed at quality education and the integral development of the person.
- In 2016, AVSI Foundation implemented 168 projects with more than 50 percent focusing on education.
- Pay specific attention to innovation to enable response to emerging needs.
- Invest more resources and evaluate opportunities in climate change and energy.
- Consider sustainable approaches to emergency or crisis situations.
- Build relationships with Founding bodies, private sector, international and local businesses, research institutions and think tanks.
- Build capacity of partner CSOs to improve their ability to respond to needs.
- Increase impact of AVSI work in countries and promote a regional approach to support countries in crisis.
- Develop publications of lesson learned and disseminate widely.
- Invest in internal communication to foster exchange and keep abreast with the ever evolving tools.
- Strengthen our human resources.

General recommendations:

- Continue to profile our beneficiaries as an important process.
- AVSI in Uganda is experiencing a new phase of growth, it is therefore important to recognize our strengths, and build capacity of staff.
- Reflect on projects as instruments to generate protagonists.
- Promote exchange of experiences, promising practices between countries.