

### **PACOME Model in Rwanda**

AVSI is present in Rwanda since 1994, reaching now a staff of 53, and working in 9 districts. The main sectors of interventions are first of all education, child protection, GBV, family economic strengthening, water and hygiene, sanitation, environment, nutrition and food security. AVSI works with 18 partners supporting almost 2000 children.

#### **1. The approach is family centered**

**The Child**



**His\her Family**



**The Community**



**Working with children and families considers 3 levels: personal, family and community. Attention to the person, integrated in his/her family and community context, enhancement of his/her personal heritage (resilience), enhancement of community heritage through strengthening relationships and involvement of the institutions.**

## 2. The Model

### PACOME (Parents, COmmunauté, Ecole) partnership model



With yearly private funds (AVSI Distance Support Program, DSP) for 1860 children for an amount of 250 Euro per child, AVSI reaches almost 40,000 beneficiaries. The services, aid, and support provided to all beneficiaries are several, and are implemented directly or in partnership with different local bodies. The common characteristic of each activity is the strong involvement and commitment of parents and local groups.

## 3. Implementation

The implementation of this model is done directly through URINZIRA Socio-educative Center or through implementing partners rooted in the beneficiary communities.

- URINZIRA is an acronym, which stands for: families on the path of development. Other groups are *Urubohero* and *Intore* (groups build on traditional existing groups where young men are taught how to be a responsible adult with positive values and wise behavior useful to their family and country. It is within those structures that elders can transmit their knowledge to insure the continuity of the Rwandan society.

- b) AVSI implements its projects in partnership with local institutions, local and faith based organizations embedded in the local communities. Among the main partners, there are ten Primary and Secondary Schools Complex (GS); one Primary Schools (EP); one health Center (CS); and three local NGOs (CEFAPEK: Centre de Formation Agropastoral de Kamonyi, HRD: Handicapé Réhabilitéé dans ses Droits and HOPE Foundation and two Social Centers.

The socio educative center URINZIRA (as well as the comparable other centers run by partners) is the core of every action starting from supporting child education from pre-school, early child education\care to secondary school and vocational training including life skills program, and adult literacy. Parents are running the center in shift (i.e. one day every two weeks) and besides being a meeting point for the entire community, the center provides legal and psychosocial support. By these simple and basic activities, the care of each child is intertwined with the family and community touching almost all life aspects. For example the activities offered at center have a strong impact on nutrition and food security improving at the same time health and well-being; saving and vocational training programs for all ages provides ability and support for small income generating activities which contribute also to cover school expenses.

#### 4. Main result of the PACOME Model for 2015-2016

##### For the child:

##### Early childhood development

- Five districts, out of the 9 in which AVSI is present, offer day care to 500 children in pre-school age thank you to parents voluntarily working in shift at the day care center. More specifically parents can leave their children at the day care center and go to work every day expect the day in which they volunteer to take care of their and other children).
- Parents equipped playgrounds for the day care centers with 48 different kinds of toys. These playgrounds serve 1,650 children.

##### Child participation

- School parliaments are organized in each partner school where students' representatives advocate for their peers facing challenges in their family or their community and contribute to problems solving.

##### School dropout mitigation

- For savings for education, more than 1.366 children received rabbits on a revolving livestock-credit basis. 549 children opened savings bank accounts which allow them a regular saving regularly, made possible by mobile bank counters established in collaboration with RIM (Interdiocesan Microfinance Network). 92 students have already been able to buy school materials by themselves (pens, notebooks, uniforms and shoes).
- School failure problems were resolved through remedial courses organized during the holidays for 78 students, based on peer education.
- 106 actors of education (elected at grassroots level) are available and have become a bridge between child, family and community. Thanks to their collaboration 80% of students at risk are back in school.
- The training of 27 social workers allowed to identify and follow 26 children with psychological problems and treated with play therapy in the playground equipped by parents. These children were able to improve their communication and imagination skills, which facilitated the creation of links with their comrades and their neighbors; and they were able to continue their studies easily improving their learning accomplishment.

This type of approach brings together children and students, teachers' school authorities, parents and community leaders, and by strengthening links among the community it converges in a successful effort to improve schools' learning outcome.

### For the Family:

#### Family economic strengthening for

- More than 480 families received small livestock
- 130 families opened saving for health bank accounts
- 53 more women were able to buy goats as part of saving for health through their integration into self-help groups.
- More than 100 got a personal loan in financial institution (MFI) thanks to their saving groups (SILC)
- 119 parents prepared income generating projects,
- 77 got funding from guarantees funds.
- 430 adults successfully learned reading, writing and counting,
- 12 families of literate people have started small businesses and are successfully managing the new small business thanks to the training they attended

#### Women and girls empowerment

- Among 34 families who benefited from counseling, 19 have no more problems and live in harmony, and the remaining families know how to better manage their relationships and their conflicts have decreased.
- 6 gender-specific groups (groupes de paroles, namely groups of friendship and sharing) initiated with the mothers under the Distance Support Program. This groups are called "Urubhero" (sort of Rwandan traditional women's school;) and more than 400 mothers can have a place where they exchange and share their experiences and help each other with mutual advice on education, nutrition, and GBV issue. Each Urubhero groups is divided into 17 self-help groups where they are also organized into saving groups linked to financial institutions in order to familiarize with saving and credit.
- Urubhero have been organized also for girls, and elder women supervised the dialogues and sharing among girls. Thank you to these centers more than 388 girls, aged 14-24 years, attended vocational training in tailoring, received psychosocial support, and learned basic financial skills. In addition at this center they created welcoming rooms for babies (6 month to 2 years) to allow all these young girls to meet on a regular base.

#### Small business

- The economic strengthening resulted in business activities and cooperatives in different sectors. One of those is for the promotion of craft products made within the community: this new cooperative is the process to obtain legal recognition. Other two cooperatives were established by AVSI (in 2009) in the agriculture sector: COPROMA (Cooperative pour la Promotion du Manioc) and COCAKA (Cooperative des Cafeiers de Kageyo). For instance COCAKA in the early stage received funds from the local government to expand the cultivated land that is now 7.5 hectares currently producing five tons of coffee per harvest. The coffee produced is of the finest quality, Amaraba Bourbon Arabica variety, and it is then sold to Union Coffee - UK, which in turn produces a Fair-trade certified brand for the United States. The cooperative has 113 members, and the great majority is women.

## For The Community:

### **Parental involvement & Positive parenting**

- 127 parents trained on data collection tools (CSI, H & S, Food Security and Food Diversity)
- 405 parents trained on positive parenting and were able to educate 1,358 peers. Thanks to positive parenting sessions, the number of male parents involved in day care has increased. Among 53 Day Care parent volunteers, 18 are male. AVSI initiated five daycare centers and others seven were born from the initiative of some parents, and built by the local community, or also by the administrative cell authorities. Forty-eight women opened saving accounts to provide for the education of their children. These ECD center run by parents are potentially new social venture “child care center”.

### **Community involvement**

#### ***Community based child protection mechanism***

Eight Child Protection and Gender Base Violence Clubs, 3 clubs for parents, 5 school parliaments were created and reinforced. These clubs offered training to 161 parents and teachers, along with 147 community-policing members, on Child Protection and Gender Based Violence. The people trained are now able to identify cases of protection and refer them to social workers when necessary.

5 CP / GBV network, bringing together stakeholders in the field of CP / GBV, have been set up in the intervention districts. Meetings are held quarterly.

### **Community outreach**

#### ***Mental health***

In mobile clinics (in collaboration with psychologist and psychiatrist of Rwanda National University, College of Medicine, mental health department), more than 4,000 people have been informed about mental health issues, their causes and consequences for the individual, the family and the community, and about the mechanisms of accompanying and taking care of people with those problems. As a result, 309 people with mental health problems, including 33 children have been treated. and 28 cases identified during follow-up and family counseling, were cared for and / or referred to response services.

#### ***Nutrition, hygiene and sanitation***

- Two sessions per month on **nutrition education** (culinary demonstrations, balanced meal using daily available resources in the village) and one session of growth monitoring are organized monthly in each village of the 5 districts.
- More than 16,600 people were sensitized on hygiene and sanitation thank you to setting up, in partner school, of 8 hygiene and sanitation clubs; 40 kitchen; 70 pit latrines built in mood bricks; 32 improved cooking stoves; 45 composters; 64 dish racks constructed. In addition, more than 60 houses were rehabilitated and paved with local materials- All the setting up was done by the self-help groups. Additional positive result can be appreciated in food security, dietary diversity, and child wellbeing.

#### ***1,000 days window of opportunity***

306 pregnant and breastfeeding women sensitized on the preparation of a suitable diet for the pregnant and breastfeeding woman and her hygiene. Those women become aware of the importance of the **1,000 days window of opportunity**.

### AVSI Foundation

The Foundation – Non-Governmental Organization, ONLUS, established in 1972 – works in Africa, Latin America and Caribbean, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

The areas of competence are: socio-educational issues, urban development, health, work, agriculture, food safety and water, energy and environment, humanitarian aid and emergency situations, migrations, reaching more than 2,6 million direct beneficiaries.

Its mission aims to promote human dignity through development cooperation activities, with a main focus on education, within the Catholic Social Doctrine.

The experience gained in different sectors, since more than forty years, represents the heritage of the Knowledge Center of the Foundation, a center that manages the results of past experiences and the outcomes of different projects, that protects the value of knowledge and supports a constant identification of its activities through publications, researches and seminars. For the year 2015, globally AVSI reached 2,600,000 direct beneficiaries with a worldwide staff of 1114, in 30 countries, and implementing 130 projects.