Annual Report 2020

AVSI USA

People for development

Rwanda
Participants during a training course in a village in Gatsibo. Photo by Andrea Signori

Cover: Mexico
Crecemos staff distributing food to vulnerable families in Monte Albán, Oaxaca, during the COVID-19 pandemic Photo by Roberto Zempoaltecati. **(Winner of the 2020 Global Giving Photo Contest)**

Back cover: Lebanon
A Syrian girl in an informal refugee settlement in the district of Marj El-Khokh.
Photo by Aldo Gianfrate

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AVSI USA
People for development

2020 - A time for courage

The pandemic has turned our world upside down and challenged us in many ways. Across the globe, AVSI staff and partners have been obliged to suspend activities, adapt to changing circumstances, and chart new ways forward. The pandemic put us starkly in front of two frightful scenarios: contagion, illness, and possible death if we continue our activities as usual, and the negative repercussions of ceasing to serve communities in times of exacerbated need, which included hunger, loss of education, slow down of economic activities, and the psychological damage that comes from neglect and social distancing. Truly, 2020 was a time to stand united with courage and humility, convinced that we could not give in or give up.

We did not stop. As related on pages 8 to 11 of this report, the resilience and creativity of AVSI's and partners' staff throughout the year was impressive and inspiring.

Our donors and supporters stayed with us every step of the way. In fact, many of you even stepped up and asked how you could contribute more. When other disasters hit, like the port blast in Beirut, Lebanon in August 2020, your response was overwhelming. On page 20, we invite you to read more about how ordinary people across the US decided not to remain paralyzed in front of the dramatic situations being lived across the world but instead chose to act and contribute to our mission.

2020 has been an extraordinary year that ended with the recognition of just how much we need each other, and how much we can do together.

Thank you for your courage and for being with us,

Ezio Castelli
President

Jackie Aldrette
Managing Director

Who we are

AVSI-USA is a non-profit organization created in 2000 to work with individuals and communities in developing countries to promote dignity and build resilience in the face of poverty and marginalization.

AVSI-USA is a member of the AVSI Foundation, a network of 36 organizations worldwide which share the same vision and method. Created in 1972, AVSI Foundation carries out development cooperation and humanitarian projects throughout the world.

Vision

AVSI-USA works for a world where the person, aware of her value and dignity, is the protagonist of her own integral development and that of her community, even in crisis and emergency contexts.

Mission

AVSI-USA works with individuals, communities, partners and donors to restore dignity and build resilience in the face of poverty and marginalization.
AVSI-USA sustains long-term partnerships with local organizations, jointly designing projects, raising funds and implementing activities in the areas of education, early childhood and youth development, economic livelihoods, health and nutrition.
AVSI-USA connects people across borders, creating opportunities for solidarity and friendship.

Method

1. To start from the value of the person who is never defined by circumstances in which she lives or by social categories
2. To consider the person always in her family and community context, seeking out and valuing local resources as a starting point
3. To accompany and let ourselves be accompanied, recognizing that we share a common human experience
4. To involve all stakeholders, facilitating active participation of beneficiaries, service providers, partners, donors and the private sector
5. To learn from experience and capitalize on lessons learned

12
Projects funded by U.S. Government

14
AVSI-USA countries

16
AVSI-USA local partners

educational and healthcare institutions and NGOs

350,000
AVSI-USA direct beneficiaries

Objectives and activities

Although 2020 was a year of unprecedented challenges, we achieved most of our targets and exceeded others.

Globally, AVSI managed to increase the number of projects in 2020. This increase contained some surprises, including the US Agency for International Development (USAID) which provided funding for a project in Italy to reach highly vulnerable families negatively impacted by COVID-19 and patients in two main hospitals in Milan which were overwhelmed in the early days of the pandemic.

The portfolio of projects funded by the US Government through USAID, the State Department's Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM), and the Department of Agriculture remained strong, with a new project awarded in Lebanon and others continuing to deliver good results.

At AVSI-USA, our work to support our long-term partners did not stop and we found ourselves grateful for the sustained commitment of our foundation partners and donors. A number of partners recognized the stress which the COVID-19 pandemic placed on local service organizations globally and opted to increase funding to provide additionally flexibility of resources.

AVSI-USA's effort to support the communication and outreach activities of the entire AVSI Foundation reached new heights in 2020, bringing increased attention from news outlets to our work and expanding our social media presence.

The number of volunteers and advocates across the US also increased in 2020, with children, young adults, families and groups of friends eager to contribute to our mission and experience the good that comes from dedicating time and energy for the well-being of others.

AVSI Foundation Projects

Total 255

Concluded in 2020	**105**
Ongoing in 2020	**87**
Started in 2020	**63**

Africa

- **Ivory Coast**
- **Kenya**
- **Rwanda**
- **Uganda**

Latin America and the Caribbean

- **Brazil**
- **Ecuador**
- **Haiti**
- **Mexico**

Middle East

- **Iraq**
- **Lebanon**
- **Syria**

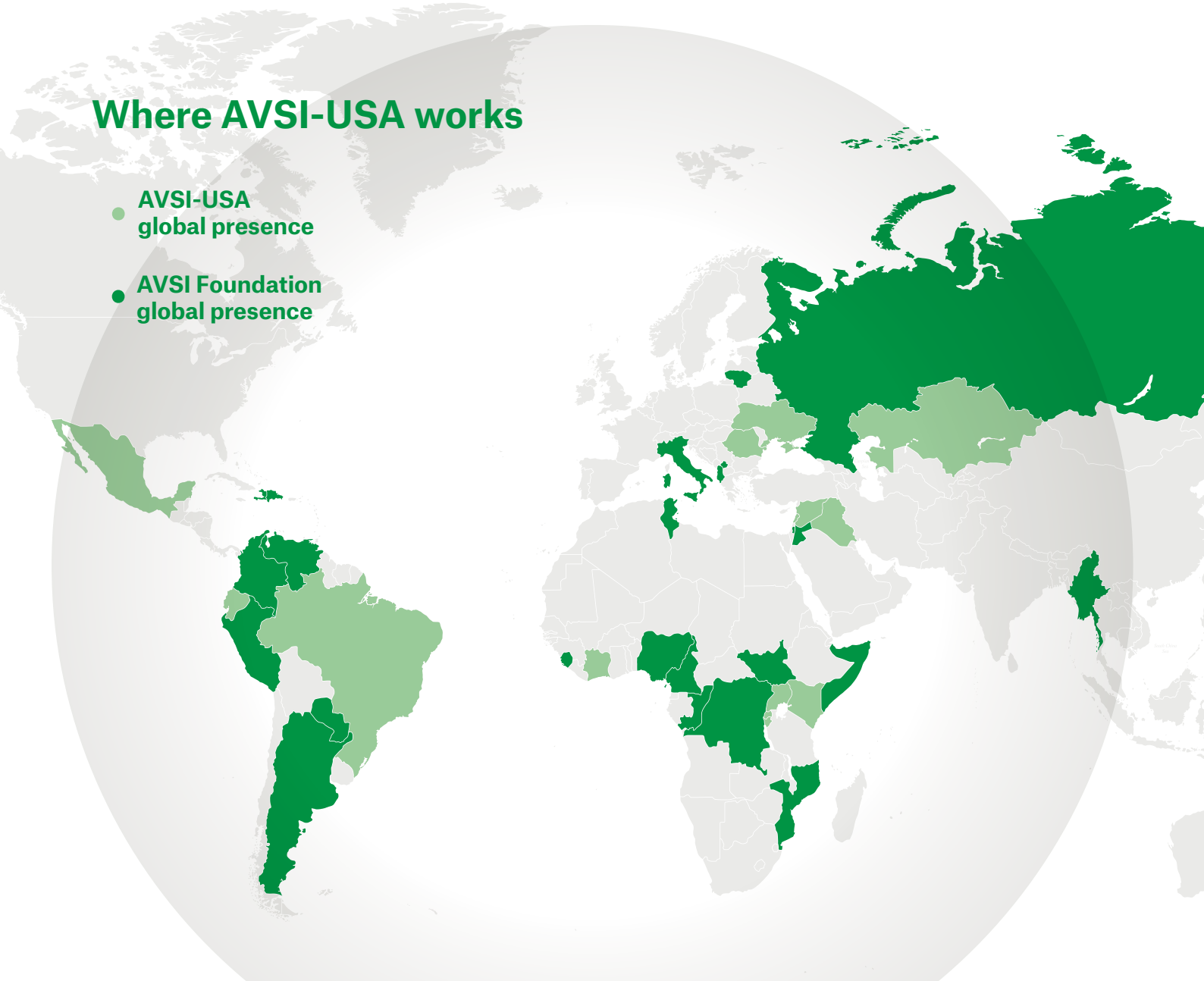
Asia

- **Kazakhstan**

Europe

- **Romania**
- **Ukraine**

Where AVSI-USA works



US Government Projects

Brazil	Welcomed Through Work - USDOS-PRM
Ecuador	Integration of Venezuelan Migrants and Refugees - USDOS-PRM
Iraq	Achieving socio-economic stability of returnees in Iraq - USDOS-PRM
	Virtuous Production Cycle to Relaunch a City - USDOS-PRM
Italy	Building Hope - USAID
Ivory Coast	School Feeding and Literacy - USDA
Lebanon	Community-based protective face masks production - USDOS-PRM
Kenya	Mwendo - USAID
	Refugee Education, Dadaab - USDOS-PRM
Uganda	Graduating to Resilience - USAID
	Better Outcomes - USAID
	Keeping Children Healthy and Safe - USAID

AVSI-USA Long-term Partners

Ecuador	Fundación Sembrar
	AVSI Ecuador
Haiti	AVSI Haiti
Kazakhstan	MASP
Kenya	Cardinal Otunga High School
	AVSI Kenya
Lebanon	AVSI Lebanon
Mexico	Crecemos
Romania	FDP Protagonists in Education
Rwanda	AVSI Rwanda
Syria	The Italian and French Hospitals in Damascus and St. Louis Hospital in Aleppo
Uganda	Luigi Giussani Institute of Higher Education
	Meeting Point International
Ukraine	Emmaus

AVSI's contributions to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals

The 2030 Agenda, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is increasingly guiding the actions of governments, organizations, businesses, and citizens around the world. AVSI's activities worldwide make several contributions to these goals.

SDGs	Number of projects
No poverty	82
Zero hunger	65
Good health and well-being	65
Quality Education	104
Gender equality	73
Clean water and sanitation	20
Affordable and clean energy	19
Decent work and economic growth	63
Industry, innovation and infrastructure	4
Reduced inequalities	29
Sustainable cities and communities	19
Responsible consumption and production	8
Climate action	46
Life below water	1
Life on land	5
Peace, justice and strong institutions	15
Partnerships for the goals	25

Analysis of the key SDG targets

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are split into 169 targets. The graphic below shows the key targets that AVSI's projects contributed to in 2020.

	Target	Number of projects
1.1	Eliminate extreme poverty	43
1.2	Reduce poverty by at least half	45
1.4	Ensure equal rights regarding financial resources	31
1.5	Build resilience and reduce exposure and vulnerability to extreme events	39
2.1	Eliminate hunger and ensure access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient year-round food	50
2.2	Eliminate all forms of malnutrition and meet nutritional needs	31
2.3	Double agricultural productivity and the income of small-scale food producers	31
4.1	Ensure that all children complete primary and secondary education	72
4.2	Ensure access to child development, to necessary care, and to kindergarten	40
4.4	Increase technical and professional skills for employment, dignified work, and entrepreneurial ability	35
4.5	Eliminate gender disparity in education and ensure equal access to education for the disabled, indigenous populations, and vulnerable children	46
5.1	Put an end to all forms of discrimination against all women and girls in all parts of the world	46
5.2	Eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls	32
5.5	Ensure that women participate fully and effectively and have equal leadership opportunities	29
8.5	Achieve full and productive employment in a dignified job and receive equal remuneration for equal work	34

Brazil
Venezuelan refugees in reception centers managed by AVSI Brasil in Boa Vista, Roraima; and moving to another state with guaranteed jobs. Photos by Francesco Pistilli

AVSI's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

At the outbreak of the pandemic in February 2020, AVSI got to work at all levels and in all countries to deal with the situation. We knew the pandemic was changing the way we operate. It was not a phase, and there would be no return to things "as before." The "post-COVID" era would be something new and different.

Regardless of the type of project, the beneficiaries' health motivated all of our front-line staff. The flexibility triggered by this extraordinary event was an opportunity to enhance skills and abilities, and to empower our workers.

We rapidly prepared an alternative plan for almost all of our projects to continue our activities, adapting and transforming them.

In many situations, including in refugee camps, we initiated new activities to raise awareness of the virus, make and distribute masks and hand sanitizer.

Many activities were carried out at a distance using new technologies:

- We gave lessons via radio and made and distributed creative kits for activities at home with children (always with an eye on child protection).
- We organized school recovery classes through WhatsApp groups.
- We used WhatsApp and phone calls to support parents in using digital learning platforms, help their children with homework, and communicate with teachers.

Two examples

From our long-term partners Fundación Sembrar and Crecemos

Quito, Ecuador

If highly developed nations like our own were caught off guard by the COVID-19 pandemic, you can imagine the challenges emerging economies like Ecuador faced. For most of the country, lockdowns meant the loss of livelihood, especially in the informal economy where many poor people eke out a daily living. For essential employees, like health care workers, grocery clerks, and cleaning personnel, it meant braving the risk of infection without proper protective gear. Fundación Sembrar, an AVSI-USA long-term partner in Ecuador working in an impoverished neighborhood on the outskirts of Quito, was able to shift almost immediately to emergency operations.

Donations from US foundations and private individuals helped nearly 700 families become more resilient during the pandemic, providing vulnerable households with humanitarian assistance, cell phone check-ins, WhatsApp-based activities for preschoolers, Zoom instruction for parents, and digital tools for school-age children to keep up with academics.

Oaxaca, Mexico

In January 2020, the Coronavirus seemed like a faraway threat. Like many other countries, Mexico was about to be hit by a firestorm that would make it one of the countries with the highest number of COVID-19 deaths in the world. Our partners at Crecemos in Oaxaca had little time to lose, and they immediately began checking on families and assessing options for service delivery.

Threatened with a deadly infection and loss of employment, panic swept through the community. Of primary concern were the children who typically receive a daily meal at the center. In the marginalized neighborhood around the center, most families are food insecure, and many of the children are being monitored for nutritional deficiencies. Crecemos staff made the bold decision to move out into the community bringing meals to households and teaching family members to implement safe hygiene procedures at home. Thanks to donors in the US, over 30,000 meals and 1,500 hygiene kits were distributed in 2020 alone. Emergency medicines and cash support were also secured for the neediest families.

Ecuador
During the COVID-19 pandemic, children and young adults were able to go to Fundación Sembrar to engage in social activities, practice sports and attend classes online when Internet was not available at home.

One example

From USAID-funded Graduating to Resilience Activity in Uganda

The economic and social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been devastating, especially to the most vulnerable communities, including those served by AVSI through the Graduating to Resilience Activity funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance in western Uganda.

Through the Activity in 2020, AVSI worked with around 6,000 households who lack sufficient food and income. These households were on their way to "graduate" out of extreme poverty through improved farming, business activity, savings and regular coaching sessions. In response to the pandemic, the Government of Uganda closed its borders and ordered lockdowns of schools and travel, as in much of the world, in an attempt to halt the spread of the virus.

AVSI staff was faced with many urgent questions. In addition to navigating the impact on their personal lives and those of their families, our staff had to figure out how to continue to support these vulnerable families as part of the Activity. **Would they be able to "graduate" out of extreme poverty and improve their health and nutrition with all of the constraints that COVID presented?**

STEP 1	AVSI carried out a context assessment to take the pulse of the population and see how bad the situation was and how people were coping. An important piece of information we needed from this assessment was: how many families own cell phones that we could use to stay in touch during the lockdown? When we found that 20% of our participants did not have a cell phone, AVSI negotiated with a company which offered loans for cell phones to remedy this situation. This partnership will continue post-COVID to support other activity interventions like in-person coaching, dissemination of market information through SMS, voice messaging, and a mobile savings group app.
STEP 2	Contingency planning to evaluate different ways to adjust the activities while reducing risks. The staff were highly flexible to new approaches and simple solutions.
STEP 3	AVSI began to test out new ways of reaching the 6,000 participants through interactive but remote contact either individually or in groups. For example, the very important weekly coaching sessions could no longer be held in person, so they were done over the phone, with SMS reminders to reinforce the information shared.
STEP 4	As adapted approaches to deliver services were tested, changes needed to be made continuously as the context was always in flux. For example, at the beginning, nutrition screening of children in these households using Mid- to Upper-Arm Circumference (MUAC) tapes to identify malnourished children by trained personnel was no longer possible. The coaches decided to spend extra time teaching parents through phone calls how to identify malnutrition through other signs such as rapid and abnormal loss of weight, loss of appetite, and refusing to breastfeed. As restrictions lifted, AVSI trained parents on how to use the MUAC tape to get a more accurate reading of their children's health. Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) adapted to health restrictions and continued to meet in groups of five with safety precautions like hand washing, wearing masks, and social distancing. Later, AVSI began to introduce digital savings platforms to ensure VSLA participants have access to savings and loans in the event of another lockdown in the future.
STEP 5	Continuous check-ins with participants and staying abreast of the situation through field visits, as soon as possible, and via phone calls and messages, a feedback loop that was more important than ever. Before the pandemic, AVSI would facilitate regular meetings with Activity participants who would gather under a tree or in a common space to discuss how the Activity was going. These focus groups have continued successfully as group phone calls giving precious feedback to Graduating to Resilience management team who cannot visit in person.

Uganda
During the COVID-19 pandemic AVSI had to find creative mechanisms to guarantee that Graduating to Resilience participants could "graduate" out of extreme poverty and improve their farming skills, health and nutrition.
Photos by Bershaza Katorobo

Migration

Almost half of the projects implemented by AVSI support migrants, refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs). You can find a few examples of our interventions on the following pages.

Welcomed Through Work - Promoting Integration Through Employment of Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants and other Vulnerable Persons in Brazil

This project complements the Brazilian Government's program "Operation Welcome" by providing job opportunities, professional and language courses, and social assistance to Venezuelan migrants in Brazil, helping them integrate into new communities and become protagonists of their lives.

Brazil, 7 states, Santa Catarina, Rio Grande do Sul, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Mato Grosso, Distrito Federal and Minas Gerais

AVSI Brasil

IMDH - Institute of Migration and Human Rights

US Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM)

2019 - 2021

5,000 direct beneficiaries, including 2,000 migrants integrated through work.
17,000 indirect beneficiaries.

Activities: how AVSI integrates Venezuelan refugees in Brazil

Results in 2020

- 228 people were hired
- 420 people were given accommodation and social assistance post-relocation
- 256 people completed Portuguese and professional training courses
- 218 host community members received technical skill certifications

AVSI's team in Brazil faced unprecedented challenges and had tremendous successes in 2020. The beginning of the pandemic in March froze all official movement of migrants and refugees throughout the country. Many companies put hiring talks on hold because of the uncertainty at that moment. AVSI pivoted to focus more effort on language and skills training, while continuing to have open communication with the companies. Eventually, when everyone understood the necessary safety precautions, AVSI was able to facilitate the hiring of hundreds of Venezuelans and helped them and their families get settled and integrated in their new cities.

"I want to help my family, not only those who came with me but also those who stayed back in Venezuela. I want to work and study. May we forget the difficult moments and keep with us only the good ones and use them as a learning opportunity to build a better future."
Marianny Isolina, 29, who moved to Brasilia with her husband and their three children, thanks to the PRM-funded project "Welcomed Through Work".

Integrados - Integration of Venezuela Migrants and Refugees in Ecuador: Ongoing Support to Provide Information on Protection Services, Job Opportunities and Access to Decent Living Conditions to Venezuelan Refugess and Migrants in Ecuador

The project's main goal is to improve the well-being and integration of the most vulnerable persons, including Venezuelan migrants and refugees, for the benefit of all.

Ecuador, Pichincha, Manabi, El Oro

COOPI (Cooperazione Internazionale)

US Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM)

2020 - 2022

4,000 direct
30,000 indirect beneficiaries

Activities

- Create a network of trusted Ecuadorian landlords who will rent to Venezuelan families for a fair price
- Identify single family apartments where Venezuelans are living, and negotiate with the owners/landlords for different improvements
- Improve multifamily housing units that are currently being rented to Venezuelans but are not in adequate condition
- Connect families with local protection networks
- Provide conditional cash-based assistance to vulnerable families
- Implement community action projects to promote integration
- Provide household kits to help families transition from shelters to longer term housing
- Offer vocational and entrepreneurship training; provide seed funding and mentorship for Venezuelan small businesses

Results in 2020

The project began in September of 2020. During its first four months, the project leadership team conducted its first phase of strategy development, staff training, and implementation planning. The team also made great progress identifying housing units and building the network of trusted landlords.

The PRM Ecuador project was one of AVSI's first projects to be designed during the COVID-19 pandemic, and this context informed every aspect of the project's activities. To that end, after kickoff in September the project leadership spent the last few months of the year building a flexible and adaptable team and strengthening communication and partnerships with key government organizations and other NGOs in the field. We are confident this project can demonstrate that it is possible to provide safe housing options, viable paths to making money, and quality social support to refugees in a foreign country in the middle of a pandemic.

"You leave everything behind because you cannot deal with the current situation in Venezuela, and you come to a country where you have nothing, not even enough money to rent a house, and you have to live in the streets with your children. The project helped me find a house. Here, my children are happy because it's a peaceful place. It was a total change. After living in depressing places, now we are in a house with better conditions."

Marvelis, a 33-year-old single mother of three children

Achieving Socio-economic Stability of Returnees, Host Community, and IDPs in Iraq (ASET)

The project's main goal is to enhance the socio-economic resilience of vulnerable returnees, IDPs and the host community in Nineveh and Duhok governorates. Through "ASET," AVSI also supports the capacity of community institutions to provide services to the agriculture and breeding sectors, and to foster civic engagement and social cohesion to create a local context that boosts the business environment.

Iraq
Nineveh Governorate, Al Hamndanya district: Al-Hamdanya, Bartella, Namrud.
Duhok Governorate: Essian Camp, Domiz, Faydia, and Sharia.

US Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM)

2020 – 2022

10,300 direct beneficiaries of which 3,708 returnees (36%), 5,047 IDPs (49%), and 1,545 host community (15%).
20,000 indirect beneficiaries.

Activities

Nineveh Governorate
- Technical training on cow breeding, beekeeping, irrigation system, business training, and life skills
- Reactivation of agricultural and animal production business
- Improve existing irrigation systems
- Restore public gardens
- Awareness campaigns
- Legal support to the Association of Farmers, Livestock Owners and Technicians (AFLT)

Duhok Governorate
- Training on life skills, flower and ornamental plant production, production of mushroom substrate, and business skills
- Greenhouse production of flowers and ornamental plants
- Production of mushroom substrate
- Restore public gardens

Results in 2020

- 390 farmers received business development support/training
- 50 farmers received support in irrigation system
- 1,016 farmers received technical and financial training and 93% increased their technical and financial knowledge
- 100% of farmers received services from AFLT
- 100% of project participants attended gender-sensitive life skills training
- 99% of participants demonstrated acquisition of life skills
- 2,414 people accessed restored community gardens

A key feature of this project is the Association of Farmers, Livestock Owners and Technicians (AFLT). The AFLT's goal is to support activities related to agricultural production and environmental resources management among the group of the selected beneficiaries. AFLT motivates and organizes producers to unify their efforts in an informal network of producers to secure a higher profit margin and a higher negotiation power (mushrooms, flowers, and sheep).

"I always liked to be productive and acquire skills that allow me to do so. I had minimal knowledge in food production, but after the 15 days of food production training, I developed a set of skills, especially in the production of pastries and pickles. Now, I can sell my processed products to neighbors and restaurants and increase my family income."
Hanna Habib, 50 years old, learned how to to produce dairy products (cheese and yogurt), pickles, and sweets thanks to the PRM-funded project in Iraq.

Imarisha Jamii: Enhancing the Resilience of Young Women in Urban Refugee and Host Communities in Kenya

Activity

Kenya is host to some 500,000 refugees of which 65,000 live in informal settlements in and around Nairobi. Imarisha Jamii, AVSI Kenya's latest project in urban refugee communities, is a compound of two Swahili words: Imarisha (strengthen) and Jamii (community). AVSI-USA partners with AVSI Kenya to support women as they build a path out of extreme poverty by engaging in business skills training and income generating activities. Market-viable lines of business include dressmaking, bakery, cookery, detergent making, tie and dye. In addition to financial literacy training, candidates are helped to set up and manage Community Savings and Loans Associations (CSLAs)

Nairobi, Kenya

AVSI Kenya

Results in 2020

In 2020, 250 women and girls ages 13 to 35 were trained on income generating activities and microbusiness management; 100% of the young women gained access to psychosocial services, including parenting and life skills; and 14 savings and credit cooperatives were created.

"I didn't know how I was going to cope with the world," remembers Alice, 25 years old.

Alice Umutoni was 19 when violence spiked in her home country, the Democratic Republic of the Congo. She was home with her family when the neighbors began to scream. Within minutes, they heard more gunshots than they could count. Scared, they started to run. One of the neighbors had to carry Alice to safety. Her family was nowhere to be found. Away from her loved ones for the first time, she was surrounded by strangers who had already chosen their next destination: Kenya.

When she arrived in Nairobi, Alice struggled to find a place to stay. Several families hosted her, but they were not prepared to help Alice process her trauma. Sometimes they would harass and abuse her. Feeling emotionally isolated, Alice would spend days without saying a word, or eating. She also suffered from panic attacks.

Out of school, struggling with her emotional trauma, and pressured by her peers, Alice ended up getting married. But the hardship was not over. The high cost of living in urban settlements surpassed the family's ability to keep up with basic needs. Alice's husband works as a carpenter, but it's not easy to find a job. To make the situation more challenging, their 1-year-old son needed to follow a strict nutritional diet after developing malnutrition-related complications and being hospitalied for months.

Alice's life began to change when she joined the Imarisha Jamii project. After attending a series of training sessions, Alice can now positively face her fears, and has adopted essential entrepreneurial skills. Alice also belongs to a Community Savings and Loans Association.

"I plan to get a loan and open a store to sell fruit and vegetables," says Alice.

Education

At the core of AVSI's work is the development of the human person. Education, formal and informal, is the key to gaining self-awareness, setting goals, and developing skills and capacities so that people can become protagonists in their lives and communities. Every AVSI project integrates opportunities for growth through activities including formal schooling, vocational training, professional development, and a whole host of informal activities such as mentoring, parenting skills classes, financial literacy trainings and community dialogues.

Transitional Support for Integration and Quality of Education in Dadaab Refugee and Host Community, in Kenya

Refugee Education is a multi-year education project for the Somali refugees and the Kenyan host community in the Dadaab refugee camp. The goal is to increase the self-reliance of refugees and preparedness for voluntary repatriation through strategic education enhancement activities. Through this project, AVSI is increasing the quality of education in line with reforms in Kenya.

Kenya, Dadaab refugee camp

US Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM)

2011 - 2021

16,658 direct beneficiaries (15,168 refugees and 1,490 host community)
193,234 indirect beneficiaries

During the COVID-19 lockdown, AVSI used online platforms and radio to continue holding training sessions for trainers and teachers. AVSI worked with the Boy Scouts to raise awareness on COVID-19 prevention measures and response and distributed handwashing stations in the refugee camps and host community. Throughout, AVSI continued to coordinate with UNHCR and local actors to ensure the safety of beneficiaries and the implementation of educational activities.

Activities

- Initiated technology-based online learning for teacher training
- Used radio to communicate with parents
- Led Scout members for awareness raisings of COVID-19 prevention measures, mask and soap making and distribution
- Distributed handwashing stations
- Ensured beneficiaries could have access to online training
- Assessed schools to register as public schools based on Kenyan Education standards
- Contextualized the refugee education policy and shared out with the community

Results in 2020

- 22 schools assessed
- 81 trainers received classses
- 240 teachers, of which 50 women, received full training
- 200 PPEs donated by US donor distributed by Scouts in the 3 Quarantine Centers in Dadaab
- 802 uniforms distributed for Scouts
- Scouts provided 1,000 hand washing stands and supplied masks
- A total of 15,000 host community and refugees reached through the local radio on COVID-19 prevention measures and response

"When I saw the world and most parts of Kenya suffering with the COVID-19 pandemic, I knew I had to help my community. I began by raising awareness and then I came up with a simple handwashing gadget using local available materials. With other Scouts, I went around the community explaining how to build it and use it to wash hands and prevent the spread of the virus."
Adam Salatusin, one the Scouts supported by the PRM-funded project in Dadaab.

Integrated School Feeding and Literacy Program, in Ivory Coast

The project addresses school feeding and literacy in 613 primary schools in Ivory Coast. AVSI's goal is to improve the quality of education received by children through literacy promotion activities, in parallel with WFP's school feeding activities. With the Ministry of Education (MENET), AVSI reviews existing curricula and supports the revision process currently underway. AVSI also coordinates a collaborative effort to bring together pedagogical resources for reading instruction, guides the implementation of a reading assessment of students, supports the MENET in training teachers in the reading curriculum and focuses on the involvement of the whole community.

Ivory Coast, Regions of Cavally, Bafing, Bagoue, Poro, Tchologo, Bounkani and Gontougo

World Food Program (WFP)

US Department of Agriculture (USDA), McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program

2016 - 2021

125,000 students in 613 schools

Activities

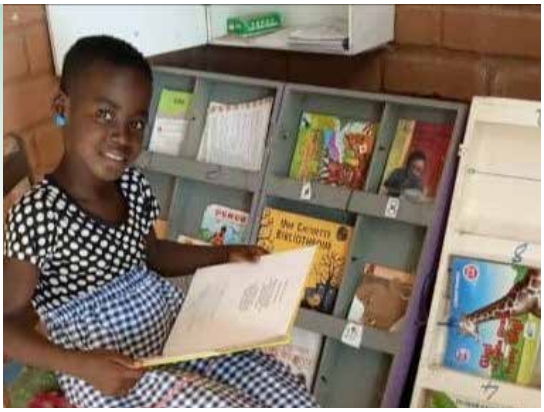
- Trained teachers on best practices and tools
- Mitigated COVID-19 through awareness raising and delivery of soap and PPE
- Worked with the Ministry of Education to ensure social distancing through a rotating system with upper classes and lower classes
- Designed and recorded radio lessons with 22 local radio stations
- Distributed radios to the villages for the use of the children and their lessons
- Distributed education packages with lessons, books and activities
- Organized friendly competition to promote good teaching practices, involving all teachers and directors

During the COVID-19 pandemic, all schools in Ivory Coast had to close. To ensure that children would not lose access to education, AVSI worked tirelessly with a team composed of AVSI staff, teachers, radio professionals, some students, and the Ministry of Education to organize radio lessons to foster education at a distance. AVSI also distributed packages with lessons, books, and activities so children could study at home. Finally, AVSI staff and trainers held dramatized storytelling sessions.

Results in 2020

- 102 audio productions of French lessons developed and broadcasted by local radio stations
- Recording of 72 educational capsules and 30 animation reading capsules for learning at distance
- 1,141 press releases in French and local languages to raise awareness of literacy
- 2,452 new training materials for learning catch-up courses
- 1,260 teachers trained, of which 291 female, in remedial teaching pedagogy
- 21,939 reading books distributed across the 613 schools:

"When I have some spare time, I love going to the library and reading books with my classmates or even on my own. My favorite title is 'Kirikou and the Men and Women' by Michel Ocelot, because the main character inspires me; I want to be smart and kind as Kirikou so that I can help people in my village to have a safer life."
Ama, ten years old, is one of the beneficiaries of Integrated School Feeding and Literacy Program.



Activating Critical Thinking throughout the Education System, Uganda

Activity

As part of a multi-year project to enhance quality education in Uganda, the Luigi Giussani Institute for Highr Education staff have been closely collaborating with various departments in the Ministry of Education to bring much needed reforms, especially in instruction and assessment. Teachers, who are the lynchpin of any educational system, often lack the knowledge and training to lift the learning experience beyond mere repetition of information. Deep knowledge, thinking, curiosity, evaluation, and creativity are, consequently, almost absent from Ugandan schooling. How are students, then, to take charge of their own learning, to discern the value of life, and to take actions that contribute to their own good and the good of others in society?

Uganda, Kampala

Luigi Giussani Institute for Higher Education (LGIHE)

Results in 2020

Throughout 2020, the LGIHE team investigated how Ugandans conceptualize critical thinking in their national context. The findings led to the development of the LGIHE Critical Thinking Activation Model which aims to strengthen critical thinking throughout the national education landscape: at the ministerial and system level, at teacher colleges and training programs, in school administration and in the classroom. For example, thinking skills that were identified as key competencies to be fostered the new curriculum were integrated into subject-specific teacher professional materials for Math, History and English. Through coaching and reflection, teachers are able to incorporate higher order skills in their daily lessons. The Critical Thinking Activation Model was piloted in 10 schools throughout the year, benefiting 100 enthusiastic teachers. Plans are to scale up the model to reach 600 teachers and 12,000 students by 2025.

Occupational Training for Adolescent Orphans with Mild Intellectual Disabilities, Ukraine

Activity

Emmaus is a Ukrainian Non-Governmental Organization and AVSI-USA partner founded in 2011 by volunteers working with orphans and teens with different abilities, providing occupational guidance and educational support. “Small World” is an Emmaus program in collaboration with the State Orphanage in Bogoduhiv. It develops and implements individual, social, and professional integration programs for girls with mild intellectual disabilities to ensure a stable form of life once adolescents leave the orphanage.

Ukraine, Kharkiv

Emmaus

Results in 2020

In 2020, Emmaus launched the pilot phase of the “Small World” program, working with six young people. Living in transitional housing accompanied by the Emmaus team, the young women participated in daily activities to develop personal living skills while receiving psychological support. Through 80 hours of tutoring and 22 individual meetings, the girls improve life planning and financial management skills, while receiving career guidance. Social activities are also part of the experience: the girls took part in 36 group events and went on three trips to Kharkiv. With funds from US donors, Emmaus purchased a car so that tutors, one of whom was formerly a resident at the orphanage and beneficiary of Emmaus programs, could reach the remote location and assist others.

Ukraine
Accompanied by Emmaus team, young girls with disabilities developed personal living skills and participated in social activities.

Why we donate and volunteer

"When we are open to beauty and let God work with our desire to love Him, we are never disappointed. When the pandemic spread and we were forced to live isolated, it sometimes felt like I was watching the world outside from a window. Working on this fundraiser helped me to look outward, and to focus my attention not only on my own fears, but also on someone else's needs. I felt joy making crafts, thinking that their sale and the time I put into it could help someone else. After some time, however, I started to realize that this work, and specifically the things I was making, had some relevance in my own life. Everything I was making had a reason, and it was helping me to reflect on all the love and tenderness I had been given during a very difficult time."
Anna, Massachusetts

"We had a great desire to give back part of our economic stimulus check, and we're grateful for the work AVSI does around the world where people are suffering much more than us!"
Meghan and David, Tennessee

"Seeing how many people were wanting to give made me happy."
Julia, at a fundraising event in Minnesota

"Kids and teenagers made Christmas cards and ornaments and jewelry and we sold them at one of the kids' school and at a little market we organized in a park. In doing this fundraising, we rediscovered how this corresponds to what we really want. We experienced a communion among adults, kids, teenagers, even people who have unexpectedly become part of our lives, like people who stopped by to talk to us at the market and the women and kids in Kenya who we fundraised for. The joy of this lived experience has become a point of attraction also for others that were not directly involved but that recognized this way of living life as desireable."
Ilaria, Maryland

Lebanon
In 2020, AVSI supported the communitiies in Mar Mikhael, one of the neighborhoods most affected by the Beirut blast. Photos by Aldo Gianfrate

2020 AVSI-USA Financial highlights

	2020	2019
Revenue and Support		
Contributions & Grants	636,863	335,482
Program Service Revenue	187,155	96,067
Other Income	11,584	2,633
Total revenue and support	**835,602**	**434,182**
Expenses		
Overseas Programs		
Grants	374,916	179,949
Technical Assistance	495,880	387,830
Fundraising	12,322	19,073
Management & General	72,081	67,872
Total Expenses	**955,199**	**654,724**
Change in Net Assets	(-119,597)	(-220,542)
Net Assets, at the beginning of the year	**304,307**	**524,849**
Net Assets, at the end of the year	**184,710**	**304,307**

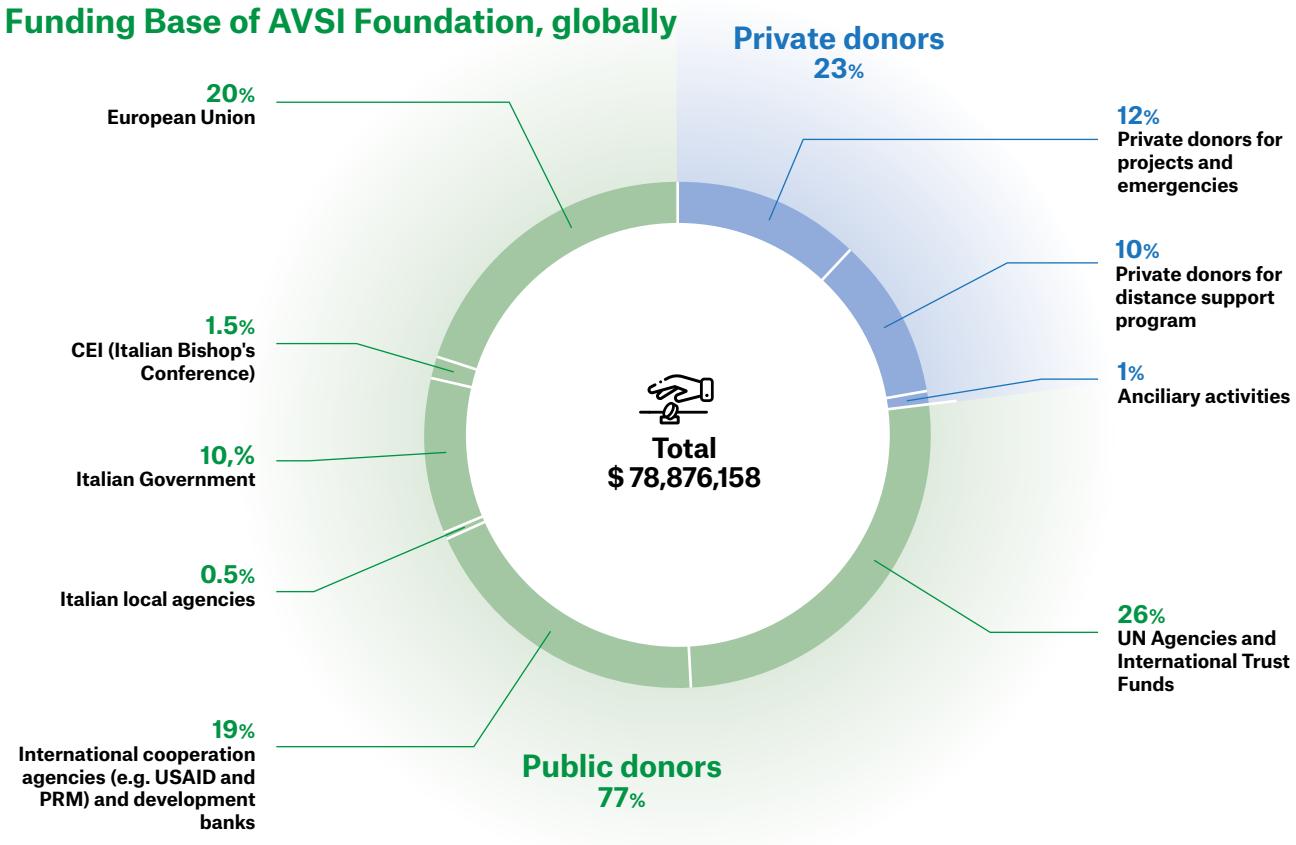
How AVSI-USA uses your donation

AVSI-USA contribution to the success of AVSI Foundation

In 2020, AVSI-USA obtained $221,500 in grant funding from U.S. based foundations for the implementation of projects with 4 AVSI network members in 3 countries. Furthermore, AVSI-USA channelled an additional $182,000 towards 3 AVSI network members in 3 countries.

In addition, AVSI-USA leveraged support from the U.S. Government and international institutions for AVSI Foundation which amounted to 19% of AVSI Foundation's consolidated revenue of nearly $79 million in 2020.

As the graph below shows, AVSI-USA is making an important contribution to the diversification of of AVSI Foundation's global funding portfolio.



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- U.S. Department of State
- United Nations World Food Program

Matching Gifts

- AmazonSmile
- Benevity Causes
- World Bank

Foundations & Corporations

- Paypal Giving Fund
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Ecuador
A family of Venezuelan refugees in Quito.
Photo by Ana Caroline de Lima

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