AVSI in the world

- Present in **38 countries** in the world
- Budget in 2011: more than **50 million USD**
AVSI Uganda

Main figures

- Operating and present with a local office in **Uganda since 1984**
- **200 staff** in offices in Kampala, Gulu, Kitgum (20 international, 180 national)
- Budget in 2011: **14 million USD**
- Current donors include: USAID, World Bank, EU, Dutch and Italian Governments, UNICEF, FAO and private donors
Guiding Values

- Centrality of the person
- Starting from the positive
- Doing with
- Development of Civil Society and Subsidiarity
- Partnership
Background
Northern Uganda
War and Insecurity

- Over 25 years of war caused the displacement of 1.8 million of people (almost 90% of the population) in camps where access to food, health services and education could be granted only through the external intervention of humanitarian organizations;
- Peace talks between the Rebels (Lord Resistance Army) and the Ugandan Government started with a cessation of Hostilities Agreement in July 2006 but since November 2008 the peace process is interrupted. Nevertheless the current situation in northern Uganda is characterized by relative peace.
Population Movement

Return and Resettlement

- Between the end 2006 and the beginning of 2007 *Freedom of Movement* has been declared in all the districts affected by the war and experiencing displacement;

- **Camp phase out process completed in 2011**

- Estimated **3,500 EVIs still in the camps** (OCHA Humanitarian Affairs-Report 2011)
Recovery Phase

Economic Situation

• Compared to the pre-displacement situation:
  ➢ More people are **self employed in non agricultural activities**
  ➢ **Petty trade** is more common
  ➢ **Brewery is widespread among women** in particular
  ➢ Less involvement in agricultural activities, **loss of cultivation habit/knowledge** especially among the youth

• Estimated **loss equal to 100 USD millions per year** to UG productive capacity (Government estimation PRDP 2007)

• Proportion of the population living in poverty in the north after the resettlement is still higher than in the rest of the country;
AVSI experience with war affected youth
AVSI Psychosocial (PSS) approach

- Initiated in 1994 in Rwanda as a response to the effects of the genocide, and developed in northern Uganda;
- It views a person in the context of his/her own community and takes into account the person’s psychological and social needs;
- It aims at meeting people’s immediate needs, but also at strengthening the innate resilience of individuals, families and community, and the self reliance;
- Values relationships, recreation and work as tools for PSS health and recovery.

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Income Generation and PSS

• Income generating interventions are small scale businesses implemented with an aim of improving the income and pss wellbeing of vulnerable persons whose normal functioning is limited by inadequate access to both financial & natural resources and lack of skills.

• The start of a livelihood activity not only improves economic self-reliance but offers purpose in life, identity, self esteem and responsibility, i.e. improved PSS conditions.

Since 1997 AVSI has provided PSS support to vulnerable persons in northern Uganda with funds from USAID/PEPFAR, EU and ECHO. More than 5,000 persons have been supported to develop IGAs.
Vulnerability for AVSI is a combination of factors that cannot be reduced to categories (i.e. disability, people living with HIV/AIDS, formerly abducted children/youth, people with disabilities, child mothers etc) but instead is determined by a combination of factors that take into consideration the individual as a whole. Therefore, the selection of beneficiaries is based on an assessment of the overall wellbeing of the person based on indicators of health, economic and psychosocial wellbeing.
Why WINGS?
Opportunity for an evaluation

AVSI Uganda Livelihoods Methodology

- Prolonged experience and observed positive effect of the livelihoods psychosocial approach: Basic business skills training, start-up capital or material investments as grants (not loans) to individuals and groups.
- Need to communicate results to influence policy debate and to get future funding.
- Interest in improving on the methodology to provide better services and reach more people.

SWAY - Survey on War Affected Youth

- AVSI involvement in the research; Results were coherent with experience, provocative and useful.

The opportunity outweighed the risks related to scaling up, standardization of intervention, and quantification of psychosocial impact.
Which questions to be answered?

• Does the program really benefit vulnerable people?
• How do we make the best use of the resources?
• What are the psychosocial and economic benefits of focusing on groups vs individuals?
• Does a focus on women lead to increased domestic violence?
Program overview

- **Partners:**
  - Main implementer – AVSI–Uganda
  - Research/ Evaluation Team – Innovations for Poverty Action
  - Grant Manager – AVSI–USA

- **Funds:** $1,500,000 for 3.5 years

- **Donors:** Private funding and World Bank

- **Time-Frame:** Jan 2009 – June 2012

- **Beneficiaries:** 1800 in 120 villages over 2 districts

- **Objective:** reinforce the integration or re-integration of vulnerable women and children into community social and economic life, and to help them to cope with conflict and displacement consequences through IGAs.
Income Generation Program Components

- Business Skills Training
- Grant Disbursement ($150 USD)
- Group Dynamics Training
- Follow-Up
Business skills training

Objectives

- to enable the participants to **identify, select, plan and start** a feasible and viable **livelihood**;
- to enable the **existing entrepreneurs** to identify and overcome problems and constraints that affect the growth and development of their IGAs;
- to deepen the participants’ understanding of the **value of saving**, of how to save and where to save.

A manual capitalizing NGOs experiences in business skills training has been developed: in particular the CARE approach for illiterate individuals was adopted.
Beneficiaries present different business plans containing costs, revenues and expected profits;

Analysis and approval of Business plans based on

- Individual capacities
- Marketability
- Viability

Follow up
Grant disbursement

- Delivery of 150 USD to each beneficiary as start up capital
- 2 phases delivery: it allows for more relationship to be built and more control on the use of the grant but it is logistically challenging
Group dynamics training

- Strengthening the structure and internal dynamics of the either already existing group or of the group to-be,
- Providing basic skills in leadership and management of a group, communication habits, and mechanisms of decision making
- Providing a context for sharing business challenges and ideas, and for saving
Follow ups

• Important to:
  ➢ Reduce the probability of **funds misuse**
  ➢ **Mentor** the beneficiaries for better economic performances
  ➢ **Address arising challenges**
  ➢ Provision of individual or group mentorship and **psychosocial support**

• Follow up for a minimum of 1 year (after 1 month, 3 months, etc.)
Phase I beneficiaries

Socio demographic characteristics (1/3)

Beneficiaries Age Distribution

- 16-20: 21%
- 21-24: 13%
- 25-27: 14%
- 28-30: 31%
- 31-33: 4%
- 34-37: 8%
- 38-40: 5%
- 41-45: 3%
- 46-50: 1%
- 46-50: 1%
- 46-50: 1%
- 46-50: 1%
- 46-50: 1%

Marital Status

- Married or Living with a partner: 48.5%
- Single: 51.5%

Gender

- Female: 86.2%
- Male: 13.8%
Phase I beneficiaries

Socio demographic characteristics (2/3)

### Years of schooling

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### # of biological Children

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### # of meals per day

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<td>2</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3+</td>
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</table>
Phase I beneficiaries

Socio demographic characteristics (3/3)

- SingleMother: 18.4%
- Widowed: 15.0%
- LimitedKin: 80.9%
- Disabled: 1.6%
- HIVAIDSstatus: 5.2%
- SocMargin: 4.4%
- PartialOrphan: 3.6%
- FullOrphan: 3.3%
- ExtremelyPoor: 56.6%
- ChildMother: 2.5%
- ChildHead: 2.5%
Phase I beneficiaries

Most common businesses

- Mixed items: 54.2%
- Fish selling: 13.6%
- Produce: 22.8%
- Livestock: 2.9%
- Vegetables: 2.5%
- Other: 4.0%
WINGS Beneficiaries

Langole Lilly

Lilly is an orphan aged 16 years and she is the main breadwinner of the household composed of 4 persons. She never attended school, her main source of income was cultivation and casual work and they normally had one meal per day. According to her, there was no hope for a better life.

After the training and grant delivery she started her Produce business. During her endeavors to improve on the family’s welfare, her Brother’s wife came in and gave her a hand in the business and basic guidance as she is still young.

With the profits according to her, life has been so much better and this has given her a new source of hope. She can currently afford her family’s life essentials with much ease, have at least 2 meals per day and to this she thanks the project.
Oyella Albina is 30 years old and a mother of 6 children. The husband was abusing alcohol and could not support her in digging because he claims he is sickly every cold season.

However, the client was trained together with the husband in and initiated a business of selling small fish and cabbage. The husband was very supportive, he is the one that buys pigs, goats, chickens and sells while the wife continues with selling tomatoes, salt and onions. After one month, they had already realized 72% return on investment.

There is an increased in household income, improved relationship in the household, the husband has become productive not like in past when he had nothing to do. The family can now buy school uniform for their children.
Implementation Challenges

- **Corruption** of local leaders;
- **Cultural boundaries** – Women should not administer money;
- **Alcoholism**;
- **HH and community conflicts** (drunken husbands and jealousy of neighbors – resulting in violence and rise in criminality);
- The **business is not among the main priorities** for many of the beneficiaries,
- **Mismanagement of grant** (family expenses, loans to family/friends);
- **Lacking of experience** in dealing with business (risk aversion, learning through mistakes);
- **Access to villages and clients**;
Phase I completed

- All Phase I beneficiaries trained in BST;
- 30 Groups trained in group dynamics;
- 860 individuals (96%) received the grant;
- Disbursed in total 130.000 USD with a double disbursement system;
- All beneficiaries followed up at least 4 times
Lessons learned

1. No conclusive evidence on the impact of Group dynamics on higher income and savings and on collaboration in the business activities

2. Beneficiaries that are trained with their partners give signals of performing better compared to those trained alone

3. Impact of the program on the most vulnerable: economic impact is bigger than the psychosocial one
Reflections on Results

*Psychosocial*

- Surprising findings on the psychosocial impact:
  - Do they *refute* the literature?
  - Do psychosocial effects take longer to show compared to the economic ones?
  - Or is WINGS just a drop in the ocean?
  - Does the *change of conditions* request for different type of intervention?
  - Did we give *weight* to the right *indicators*?

- **Follow ups** are a major component of AVSI psychosocial approach, do they *really* matter? If yes, how much?
Reflections on Results

Cost Effectiveness

- How to factor in the non-economic benefits into cost effectiveness analysis?

- The evaluation was not designed to isolate the impact of single program components on profits/income, i.e. businesses might have not been in place after one year if the follow up had not taken place: how to find appropriate ways of calculating cost effectiveness?
Phase II ongoing

- All Phase II beneficiaries trained in BST: more than 90% of W+ trained with partners
- 898 individuals (99%) received the grant;
- Disbursed in total 160,000 USD with a single disbursement system;
- More than 1200 follow ups already carried out
Observations from the field:

- Women Plus training: important occasion to share an experience with the partner
- Difficult to follow up the women with their partner because of different priorities, lack of commitment or collaboration in the business
- Fast changing household setting: change of partner, change of address...
AVSI’s perspective on evaluation

Challenges

- Standardization of the intervention
- Managing expectations and maintain the control group
- Gain consensus from the local authorities;
- Tracking the beneficiaries in different phases;
- Translate people into numbers;
AVSI’s perspective on evaluation

Opportunities

• Identify what works and doesn’t work (es. group dynamics)
• Opportunity to test interesting outcomes in phase II (W+ approach)
• Going deeper in the interaction with our beneficiaries
• Provide evidence of effective interventions