

September 8<sup>th</sup> 2023

To the United Nations Global Compact New York, NY USA

AVSI is pleased to confirm its continuous and active engagement in support of the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact. Our commitment to the Ten Principles is embedded in the about 1000 projects designed and executed by AVSI in 40 countries in the reference period of this communication, under the supervision of the headquarters in Italy and in the US.

AVSI Foundation is part of UN Global Compact since March 2012.

This is our fifth Communication On Engagement and we are committed to submit it every two years describing the specific initiatives AVSI takes in line with the Ten Principles and to support the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda.

Sincerely Yours,

Each Silahi

Giampaolo Silvestri Secretary General **AVSI** Foundation



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## **5th Communication of Engagement by AVSI Foundation**



> AVSI Foundation short Presentation.

**AVSI Foundation engagement on UNGC Principles for:** 

- Human Rights
- Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights
- Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses
  - Labour
  - Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour
  - Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour
  - Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation
    - Environment
  - Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges



- Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility
  - Anti-Corruption
- Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery

AVSI is also fully committed in the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda, in all the Sustainable Development Goals supported by UNGC, namely SDGs 1, 2, 5, 13, 16, 17.

## **AVSI Foundation short Presentation**

Created in 1972, AVSI is a not-for-profit organization, which carries out development cooperation and humanitarian aid projects throughout the world.

**Vision**: AVSI works for a world where the person, aware of his/her value and dignity, is the protagonist of his/her own integral development and that of his/her community, even in crisis and emergency contexts. **Mission:** AVSI implements cooperation projects in various sectors with a preferential focus on education, meaning that the persons involved are accompanied towards their self-discovery and the recognition that any person is a resource. Each project is conceived as an instrument to promote this awareness in everyone involved in it, has in itself a drive for communication and sharing, and in its impact generates a positive change.

**Method**: In the implementation of a project, AVSI takes into consideration the following approach: a) to start from the value of the person, who can never be defined by the circumstances in which they live b) to consider the person always in their family and community context c) to do with: accompany and let ourselves be accompanied, recognizing that we all share the same human condition and experience d) to involve all the present stakeholders that is promoting the participation of the beneficiaries, service providers, partners, donors and the private sector e) to learn from the experience and capitalize on the lessons learned.

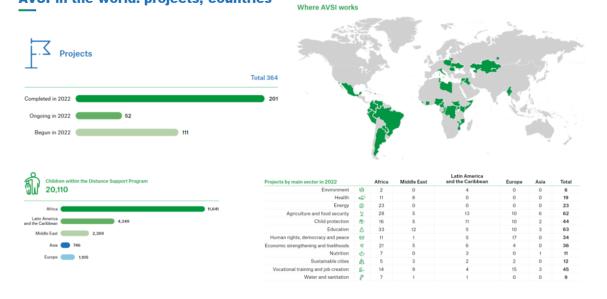
# Attachments: AVSI Social Report 2021 and 2022

In 2022 AVSI implemented **364** projects and was active in **40** countries for **7,440,748** direct

beneficiaries, with **2,296** staff and **1,671** local partners, with a total budget of

# 105.849.928 euro.

AVSI in the world: projects, countries



## AVSI Foundation engagement on Principles 1, 2; 4, 5, 6; 7, 8, 10

AVSI is fully engaged in the human rights and labour challenge at HQ, field as well as at advocacy level: its direct activities in the different countries and sectors show its methodology and introduce the possibility of meaningful changes in the practice and the two levels are strictly linked and enrich themselves mutually. In the frame of its responsibility for common good, AVSI is also active in the field of environment, both through its own internal procedures, its activities in the field and a wide activity of environmental education. Transparency and compliance with ethic rules are other important principles guiding AVSI activity.

The engagement of AVSI for the UN Global Compact is referred to the following suggested activities for Non Business Participation - Civil Society Organizations/Non-Governamental Organizations:

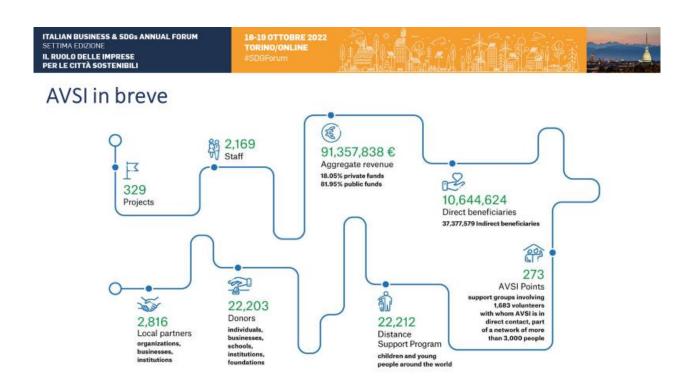
- Propose and implement partnerships on corporate sustainability and engage with other stakeholders
- Engage with Global Compact Local Networks
- Join and/or support issue platforms and workstreams.

# People for development Engagement with GC Local Network Italy

Since 2021, AVSI has been engaged locally in the Global Compact Local Network Italy.

The most important action of engagement with the GC Local Network in Italy has been the participation at the **Italian Business & SDGs Forum**, the annual appointment promoted by the UN Global Compact Network Italy to encourage dialogue and discussion between representatives of the business world, academia, institutions and civil society on the role of the private sector in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the UN 2030 Agenda.

On **18th October 2022** AVSI Secretary General, Giampaolo Silvestri, gave a presention about the topic of the Forum: "Il ruolo del business per le città sostenibili" **("The role of business for sustainable cities")** focusing on three drivers of change: 1. participation and stakeholders; 2. integrated systemic approach; 3. partnerships and governance (full presentation in attachment).



AVSI took part in other initiatives of the UN Global Compact Local Network Italy:

 Presentation of the Guidelines Diversity & Inclusion, writte in partnership with ILO International Labour Office (office for Italy) and AIDP – Associazione Italiana Direzione Personale (Italian Association of Personnel Management). The document has been presented during a webinar on 16th December 2021 with more than 300 professionals in Corporate Sustainability, Human Resources and Diversity Manager.



• Presentation of the **SDG Action Manager**, a tool for the evaluation of sustainability in companies, held on **22nd March 2022**.



- Human Rights
- Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights
- Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses

# **CIDU** (Comitato Interministeriale Diritti Umani = Interministerial Committee for Human Rights)

AVSI is member of the **Italian CIDU (Comitato Interministeriale Diritti Umani = Interministerial Committee for Human Rights)**, a governmental body established in 1978 in order to fulfill the obligations assumed by Italy in execution of the numerous agreements and conventions adopted at the international level in the field of protection and promotion of human rights.



AVSI activity inside the CIDU is mainly focused on the issue of **Business and Human Rights**: it contributed the first National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights 2016-2021 and is now contributing to the second National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights 2021-2026.

In 2022 AVSI sent its contribution to the **Draft OECD Recommendation on the Role of Government in Promoting Responsible Business Conduct**, in the direction of steering all corporate investments towards the achievement of the SDGs, respect for human rights and nature, in compliance with the principle of policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD) (document in attachment).

Besides, AVSI has recently begun to follow the works of the HRC Working Group on Business and Human Rights, Sustainable Human Development Section.

# • AVSI Code of Ethics

In its activity AVSI is more and more connected with business, collaborating with national companies, international companies, and companies operating in the countries of intervention.

All companies involved in AVSI activity are requested to respect **AVSI Code of Ethics**): "The principles of this Code apply to everyone who works with AVSI Foundation: administrators, auditors, managers, employees, collaborators, partners, suppliers, donors and beneficiaries."

The aim of the Code of Ethics, together with its correlated policies (Child Safeguarding Policy, Fraud and Corruption Policy, Environment Policy) is not just to avoid irregular behavior but also to promote virtous practices:

"This Code of Ethics is not aimed at merely controlling the behavior required of each individual person, but intends to provide the directives and reasons for the action of all staff and all stakeholders. These directives are rooted in the vision of the Foundation (AVSI works for a world where the person, aware of his/her value and dignity, is the protagonist of his/her own integral development and that of his/her community) which gives form and substance to the work of AVSI in all its dimensions, including rules, regulations and policies."

AVSI Code of Ethics touches the most of the 10 Principles of the UN Global Compact. The related activities are yearly reported in the Social Report, drawn up in accordance with the rules established by Italian law.

# Labour

Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour

Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour



<u>Principle 6:</u> the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

AVSI is committed to respect the principles of diversity, not discrimination and equal opportunities. At the basis of AVSI's actions towards all people, be they beneficiaries, staff, collaborators, partners, consultants, suppliers, donors, there is the first point of AVSI's method: "Starting from the value of the person, never defined by the circumstances in which she lives ". On this universal and all-embracing principle, content AVSI bases its policy on the Code of Ethics that all stakeholders must sign and respect about diversity, non-discrimination and equals opportunity.

# Environment

<u>Principle 7:</u> Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges

Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility

Among the priority aspects of its planning, AVSI includes the fight against climate change, access to renewable energy, energy efficiency and the distribution of efficient cooking systems, resilient urban development, the circular economy, the defense of forests, biodiversity and ecosystems. In 2022, around 109,101 improved cooking systems were distributed, which allowed families to reduce the use of wood and coal by at least 50% and harmful emissions (domestic pollution) and greenhouse gases by at least 60%. It is estimated that the cooking systems distributed by AVSI in 2022 will guarantee a reduction in CO 2 emissions of at least 200,988 over time equivalent tons.

AVSI is committed to identifying and evaluating all the impacts, positive and negative, even potentially, that its activities and projects may have on the environment, and to adopt behaviors that reduce its ecological footprint (Carbon Footprint), in full compliance with the legislative provisions of the countries in which it operates.

The Environmental Policy, published on the institutional website, applies to all AVSI offices in the world, starting with those in Italy, in compliance with local regulations in force, and provides a general guideline for responsibly and sustainably protecting the environment through suitable planning, organizational and management processes.

At the AVSI offices in Italy there are ecological islands for separate waste collection and dispensers of filtered and purified drinking water available to all staff, equipped with aluminum bottles for customized with the aim of achieving the "AVSI plastic free" objective. The Milan office has a geothermal heating and air conditioning system. During 2022 AVSI continued to favor the long-term rental of hybrid vehicles: in this way it expects to complete the renewal of the entire company fleet in 2023.

# Anti-corruption

**Principle 10:** Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery



The Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy applies to all AVSI in Italy and in the world, including national, regional, local offices and any other office intended as branch, branch or subsidiary. Furthermore, all AVSI suppliers and consultants must acknowledge and adhere to the policy. Specific training sessions, addressed to all personnel, are implemented both in Italy and in the countries where AVSI operates in order to bring about widespread knowledge of anti-corruption issues as well as the risks associated with one's own activity with respect to qualifications, responsibilities and personnel areas of expertise. In the event that there is reasonable suspicion or evidence of a violation, a related report

to facts or events attributable to corrupt or fraudulent behavior, even presumed, by a subject belonging to AVSI or in any way linked to the AVSI Foundation's own activities, the conduct The Anti-fraud and anticorruption Policy applies to all AVSI in Italy and in the world, including national, regional, local offices and any other office intended as branch, branch or subsidiary. Furthermore, all AVSI suppliers and consultants must acknowledge and adhere to the policy. Specific training sessions, addressed to all personnel, are implemented both in Italy and in the countries where AVSI operates in order to bring about widespread knowledge of anti-corruption issues as well as

the risks associated with its own activity with respect to the qualifications, responsibilities and areas of competence of the personnel. In the event that there is reasonable suspicion or evidence of a violation, a report relating to facts or events attributable to corrupt or fraudulent behavior, even presumed, by a person belonging to AVSI or in any way related to the activities of the AVSI Foundation, the conduct is immediately reported according to the operating methods described in the

Whistleblowing Policy or through the information channels envisaged by the Organized Model is immediately reported according to the operating methods described in the Whistleblowing Policy or through the information channels envisaged by the Organizational Model.

The role of companies in AVSI projects can be partners, donors, beneficiaries. In the country of intervention among companies it has to be considered also businesses, cooperatives, individual enterprises, small farmers. Therefore a significant number of people and enterprises are sensibilized and accompanied in improving their practices in terms of respect of human rights, dignified work, respect of the environment and transparency and legality and promoting a human rights enhancing economy.

Companies	2021	2022
partner	1088	633
donor	325	419
direct beneficiaries	1932	2108
Indirect beneficiaries	2926	1660
Suppliers (HQ)	161	164

Here below the businesses involved in AVSI activities in the last two years:

# • Partnerships on corporate sustainability

To encourage the diffusion of a corporate culture oriented towards solidarity and the promotion of human rights, AVSI is involved in **corporate volunteering programs** in which companies allow their employees to collaborate free of charge, during working hours, in favor of activities carried out by AVSI.

Since mid-March 2022 AVSI Foundation has launched an "operational secretariat" in support of Ukrainian refugees in Italy fleeing the conflict in Ukraine and since 16 May 2022 it has inaugurated in Milan the #HelpUkraine Hub, a space made available by UniCredit (a pan-European Commercial bank with about 15 millions customers), to respond to numerous requests of refugees arriving from Ukraine and to coordinate the reception offer of Italian families. In January 2023, the identity of the hub evolved into the AVSI for Community centre, expanding services to the entire range of migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable people. The AVSI for Community center is becoming an active player in the area by promoting processes of integration-autonomy, and also by promoting volunteering and the creation of communities.

Following the launch of this service, volunteering activities were launched with UniCredit employees, dedicating a half or full day first at the Help Ukraine Hub, and later at the AVSI for community center, supporting the services provided. The main task of the volunteer involves support at the reception of the service center through an action of orientation, proximity, reception and support to the beneficiaries.

In 2022 the collaboration has involved 60 volunteers, in the first part of 2023 already 55 volunteers.

Besides, as part of the projects on the issue - job placement for migrants, some other companies have provided free courses, making staff and competence available:

- 2022+2023 N. 6 courses about digital literacy
- 2022+2023 N. 4 courses about financial literacy
- Studies and research

To contributing to the diffusion in emerging countries of a modern entrepreneurial mentality attentive to current challenges, AVSI has cooperated at the thesis **"New models for coaching and training aspirant entrepreneurs in Emerging Countries"** developped for the Master of Science in Management Engineering at the School of Industrial and Information Engineering of the Politecnico di Milano. AVSI contribution is mainly based on its experience of local business development in Uganda, with a view to promoting the creation and growth of local companies that respect the human rights of workers and the environment and that can truly promote the well-being of the population.

The aim of the thesis is to create and validate a method for supporting entrepreneurship in the context of Emerging Countries, using a specific case study of a start-up incubated in the country of Ethiopia as an



environmental test. The real problems faced by different realities (both for profit, non-profit and governmental) that tries to support Emerging Countries to become autonomous are in fact of two different natures. The first one has an economic-financial's one, and in particular can be identified in the cash flows' management, a problem that derives from a cultural error and probably from a historical error partly caused by the colonialism of the more advanced Western Countries: from the analysis of historical data and empirical experiences, it is in fact evident how the concept of economic and social return on an investment is sometimes developed at a primitive level in the context of Emerging Countries. This is not the case if the subjects analyzed has an education or work experience in environments related to Western Countries' culture, in fact in this way the subject has been able to absorb through an osmotic process the methodology and meaning of the actions. It is precisely for this reason that the funds loaned – either free of charge or with a request to return on favorable terms – often risk being lost or wasted, thus creating an inefficiency, as well as ineffectiveness, in the economic support system itself. The analysis of this type of problem consequently leads to a second problem that could be considered even more important to analyze: the problem of cultural and social difference, both in terms of values, beliefs, customs and habits, but also in terms of style and daily approach to life. In fact, from these analyses and starting from the immense literature already available, it has emerged that the primary cause of the failure of many businesses is related to an underestimation of the impact that the different values previously written have on the form and effectiveness of the business itself. It is therefore useful to bear in mind that an approach of impositions – while theoretically more effective and functional - often brings a failure of the methodology itself making it ineffective and non-functional. The innovative value of this thesis is found, with humility, in the contribution that this work can provide as a support to the existing literature and public debate, and thus to the potential use that others will make of it in order to hopefully arrive in the future at making scientific and structured a methodology that has too often so far proved to be ineffective in its results.

#### ANNEX:

- Presentation at the Italian Business & SDGs Annual Forum
- Public Consultation on Draft OECD Recommendation on the Role of Government in Promoting Responsible Business Conduct – AVSI Foundation's contribution
- Link at AVSI Code of Ethics <u>https://back.avsi.org/uploads/Code-of-Ethics-ENG.pdf</u>



Global Compact Network Italia

#### **ITALIAN BUSINESS & SDGs ANNUAL FORUM** SETTIMA EDIZIONE

#### IL RUOLO DELLE IMPRESE PER LE CITTÀ SOSTENIBILI



PIEMONTE

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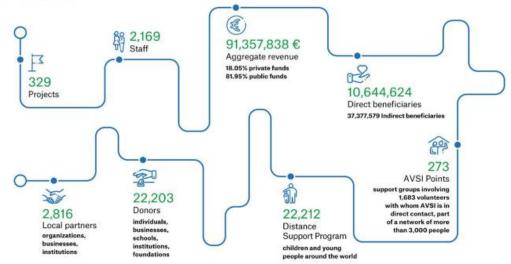
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## AVSI in breve







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#### Progetto di rigenerazione urbana integrato di quartieri poveri di Maputo, Mozambico (2011- 2016)

- Elaborazione di un piano integrato di sviluppo del quartiere
- Realizzazione di interventi prioritari con azioni tese al rafforzamento del capitale sociale, culturale ed economico
- Rafforzamento della municipalità nella pianificazione gestione del territorio







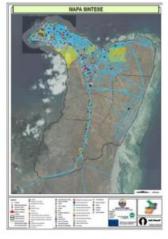


#### Il piano integrato di sviluppo della comunità per attrarre nuove risorse (2012-2019)



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#### Progetto PLATIP, Integrated and participatory urban planning of Pemba (2016-2019)



A Pemba la scoperta di numerosi giacimenti di gas tra il 2007 e il 2009 ha generato una serie di investimenti in seguito ai quali la popolazione è cresciuta da 141.316 abitanti (Censimento 2007) a 211.000 (Censimento 2017). Il progetto include:

- Rafforzamento della società civile e di stakeholder mediante co-progettazione (15 ٠ CSOs, 2 Università, 15 medie imprese, 4 aziende)
- . Piani di sviluppo integrato delle aree vulnerabili in accordo con il Master Plan della città (n. 2 quartieri per un totale di 19.000 abitanti)
- Formazione dei tecnici comunali
- In due quartieri a basso reddito: 1.000 piani di cottura migliorati venduti, sostegno a 55 piccole imprese, sostegno a 6 progetti culturali coinvolgendo 18.000 persone











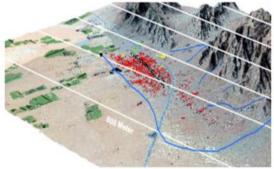


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PROGETTO RADICE, STRENGTHENING AND PROTECTION OF CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HERITAGES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN JORDAN, Quweira – Giordania (2020 – 2021)



## OBIETTIVO

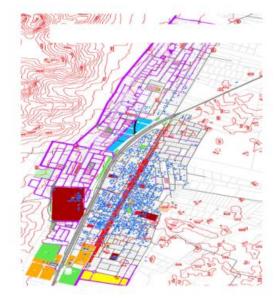
Migliorare le condizioni di vita dei rifugiati siriani e delle comunità giordane, rafforzando l'accesso ai servizi essenziali e riabilitando le infrastrutture di base di Agaba.





#### PROGETTO RADICE

- all'elaborazione di un piano di sviluppo locale nel comune di Qweirah (12.000 ab) Attualmente stiamo replicando in altre sei città della Giordania.
- 2) Riabilitazione delle infrastrutture (Cash for Work) coinvolgendo nella realizzazione 180 persone
- I servizi di turismo sostenibile sono stati rafforzati e promossi e le opportunità di sviluppo e investimento per le comunità locali sono aumentate. Avvio cooperativa femminile, rafforzamento di iniziative 15 iniziative imprenditoriali per un totale di 120 persone



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#### Uno sguardo sull'Italia

- 1) Le persone con le su diverse forme di espressione sono e devono essere PARTE ATTIVE di tutto il processo di pianificazione e implementazione
- 2) Il terzo settore è parte integrante della progettazione. Si deve lavorare per una partnership alla pari
- 3) L'integrazione: far dialogare i diversi attori del territorio (terzo settore, enti territoriale, attività economiche, ecc..) Il PNRR in Italia ha reintrodotto l'idea che fin dalla fase della progettazione delle infrastrutture l'aspetto sociale con le sue varie ricadute è parte integrante del processo di progettazione
- 4) IL primo scopo di un piano è quello di riconoscere e mobilizzare e investire nelle risorse presenti nel territorio
- 5) AVSI oltre a realizzare piani di sviluppo integrati o piani di rigenerazione urbana favorisce la loro implementazione



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#### SOCIALE nella Città Sostenibile

Città sostenibile, città resiliente, città vivibile, città verde, città inclusiva, smart city:

luogo di espressione e vita delle persone che la abitano, la città prende forma e sviluppa per rispondere ai bisogni e alle dinamiche di vita delle persone/comunità

città sostenibile vuol dire

- favorire il community building: la nascita di comunità aperte e accoglienti per tutti, anche i più vulnerabili

- promuovere i nessi nei vari ambiti (educativo, sanitario, alimentare, culturale, lavorativo, economico, del tempo libero, ambientale)

- attivare sinergie con i partner del territorio, pubblici, privati, profit e no profit, universitari

- co-progettazione tra le parti dalla fase di ideazione a quella di implementazione, fino a giungere al processo di valutazione, secondo un approccio olistico e integrato

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#### Driver 1: partecipazione e stakeholders

L'identificazione, la mappatura e l'*engagement* degli *stakeholders* è fondamentale per il processo di sviluppo territoriale.

Si parte dalla persona, con le sue espressioni sociali e associative (società civile) al centro.

Questo nucleo è in relazione con tutto il sistema di attori pubblici e privati.





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#### Driver 2: approccio integrato sistemico



Tre pilastri della sostenibilità: socio-culturale ed educativo, ecologico e ambientale, economico e lavorativo.

Focus e attenzione alla persona con una visione globale della comunità nel territorio.

Focus su un settore di intervento senza perdere di vista tutti gli altri fattori del territorio.

Per una crescita omogenea di tutti i fattori



#### **Driver 3: Partenariati e governance**

La pianificazione è un processo che permette agli attori locali di:

- prendere coscienza e conoscenza del proprio territorio, sia in termini di risorse, capacità, opportunità e potenzialità, sia in termini di bisogni e necessità
- mettere in contatto e in relazione i vari attori presenti



Un piano integrato di sviluppo permette di :

- avere una visione d'insieme in una prospettiva di sviluppo;
- attirare nuovi finanziamenti in un medio lungo termine;
- favorire sinergie tra i vari attori presenti avviando fin da subito gli interventi



# Public Consultation on Draft OECD Recommendation on the Role of Government in Promoting Responsible Business Conduct – AVSI Foundation's contribution

The suggestions contained in this contribution to the document "Recommendation on the role of Governments in promoting Responsible Business Conduct" go in the direction of steering all corporate investments towards the achievement of the SDGs, respect for human rights and nature, in compliance with the principle of policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD).

AVSI Foundation's suggestions set out below are based on its 50 years of experience in development cooperation projects in about 40 developing countries, with economic development activities also in partnership with local and multinational companies.

The suggestions concern the various areas affected by the recommendations – legal and regulatory aspects, policies and support measures, participatory approach – and respresent some general recommendations and others more specifically focused on international activities.

#### General recommendations:

- Exclude from the allocation of public funds any company subject to a dispute for the violation of the OECD Guidelines for multinational companies;
- Envisage mechanisms for facilitating access to information, social and environmental impact analyses prior to investments, containing the appropriate values of the SDGs indicators, in order to encourage the participation of the communities concerned;



- Certify the global supply chain in specific sectors according to the standards indicated by the OECD for the application of the Guidelines for multinational companies;
- Promote and support the implementation of pilot experiences that can accelerate the process (for example, strengthening support for traineeship for young people within companies) and their dissemination, replicability;
- Incorporate elements of social impact such as additional/preferential requirements at the level of public procurement.

Recommendations for international activities:

- Steer funding and investment of public development cooperation in partnership with companies towards the achievement of the SDGs, respecting human rights and nature, having as main reference the development of the private sector of partner countries, continuity of medium to long term investment in order to ensure a country ownership approach and promoting the creation of durable and decent employment, respecting international standards on transparency, competition and social accountability;
- Ensure maximum visibility, for the purpose of transparency and accountability of the results related to public tender procedures of projects that have gradually obtained public funding to operate in the sector of international development cooperation;
- Structure an analysis and evaluation programme on the additionality of the contributions of the private profit sector to the cooperation and its effectiveness with respect to the SDGs.

28/02/2022