

# 2020 Annual Report



Envisioning the Post Pandemic  
Future

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Vitas Jordan's client submitting his paperwork at a local branch office in Amman. Vitas employees and clients are following strict COVID safety protocols in all branches.

Cover Images: Vitas Jordan's mobile app.

Vitas Iraq equipped public schools in dismal condition with 5,000 new desks, exclusively produced in local Iraqi factories. The desks were distributed to approximately 250 schools across the governorates.

## Letter from the CEO

Most will remember 2020 as the pandemic year. The world faced a massive shock like no other in recent history, one that has affected almost every aspect of life and every corner of the world. Vitas' employees and customers alike were impacted on a very personal as well as professional level. Vitas' staff have lost parents, relatives, and loved ones, including two of our Iraqi colleagues who passed just weeks apart in July. Vitas' customers have suffered business disruptions, broken supply chains, heightened food insecurity, lockdowns and curfews, and the emotional toll that comes with continued health risks and economic uncertainty.

And yet, Vitas has proven resilient. In crisis, Vitas' management teams did not lose sight of strategy and in fact have made extraordinary investments in people, tools, and training that will mark 2020 as the year of transformation. That success in weathering severe shock is no special recipe but an ability over the years to become seasoned crisis managers and to take the long view.

What is the long view?

Sustainable finance: Vitas secured sufficient liquidity from local and international lenders to disburse new loans that sustained portfolio levels and, even with adjusted provisioning for bad debt, allowed Vitas companies to remain in a strong financial position despite losses. Financial instruments such as guarantees and insurance that Vitas has deployed for the last decade became critically important financial management tools today. At the time of writing this letter, nearly 60% of Vitas' portfolio outstanding is comprised of loans made post-crisis, since April 2020, and remarkably carries less than two percent portfolio at risk, back to pre-crisis norms. Vitas companies have disbursed an additional \$20 million in new growth over the last quarter to maintain the portfolio at a level just above where it was a year ago.

Commitment to customers and staff: When governments and central banks forced Vitas' physical doors to close temporarily, it accelerated digital loan applications through Facebook and other channels in order to keep operating and disbursing loans, no matter what. Vitas launched consumption and emergency loan products as well as top-ups to existing customers to weather the disruptions. It opened new branches, moved some branches to virtual, and made a decision early on to retain staff and prevent lay-offs, and to offer flexibility to work remotely, especially for working parents and those with caregiver responsibilities at home. It developed dashboards to monitor the retention of women clients by country, branch, and product. A new initiative called "Vitas Women" is providing a safe space and sense of community, professional support, and cross-learning to junior, mid, and senior-level women managers. It put in place office rotation schedules, strict cleaning policies, and mask mandates as well as testing in private clinics where needed, and procurement of vaccines for staff when government plans fall short. People over profit are at the heart of Vitas' business success.

Digitalization: Digital defines every business whether it was planned or not, Vitas expanded the Serbia IT Hub, added capacity and staff, launched an extensive data warehousing strategy, and trained the first team of Embedded Data Analytics Champions. Vitas Lab designed and launched its first pilot in supply chain financing with Toters, the Lebanese delivery app, to expand credit access for thousands of merchants in Lebanon and drivers in Iraq. This is one of several flagship partnerships in the pilot phase that is the cornerstone to Vitas' value offering of responsible finance through digital rails.

The future is in technological innovation rooted in a deep understanding of the customer, those entrepreneurs, and small businesses who deserve financing to meet their true potential. In the midst of massive global change, transformational change becomes easier when you have solidarity in purpose. At Vitas, we are financing a better world.



*We dedicate this annual report 2020 to lost colleagues who shared our commitment to finance a better world. In memoriam, Mr. Bahaa Eldeen Hasan Fathalla, Senior Customer Relationship Officer in Sulaimaniya Branch, and Ms. Jihane Jawad S'oud, Senior Credit Assistant in Karbala Branch. May they rest in peace.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elissa McCarter Laborde".

Elissa McCarter Laborde  
CEO, Vitas Group

## Letter from the Chair of the Management Committee

Dear colleagues,

When we look back at 2020, most of us will remember the way the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted our daily lives and threatened the health of our loved ones and the economic security of our communities.

The Vitas Group felt the effects of the pandemic deeply, and close to home. Valued and respected colleagues lost their lives to the coronavirus, and we mourn their passing while honoring their commitment to serving others. Every team member and the customer felt the impact of the second-degree effects of the pandemic, with lockdowns and closures sending ripples across the global economy. Little about 2020 felt like business as usual.

Beyond the pandemic, there were other shocks as well. The economic and political crisis in Lebanon compounded by the massive explosion in Beirut, and widespread unrest in the West Bank and Israel, and the conflict between Israel and Hamas resulting in massive destruction and devastation in Gaza.

And yet, when I think of Vitas Group, the first word that comes to mind is resilience. We know from past conflicts just how quickly our Vitas institutions and clients can rebound. The global team is focused on innovation, digitization, and forward progress, and that agility and adaptability became more essential than ever before in this time of crisis. Customers are also truly resilient, facing enormous obstacles and yet finding ways to grow their local economies, create jobs, and generate meaningful business opportunities that bring value to their communities.

The resilience of every Vitas Group team member, customer, partner, and leader has resulted in a remarkable outcome for this most unusual year. The data points that measure our financial success – which are always coupled with a clear understanding of customer needs – show that the portfolio has rebounded from the COVID crisis, with significant loans disbursed and new growth in the last quarter.

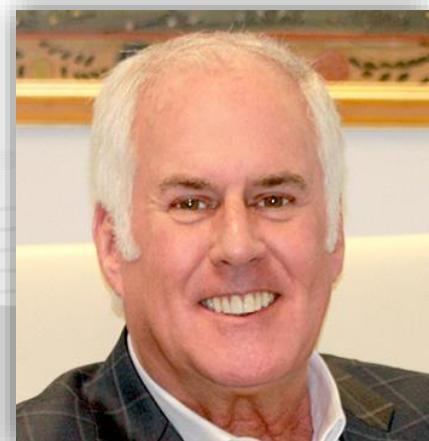
As we look ahead, it is clear that so many of the big global challenges of 2020 remain unfinished. Climate change will reshape our world and our work in ways we might not even be able to predict. Calls for urgent progress in achieving equity, racial justice, and real inclusion have only just begun to receive the answers they deserve. Through all of these changes, the Vitas Group will play an essential role for years to come, as we work toward true financial inclusion, striving every day to meet our commitment to equitable development and inclusive growth.

By working together, I truly believe we are well-positioned to meet our ambitious and vital mission and bold vision of a more just, equitable, and prosperous global community.

Sincerely,



David A. Weiss  
Chairman of the Management Committee



## Meet Vitas Group

### Our Mission:

Vitas Group strives to provide financial products and services that respond to our clients' needs and foster the long-term development of individuals, their businesses, their families and their communities.

### Our Vision:

Vitas Group believes that all people with a desire and capacity to improve their lives should have access to the financial services they need to help them realize their potential and become full social and economic participants in their communities.

Vitas Group is a for-profit holding company that operates a network of non-bank financial services companies. With more than 20 years of successfully lending to small businesses across the Middle East, Vitas offers investors unique exposure to emerging markets and is the only such network in the region.



On August 11, 2020, Global Communities and Vitas Lebanon, along with Saradar Foundation, launched "Li Beirut" (For Beirut) to raise funds for local communities devastated by the massive explosion that shook the city on August 4, 2020. More than 6,000 buildings were damaged or destroyed in the blast, resulting in the displacement of over 250,000 people and causing an estimated \$5 billion in material damage.

# Together Against Coronavirus



## Campaign supporting the health and safety of orphans and elderly in Iraq

Vitas Iraq, in coordination with the Department of Foreign International Relations and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of Erbil, equipped orphanages and elderly with personal medical supplies. This initiative is part of the major Covid-19 prevention campaign launched by Vitas and partners across Iraq's governorates since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic.



## Campaign supporting the health and safety of security forces in Iraq

CHF Vitas Iraq continued its humanitarian work all over Iraq during the Covid-19 pandemic. Vitas Iraq distributed medical kits such as face masks, gloves and infrared thermometers to the police security teams. This activity took place in several governorates including Baghdad, Babel, Najaf, Basra and Mudaina.

## Campaign supporting the health sector in Hella, Iraq

In order to provide support and assistance to the health sector, CHF Vitas Iraq has equipped 25 medical beds in the Crisis Cell in Babel Governorate. This is an integral part of humanitarian initiatives undertaken by Vitas Iraq.





## 2020 in Numbers

**Portfolio  
Outstanding**



**246 M**

**Active Clients**



**83,499**

**PAR>30**



**15.19%**

\* Numbers include Vitas subsidiaries and affiliated companies in Iraq and Egypt



## Investing in Youth

**38%**

Percentage of Vitas' clients who are youth (30 years and under)

## Women Entrepreneurs

**30%**

Percentage of Vitas' clients who are women



## Offering Opportunities

**43%**

Percentage of Vitas' clients who live in rural areas

# Meet Our Clients

## Shaima's story

Shaima Kazem Mahdi is a fighter. Despite being wheelchair bound she decided to start her own business in 2017. At the time she didn't know what steps to take or how to secure the initial capital. She learned about CHF Vitas Iraq's unique loan product for people with special needs from a friend. After discussing her business idea and learning more about the special needs loan, she applied for a business loan with CHF Vitas Iraq. She used her first loan to buy a sewing machine to sew curtains among other things. Since her first loan, she has taken three more loans from CHF Vitas Iraq and bought new sewing machines and has been able to offer more services to her customers. Shaima is not only a businesswoman, but she is also an athlete at the Babel Sports Club. She regularly participates in games for people with disabilities. She is among the first women to fence in Iraq. Shaima wishes there were more institutions like Vitas that support people with special needs.



## Bassam's story

Bassam Kamel Nasser has owned a small carpentry factory since 2010. In 2015, he needed financing for a new project. Bassam came to know about Vitas Iraq and its loan products through one of our customer relationships officers. After learning about Vitas' business loan program, he decided to apply. With his first loan he was able to buy a few machines and tools. Bassam has continued to renew his loans and today, six years since his first loan, Bassam has managed to convert his small shop into a large carpentry factory. The loans have enabled him to buy the latest machinery and tools. Bassam says that he has tremendous respect for Vitas Iraq and its employees for helping him realize his dreams.

## Rabah's story

59-year-old Rabah Allan lost his job due to the suspension of his work permit a few years ago. His family members were in a similar situation and were unable to obtain a new permit. Allan was a master glass maker. After failing to find new work Rabah decided to start his own business. He approached Vitas Palestine and applied for a business loan. With Vitas' timely financial help, he was able to start his own glass manufacturing unit. His business is doing well and now he can provide a steady income for his family. He is also able to send his children to school and provide for their educational expenses.



## Our Social Impact



**346K**

Youth financed



**200K**

Homes improved



**273K**

Women empowered



**11, 168**

Number of jobs created



**49,343**

Number of jobs sustained



**9% average increase in monthly business profits for our clients.**

**Vitas is among the top three in terms of market share according to portfolio size in our respective markets.**

# Meet Our Clients

## Radwan's story

37-year-old Radwan Moualem is a pharmacist from Lebanon. He opened his business right after graduating from pharmacy college. Radwan's business grew exponentially in five years. There was a lot of demand for his pharmacy, and he needed to add more inventory to keep up with the rising number of clients. Being a father of two, Radwan was not able to save a lot of money to add new inventory. That is when he decided to approach Vitas Lebanon. After meeting with a loan officer from Vitas, he applied for a business loan and was able to get the required money to stock his store with inventory. This timely financial help has allowed him to keep up with demand. Radwan was extremely happy that he decided to meet with the loan officer from Vitas and says that the application and approval process was very easy and Vitas staff was extremely helpful. He intends to continue to work with Vitas as his business grows.



## Monica's story

Monica Toma is an artist based in Alba county, Romania. She produces original artwork on laminated hardwood. Her relationship with Vitas began in 2013 when she applied for a small business loan to build a workshop and a warehouse. Once both the workshop and warehouse were built, she wanted to create a website to promote and sell her work. She applied for another Vitas loan to fund her website development. Her business has grown since. Monica gives back to her community by hiring families in need to help her at the workshop and donating her work to local monasteries and organizations.



## Adib's story

28-year-old Adib Ibrahim is a successful barber from Bar Elias, Lebanon. He has always been passionate about his profession. After graduating from high school, Adib decided to open his own business in his hometown. He has been a Vitas client since 2014. Adib says that he is grateful for all the support he has received from Vitas Lebanon and the employees who helped him in achieving his dream. A business loan from Vitas helped him in buying the required equipment and products to keep his shop afloat. In the last seven years, Adib has seen many ups and downs, but he remains resilient. Even during these hard times, he is planning to renovate his shop and make it more modern so he can keep on working in the profession he loves.

# Committed to Growth



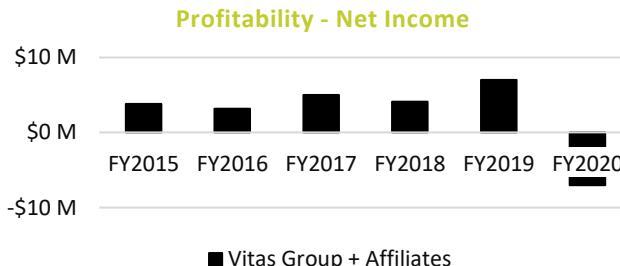
- Consistent portfolio growth



- 70% Client Retention

## Proven Track Record of Impact Investment

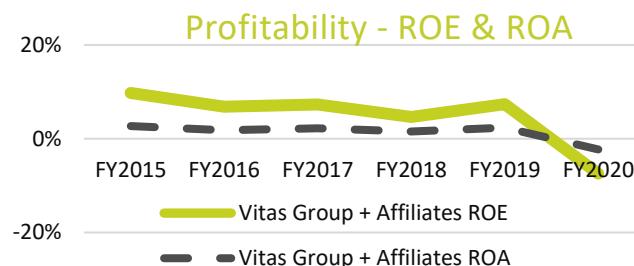
Since 2004, Vitas companies have disbursed more than \$3.3 billion to over 1.1 million customers in 5 countries.



Covid-19 greatly impacted profitability, ROE, and ROA in 2020

## Innovation and Partnerships Through Vitas Lab

Target 1 million active customers in MENA and 5 new markets over next 5 years.



## Types of Potential Partners

We aspire to create a global footprint

In markets where Vitas group currently operates and expand to new markets.



- Telecoms
- Banks
- FMCG Distributors & Wholesalers
- Large Retailers
- E-Commerce / Marketplace Platforms



- Ride hailing apps
- Home delivery apps
- Payment companies (gateway, card based, NFC, QR, mobile wallet)
- E-wallet operators



- Supply Chain Finance (SCF) Platforms / Marketplace
- Credit bureaus, social networks, Associations
- Insurance companies
- Post offices

for services

# Partner with Us

Vitas Group is a network of non-bank, microfinance institutions that reflect the culmination of two decades' worth of microfinance experience in many different geographic and political environments.

Vitas Group offers an attractive return on investment and an opportunity to join the only commercial-oriented, private network of high performing microfinance institutions with exposure to the Middle East region. As a path for growth, Vitas Group seeks investment opportunities in both existing and new countries, where its strong credit underwriting and client centric approach to micro and small enterprise lending will advance financial inclusion and enhance employment.

## Our Services

### Micro Business Loans

- Loan amount varies from \$100 - \$20k
- Loan term varies between 12 month and up to 36 months
- Loan usage: working capital – increasing assets – start up.

### SME Loans

- Loan amount varies from \$20k - \$35k
- Loan term varies between 12 months and up to 36 months
- Loan usage: working capital – increasing assets.

### Home Improvement Loan

- Loan amount varies from \$100 - \$20k
- Loan term varies between 12 months and up to 36 months
- Loan usage: renovate or add rooms.

### Consumption Loan

- Loan amount varies from \$100k - \$15k
- Loan term varies between 12 months and up to 36 months
- Loan usage: education, health, personal needs

## Responsible Lending to Unbanked Business Owners

### Underwriting Ability for Un-Bankable Loans

Personalized door-to-door sales approach with minimum collaterals. Business and personality assessment is conducted.

### Low Default Rate

Vitas companies have had a consistent annual default rate under two percent. This comes as result of proper assessment of repayment capability.

### Proprietary Client Management Platform

In-house technology team and proprietary software services managed from Serbia.

### Digital Readiness

Offer over 600 Point Of Sale locations, app and tablet-based client engagement. Increasing number of products to enable the digitization of SME customers.

### Experienced Management Teams

Committed local professionals serving Vitas over 18 years. Global team with experience on four continents.

### Ability to Launch in New Markets

Actively pursuing strategic partners and opportunities for expansion beyond MENA.



Ikhlas Al-Hourani is a Vitas customer from Jordan. She owns a beauty shop that also sells jewelry and accessories. Vitas' timely help allowed her to buy required inventory and expand her offerings.

## Vitas Jordan

Portfolio Outstanding



62M

Active Clients



20,412

PAR>30



4%

# Managing During the Pandemic and Beyond

## Q and A with Vitas Jordan's General Manager Nasser Darwish

### How did you manage to keep your staff safe and motivated during the lockdowns?

Nothing changed in terms of motivation. All means of communication were available and maintained by our team. Vitas Jordan has the necessary technology and a strong IT structure. We also took the following steps:

- Business continuity plan which covered everything needed to keep staff positive, confident, and motivated.
- Created internal WhatsApp groups to stay connected with our staff and highlighting major announcements.
- Provided all staff health care and fully paid COVID-19 test if he/she is suspected to have COVID-19.

### How did you make sure that clients were well served even when branches/offices were not in operation?

We created a communication plan with the clients, especially by making it easy to switch to working from home by providing the needed technology, systems, and tools. Also, a collaboration between all departments and sections made it easier in sharing, unifying and sending messages to the clients. We also used social media channels to stay in touch with our clients. We launched campaigns to create awareness about the pandemic. SMS was another form of communication that was used for urgent announcements. We encouraged clients to use E-Fawateer.com as a payment channel in order to maintain social distancing as much as possible.



### What are some of the major learnings from the pandemic?

People are still our most valuable resource. Transparency, decisive leadership, effective communication, team spirit, and responsibility are vital in succeeding under tough situations. We also learned that moving forward change management is essential. The world is changing quickly and making decisions in uncertain times was a big challenge, but it made us realize that we have the capability and the proficiency to continue doing what we do when everything is disrupted and unpredictable. It is not only about experience; it is also about believing and being persistent, and, most of all, fostering a team spirit.

### What are some of your key future projects?

By learning a few key lessons from the pandemic combined with some new technologies and innovation, we can make a difference in how we do business in the future. This can only happen through strong, mutually beneficial partnerships that we are currently exploring, for example, mobile wallets.



55-year-old Najla Aghnatiou started her catering business in 2016 to support her family. In 2018, she needed new equipment but didn't have the money, so she applied for a loan with Vitas Lebanon. With the Vitas loan she was able to buy an industrial freezer and a new oven. Najla was also able to register her business with the government and now has become a supplier to the Lebanese Army.

## Vitas Lebanon

**Portfolio Outstanding**



**25 M**

**Active Clients**



**16,208**

**PAR>30**



**27%\***

# Managing During the Pandemic and Beyond

Q and A with Vitas Lebanon's General Manager Ziad Halaby

## How did you manage to keep your staff safe and motivated during the lockdowns?

Several steps and measures were implemented to keep staff safe and motivated during the lockdown including but not limited to:

- Implementing and enforcing safety standards in line with World Health Organization recommendations and best practice guidelines. Key measures revolved around immediate testing, reporting of potential cases, social distancing, hygiene and masks. Processes were changed to take into consideration the challenges of Covid-19, and staff safety.
- On another note, management enforced transparent and regular communication between all staff. The company also supported all staff working from home by providing the necessary hardware, software, and tech support needed to ensure the smoothest transition possible.

## How did you make sure that clients were well served even when branches/offices were not in operation?

Maintaining proper levels of customer service was a key priority during the pandemic and lockdowns. Vitas Lebanon institutionalized several measures to ensure clients remain well served across the entirety of the Lebanese territory including but not limited to:

- Executing a segmentation exercise of the portfolio and ensuring that all clients were contacted to inquire about their well-being and safety.
- Refraining from unnecessary visits to clients' businesses and halting all staff field trips to clients' domiciles in line with applicable safety standards.

Vitas Lebanon launched a newly designed website and mobile app during the pandemic.



## What are some of the major learnings from the pandemic?

- Cloud technology is essential in times of crisis. Several tools available to the team before the crisis were under-utilized. Since the pandemic, these tools are now a central part of day-to-day activities, particularly video conferencing.
- Business agility is an extremely important corporate trait that every company should have and work on instilling as part of their corporate culture. Vitas demonstrated that it is adaptive, flexible, and creative in a rapidly changing financial inclusion sector.
- Maintaining client contact and communication are fundamental.

## What are some of your key future projects?

Future projects consist mainly of full digitization of the lending cycle, a revamp of customer channels, a fully-fledged digital customer suite (such as a new company website, a client application), and the overhaul of key policies and procedures to accompany these changes. In addition, the product development process used by the institution focuses on exploring new methodologies in product design, and product features to ensure out of the box products that respond to customer needs. Vitas is also working on important partnerships that will reshape its product offerings, its lending operations, and customer service experience, which will be the cornerstone of the future direction of the institution.



Hanan Ammash is a resident of Ukba Al Jaber refugee camp and an owner of Palestine Chef Products. Hanan started her business three years ago. At the time she didn't have money to buy a refrigerator or a gas container and needed a car for deliveries. Her business started to grow but she couldn't keep up with the orders. That's when she approached Vitas. She received a start-up loan managed by Vitas which has helped her grow her business. Hanan delivers food to six different schools along with government and social organizations. A portion of this loan was managed by the European Union and European Investment Bank, which supports 2,000 small businesses in Palestine with one third of them being run by women.

## Vitas Palestine

### Portfolio Outstanding



49 M

### Active Clients



12,218

### PAR>30



9.5%

# Managing During the Pandemic and Beyond

## Q and A with Vitas Palestine's General Manager Alaa Sisalem

### How did you manage to keep your staff safe and motivated during the lockdowns?

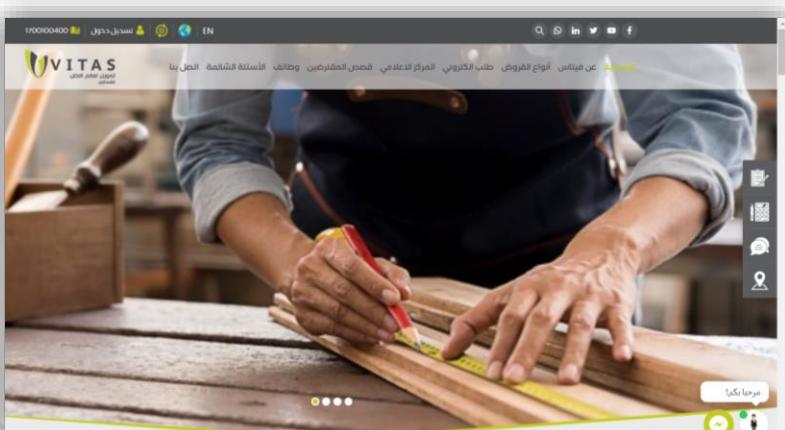
Since the beginning of the pandemic, Vitas Palestine continuously sent alerts and instructions to all employees on safety measures and followed up to make sure all employees followed instructions. In addition, the following measures were taken:

- Glass shields were installed in front of all branch employees to protect them and clients.
- Masks and gloves were distributed to all employees in addition to sanitizers and alcohol.
- Infected employee were required to receive a negative COVID-19 PCR test before returning to work.
- Offices with infected employees were sanitized thoroughly.
- All meetings were conducted online. No visitors were allowed.
- To boost employee motivation, management continued to communicate with employees on a daily basis and rewarded employees who performed at an exceptional level.

### How did you make sure that clients were well served even when branches/offices were not in operation?

During the lockdown we implemented our emergency plan. Depending on the level of mobility, we implemented the following actions:

- All Customer Relationship Officers (CROs) were prepared to contact clients with active loans, follow up on the impact of lockdown on their daily life, and predict their ability to make their payments.
- The credit team had access to the loan management system from home and was able to provide loans to eligible clients.
- The Finance department received all disbursement requests and transferred them based on the bank's availability.
- Our team was available 24/7 to support our clients and followers on social media such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, etc.



Vitas Palestine launched a newly designed website during the pandemic.

### What are some of the major learnings from the pandemic?

When you have engaged, motivated, and satisfied employees, as well as strong leadership and teamwork, you can overcome any obstacle. Always be proactive in mitigating any risks that might arise. Planning and providing all necessary tools to ensure that work continues on-premises and online. The importance of digitization in providing solutions and providing more efficient services.

### What are some of your key future projects?

- Linking the back office with a task management module will enable us to organize the process more professionally, speed up the process, and easily reallocate tasks between employees to serve more clients from home or the office.
- A collection system that organizes and prioritizes the collection process at the loan officer level. CROs will have access to information on client repayment behavior, location, amount due, guarantor contact information, and other available grantees. This also allows new staff member to manage other portfolios with minimum effort.
- Delivery companies can help in contract signing for verified clients (renewal loans).



Edu Lab Program- Edu Lab is an educational entrepreneurship program dedicated to rural high school students in Romania. It was started by the New Horizons Foundation with the support of Vitas Romania. The program's vision is to create a student-led local solution to a global problem. A total of 57 students were selected to participate in this program. They were helped by a team of twenty mentors and business experts. This year's theme focused on solutions to remedy inequitable access to quality education.

## Vitas Romania

### Portfolio Outstanding



18.5 M

### Active Clients



1,797

### PAR>30



7.6%

# Managing During the Pandemic and Beyond

Q and A with Vitas Romania's General Manager Cristian Jurma

## How did you manage to keep your staff safe and motivated during the lockdowns?

We took all sanitary and safety measures and communicated regularly with clients. Whenever possible, we implemented rotation schedule between working from home and office. We set short-term goals and tried to recognize efforts made and achievements.

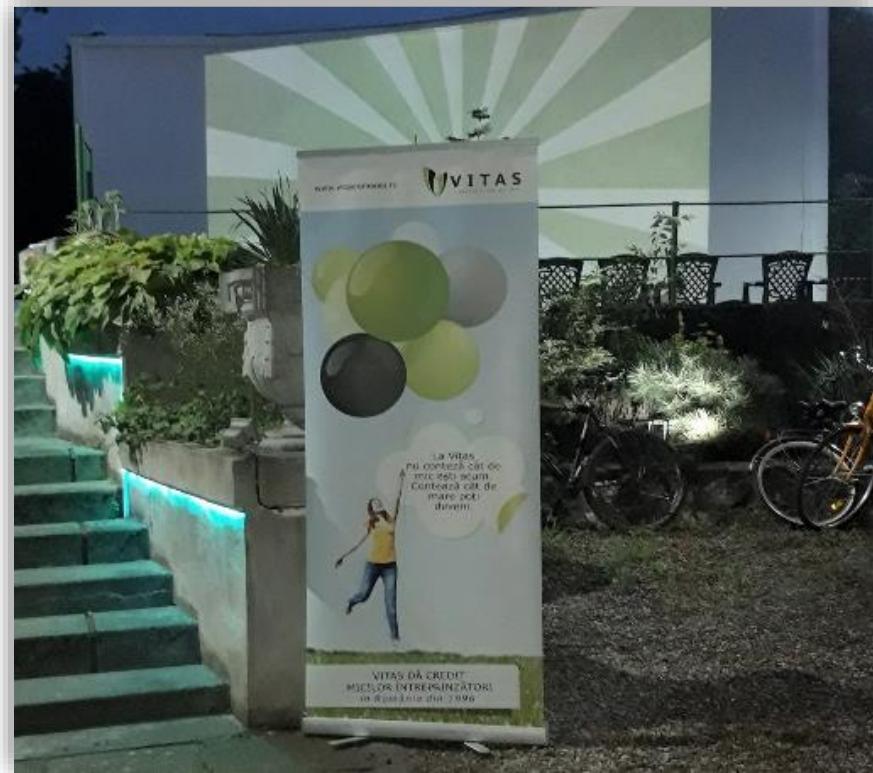
## How did you make sure that clients were well served even when branches/offices were not in operation?

Few branches were open on a regular schedule during the pandemic. However, we introduced digital channels for clients, so that they could apply for payment postponement, submit loan application, access information regarding the loan, and make payments from home.

## What are some of the major learnings from the pandemic?

The pandemic has had similar implications to previous crises. In the initial stage we focused on liquidity, access to data, monitoring our portfolio, and preparing an action plan. The difference between this situation and previous crisis was this situation came in a number of waves unlike the previous financial crisis. We took the following steps to deal with the pandemic:

- Constant communication with clients and staff was critical.
- The pandemic accelerated the need for digitization even though some clients still wanted in person transactions.
- Changed staff expectation in terms of working from the office.



Vitas Romania sponsored Ceau Cinema-Pocket Film Festival, held between July 16-19. Due to Covid related safety measures, the entire event was held outdoors at the 'Capitol Summer Garden' in the former Arta Cinema. This was the seventh year of this film festival.

## What are some of your key future projects?

Online lending platform: We are building the first end to end digital lending platform for businesses in Romania. It is complex and challenging task but once ready it will enable us to expand outside of our current geography and help us in expanding our client base.

Sales acceleration: Vitas Romania is improving its organizational structure by creating a demand generation, sales, and customer success team. This specialization will bring efficiency and the focus required from both a Human Resources perspective as well as enhancing the implementation of digitization.

Jennar, a 27-year-old hairdresser from Sulaymaniyah is a long-time client of CHF Vitas Iraq. She is in her fourth loan cycle with Vitas.



## Vitas Iraq (affiliate)

Portfolio Outstanding



81.5 M

Active Clients



28,399

PAR>30



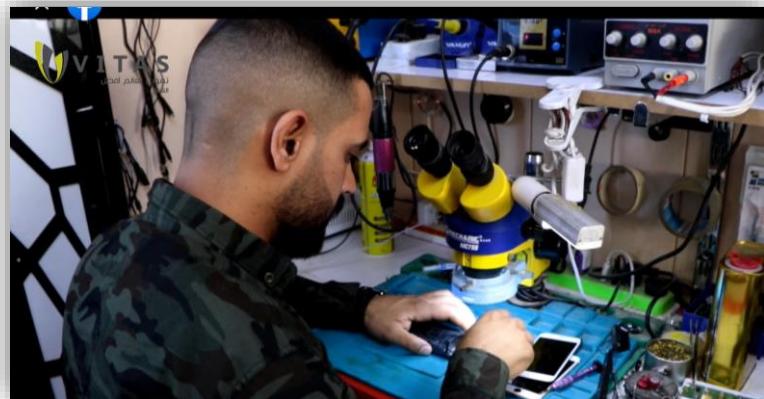
24.2%

# Managing During the Pandemic and Beyond

**Q and A with Vitas Iraq's General Managers Ahmad Lamaa and Moustafa Khalifeh**

## **How did you manage to keep your staff safe and motivated during the lockdowns?**

We took a three-pronged approach: 1) improve policies, 2) stay connected, and 3) adapt to ensure employees felt safe. We adapted our benefit programs for staff to cover COVID-19 and created a 14 days quarantine leave policy for employees that might have come down with the virus. We prioritized enhancing our communication channels when we moved to remote work and have implemented continuous sterilization of offices and creating flexible schedules for staff.



Murtada Hamed owns a mobile phone repair shop in Hashimiya. He specializes in selling and repairing cell phones. He is in his third loan cycle with CHF Vitas Iraq. He credits his success to Vitas' simple and efficient loan process and personalized attention.

## **How did you make sure that clients were well served even when branches/offices were not in operation?**

We launched a client mobile app which enabled our clients to make payments directly to us through the mobile application. Our clients were also able to have their questions answered directly by our team instantly through the app. We increased our physical payment access points by expanding our Zain cash agent network.

## **What are some of the major learnings from the pandemic?**

This year we learned the importance of ensuring our employees' and clients' safety, clear communication internally and externally, and keeping an open mind towards growth opportunities during a crisis.

## **What are some of your key future projects?**

We are excited to expand our Zain cash agent network and have operations across all governorates in Iraq by June 2021. We are also excited to forge partnerships with businesses to be able to serve new customer segments. We partnered with Toters, an on-demand delivery tech platform, to finance their drivers' bikes in Baghdad. We look forward to expanding this product throughout Iraq. In conjunction, we partnered with an insurance company, Al Hamraa, to develop an insurance product to cover bikes purchased by Toters drivers through Vitas Iraq's financing.



## Basata Microfinance Solutions (formerly Vitas Egypt)



10.3M



4,465



6.9%

# Managing During the Pandemic and Beyond

Q and A with Basata Microfinance's Managing Director Hossam Heiba

## How did you manage to keep your staff safe and motivated during the lockdowns?

Vitas Egypt went remote at the end of March 2020. To ensure our staff had resources to work from home, we provided internet bundles, mobile lines, digital platforms such as Zoom and WhatsApp to communicate and continue operations. We also ensured our staff had access to COVID-19 medical support through their insurance.

## How did you make sure that clients were well served even when branches/offices were not in operation?

With existing clients, we continued to communicate clearly via multiple digital channels while also calling clients directly. To better serve our clients during the pandemic, we offered them the option to postpone their payments without penalty or a rebate on their last payment if they were in good standing. To ensure strong communication with clients, we set up a customer service line for client inquiries and our customer relationship officers called clients to understand their unique circumstances.

For new clients, we introduced a new emergency product, El Saneed, which has the lowest interest rate in the market and was designed specifically to support clients during the pandemic. Clients have the ability to apply for the loan remotely.



Basata Microfinance offers loans ranging from 3,000 to 200K Egyptian pounds to small, medium, and micro enterprises.

## What are some of the major learnings from the pandemic?

We learned the importance of creating a crisis management committee, ensuring our staff has the resources necessary to work remotely, and the importance of digitization to enable business continuity during lockdowns.

## What are some of your key future projects?

We are excited about our digitization initiatives which will increase efficiency, allowing us to focus on new opportunities in the market. We are looking forward to launching products for customer segments in sectors that are new for us such as agriculture, healthcare, and supply chain.

# Business Strategy Driven by Digital Transformation



**In 2019**, Vitas Group recognized the need to address digital impact on its business across different geographies and decided to initiate due diligence on digital transformation.



**In 2020**, Vitas Group published a digital transformation strategy built around three axes

1. Launched an **innovation lab** to create new products leveraging digital capabilities and anticipate new trends
2. Digitize core to create a new business model
3. Prioritize three business growth digital initiatives to help subsidiaries create new business opportunities and social impact at scale



**In 2021**, Vitas Group implemented selected key digital growth initiatives identified in 2020 around

- Marketing and CRM automation
- Data analytics
- Moving to the cloud
- Launching new disruptive digital financial products targeting new segments



**From 2020 to 2021**, Vitas Group has been focused on transforming its tech and business to be digital-ready



**In 2022**, Vitas Group will leverage its new digital platform to enter new geographies, and to scale its social impact in creating sustainable jobs, financial inclusion and gender inclusion.

# Vitas Lab



Vitas Group is driven by innovation rooted in customer centricity. We launched Vitas Lab in 2020 to test new ideas and drive responsible finance innovation, create new products, and identify new partnerships.



Vitas Lab is at the forefront of digitizing existing processes, products and services in an agile framework by leveraging data and technology to respond to rapid market changes, accelerate growth, and better serve our customers.



Vitas aims to accelerate a mobile-first network of small enterprise lenders and expand to new markets.



Through its own lending platform Vitas directly banks the customer; through partnerships with acquirers, distributors, and other platforms Vitas indirectly banks the customer via LaaS (Loan as a Service)

## Partnerships in Development

**Partnership with global digital APP.**  
Ride hailing app model

**Partnership with a payment processing company**

**Partnership with a wallet operator**  
Includes telcos, payment companies, banks-anyone who offers a payment solution

**Partnership with an online merchant aggregator**  
Marketplace or online set-up store platform

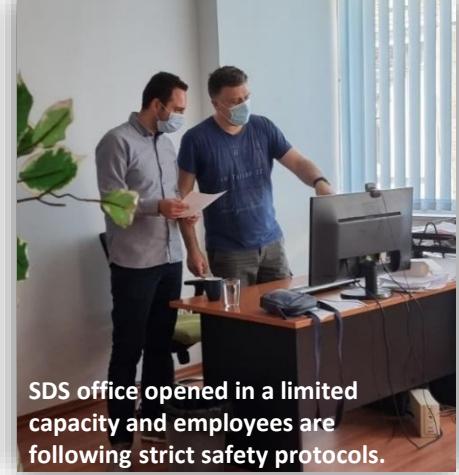
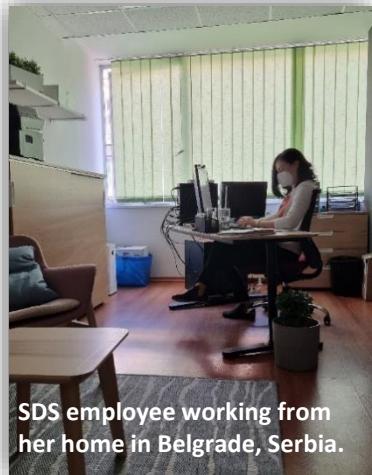
**Partnership with large retailers**

**Partnership with Digital POS provider or an agent network**

# Software Development and Support Unit (SDS)



Vitas Group's proprietary loan management software, WebAbacus, is created and managed by the SDS team based in Belgrade, Serbia.



## How Did We Manage During the Pandemic?

By Boris Marković, Director SDS, Serbia

Everything changed at the beginning of 2020, even though strategies and contingency planning documents were stored somewhere. The whole world shut down.

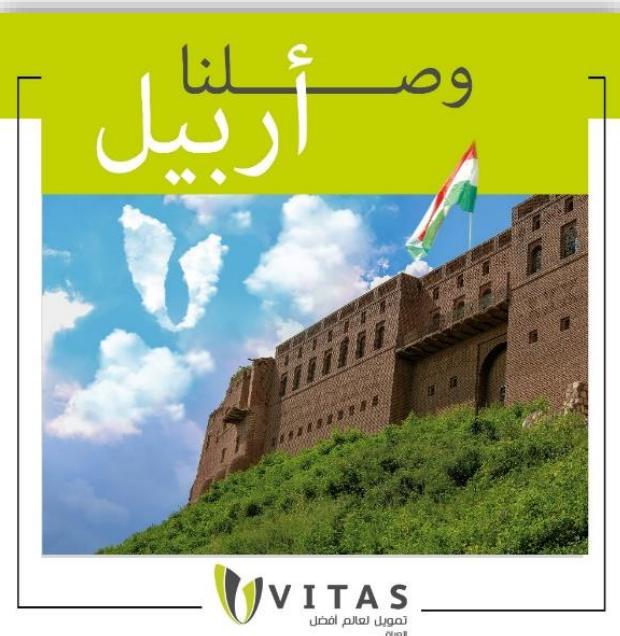
In a matter of days, the SDS team, a close-knit group of friends, had to start working isolated at their homes. In no time, our colleague Vlada became a field operator and connected us to our virtual office setup. Like so many people all over the world, we were facing similar challenges.

Amidst the chaos, we hired four employees. They have become part of the SDS family, even though they haven't met their colleagues in person. We have been able to share collegial warmth virtually. In addition, with support from HQ, implementation of Vitas Group digital strategy continued. The digital strategy plan, which was formed in Amsterdam just a few months before the pandemic, became even more critical. We are beginning to see the results of our digital strategy and it has inspired new collaborations and projects which can generate more opportunities for microfinance institutions (MFIs), their clients, and SDS.

Additionally, we reorganized our team, changed the way we operate, supported and initiated new developments that helped and continues to support MFIs in handling challenges associated with operating in crisis mode. We managed to hold everything together and became even stronger as a team.

I will use the Japanese art of Kintsugi to describe how we became a stronger team during this crisis. Kintsugi ("golden joinery") is the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery by mending the areas of breakage with lacquer mixed with powdered gold, silver, or platinum. As a philosophy, it treats breakage and repair as part of the history of an object, rather than something to hide.

# Retail Operations



Vitas Iraq launched a new branch in Erbil-Kurdistan Iraq in November 2020. The main goal is to serve a new segment of business owners in the Kurdistan region

By Khalid Kabeer, Vitas Group COO

COVID-19 impacted our operations in an unprecedented way. It can be broken down into three main categories 1). disruption of clients' businesses, 2) impaired ability to reach out to clients due to continuous or intermittent lockdowns, and 3) disappearance of certain segments of businesses depending on the economy.

One key driver of this disruption has been the uncertainty prevalent due to successive variants of COVID-19. The clients whose businesses have survived so far are unable to plan long term and the burden of fixed costs with less revenue has diminished margins. In comparison, there are businesses and clients who absorbed the shock of the loss of revenue and restarted their businesses with similar or evolved business models. Last but not least, some of our clients went bankrupt during the pandemic due to lack of demand in sectors most impacted by the pandemic, such as gyms and cafes.

Our approach towards our clients has evolved during the pandemic. Initially, we focused on existing clients to help them by either giving them repayment holidays or providing them with fresh loans to restart their businesses and meet their consumption needs during the pandemic.

We saw a significant shift towards multiple distribution channels and the presence of such businesses using technology in all our markets. However, it has not been pervasive, since barriers to mainstream and being able to leverage technology are driven by multiple factors like country infrastructure, regulations, private sector push towards digital solutions, and so on. All these factors posed bigger barriers to micro and small businesses to leverage technology. However, larger private sector entities adapted rather quickly, since they have more capital to invest in the long-term as opposed to micro and small businesses.

The post COVID-19 business landscape is still not clear in terms of the time frame in which markets will adjust. However, the new 'normal' will leverage technology, partnerships, and diversification more than before in order to survive.



Potential clients filling out information at the main branch of Vitas Jordan in Amman.

# Women Leaders of Vitas



## Bianca Bobirca

I have been leading the marketing strategy and campaigns at Vitas Romania for more than three years. I also lead and coordinate PR efforts, CSR projects through partners (New Horizons Foundation, Code for Romania, Big Screen Association), and company projects like Declaration of Independence – business plan contest for startups, which is very dear to me. Introduced in 2015, 'The Declaration of Independence' business plan contest is aimed at encouraging and financially supporting young entrepreneurs to start their own business.

One of the most gratifying aspects of my work is in addition to ensuring access to finance, I am able to see the history of each client, their ideas, their path, and their failure or success. I am really exited to be a part of their journey.

From the pandemic experience I have learned to appreciate the little things in life and rediscovered beautiful places in Romania. During this pandemic we focused our efforts in two main directions. One consists in reorganizing the activity in the marketing and demand generation area in order to generate more leads via different channels and the other one is focused on Salesforce implementation.

## Jenny Kim

I am Vitas Group's number cruncher. I take data from the field and organize it into presentable formats. Every month our subsidiaries submit results which show how their portfolio and businesses are performing. I take this information and create comprehensive reports which are shared with various stakeholders within the organization and with external partners such as our funders. Oftentimes I'm tasked with creating fewer routine reports that seek to answer questions around a specific area of business or get a better understanding of certain trends. I provide information to key decision makers helping them make informed and beneficial decisions for the organization. Good decisions lead to operations running smoothly, long-term success for our business, and continued support of our individual clients, and their businesses, families and communities.



Most recently, I was asked to profile our female clients, evaluate the performance of their loans, identify any trends and variances, and evaluate them vs our male clients. An analysis of our female clients during the COVID-19 pandemic showed our female clients tend to have lower delinquency rates compared to our male clients, are less likely to be retained compared to our male clients in most subsidiaries, and in one country decreasing at a much higher rate than our male clients.

## Rula Muhiesen

I am the head of Vitas Jordan's Customer Service, Complaints, and Research departments. I built these departments from scratch. I am proud to see the impact these departments have on the company's insights on customers and strategic plans. I primarily focus on customer centricity at Vitas Jordan. I conduct in-depth research on customer needs, preferences, and behaviors to provide recommendations to inform financial product designs. I strive to offer comprehensive support to both existing customers and potential customers to improve customer journey.

I have developed an insurance program, which has been operating for over six years. This microinsurance program serves as a model for microfinance institutions. I also created a complaints resolution system that has policies, procedures and channels that are clear and comprehensive.



Vitas Jordan has weathered many crises since inception. However, the pandemic has been the most challenging crisis Vitas Jordan has experienced. I am looking forward to emerging from this crisis with better products for our customers as we all work towards overcoming challenges we've encountered due to COVID-19.

# Women Leaders of Vitas



## Rola El Amine

As the senior member of Vitas Innovation Lab, I am involved in creating a digital transformation culture among Vitas' subsidiaries. Implementing strategic and operational digital solutions, developing a data strategy and warehousing plan in place and encouraging data-driven decision making

Digitizing our services and products will result by default in providing better and quicker accessibility to financial products and to wider segments and this pours into the core of Vitas' vision and mission. A digital product that we call Supply Chain Finance is in its pilot phase. It is in partnership with Toters, a digital platform for delivery services in Lebanon.

Toters has drivers on its platform that deliver purchased orders, merchants (of all sectors, grocery, restaurants, pharmacies, bakeries, etc.) who are the sellers of the orders, and wholesalers who supply the merchants with products. Vitas will seize this opportunity to finance this chain by financing the invoice between the suppliers and the merchants digitally. This partnership is for impact, financing merchants' invoices has come up as an urgent need after the banking sector meltdown and the drastic and historical drop of the value of currency leaving the merchants with no credit facilities from suppliers. Another vertical of the partnership is job creation for unemployed Lebanese youth by giving them loans to finance buying a bike and joining the Toters team as a driver.

## Biljana Djordjevic

As a Scrum Master with the Software Development and Support (SDS) team based in Serbia, I am involved in implementing Scrum framework and Agile values across the network. Also, I represent the technology team for Vitas Lab, and provide feedback and innovative ideas.



At SDS, we are working on several exciting projects since last year. One of the most important projects is WebAbacus 3. WebAbacus is the proprietary loan management system used by Vitas Group. WebAbacus 3 will transform the current monolithic application into the more open micro-service environment. We are working with the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software team to implement Salesforce throughout the network. This would provide a unique solution for all the Vitas subs. Our idea is to cover the complete lifecycle of a loan, from lead generation to loan closing. After rolling out the initial setup, we are hoping to build more modules on top of it.



## Janet Abzakh

I have been with Vitas Jordan for 14 years, during which I established the Human Resources (HR) department with the support of the General Manager and my team. With HR being a strategic business player at Vitas Jordan, I am a member of the management committee of Vitas Jordan. Vitas Jordan upholds Vitas Group's mission and strives to create a culture where we can provide financial products and services that meet our clients' needs and foster development of individuals, their business, family, and community.

As the head of HR at Vitas Jordan, I am very excited to see that HR departments across Vitas Group have the support of Vitas Group CEO and Development Finance Institution managers. In 2020, we launched the first online Standards of Conduct Training dedicated to Vitas Group microfinance staff. We are excited to adapt to improve the training to better reflect current realities. Additionally, Global Communities is providing Vitas Group access to an online learning platform to enhance staff development through what we hope will be a "Digital Academy."

# Network News



Vitas Palestine, represented by General Manager Mr. Alaa Sisalem, signed a framework agreement and strategic partnership with Malachat Electronic Payment Services, represented by Chairman Dr. Samir Halila. The agreement aims to define the framework for cooperation and strategic partnership between Vitas Palestine and Malachat by providing various financial services to Vitas and Malachat customers.

Code for Romania is an NGO which offers digital solutions to Romania's problems.

Vitas Romania is supporting Romania's digitization plan developed by Code for Romania by providing funding for two digital solutions within Civic Labs.

Vitas Romania granted Code for Romania an amount of 12,500 Euros as part of its sponsorship program.

A screenshot of the VITAS website. The page features a large graphic of a hand holding a smartphone. Text on the page discusses the "Digitalizăm România împreună" project, which aims to connect public institutions and citizens through digital means. It highlights services like "Website builder minister", "Website builder primărie", "Acces 544", "Birou de proponeri", "Buzunar Participativ", and "Public Report". A call-to-action button says "Te reprezintă". The VITAS logo is prominently displayed at the top right, with the tagline "FINANȚĂ O LUME MAI BUNĂ".



World Volunteer Day: Our colleague Rania Al-Khairy, volunteered to share her practical experience with students from schools, institutes and universities. This campaign aims to raise awareness related to financial literacy during the pandemic.



Vitas Jordan launched a **Financial Literacy Campaign** in order to educate customers on managing their financials. Lack of financial education is a serious concern among small business owners in Jordan. This campaign aims to inform customers about available financial solutions and how to benefit from the financial services offered by providers.

Vitas Group released its first mandatory Standards of Conduct Training for all Vitas staff in November 2020. The online version of the training was in English and Arabic. This program stems from Vitas' genuine interest in building a safe and respectful work environment and ensuring everyone is aware of the proper steps to take in the event any misconduct occurs. The content has been built around cases collected from both the Human Resources Working Group and the Internal Auditor Working Group, to ensure relevance to everyday situations that members of our staff face. The program is being developed by True Office, which also provides training for Global Communities.

*EFSE and Vitas expand access to local currency financing for Romanian MSEs*

**EFSE**  
EUROPEAN FUND FOR SOUTHEAST EUROPE

Senior loan equivalent of EUR 2 million to be on-lent to underserved local entrepreneurs to sustain small business operations.

**VITAS**  
FINANȚĂM O LUME MAI BUNĂ

**The European Fund for Southeast Europe (EFSE) and Vitas expand access to local currency financing for Romanian MSEs:** EFSE provided a senior loan in Romanian leu equivalent to EUR 2.0 million to Vitas. This funding is intended to expand local currency financing to micro and small enterprises (MSEs) that may otherwise have difficulty finding a business loan, especially in an economic environment burdened by the coronavirus pandemic.

# Risk in the Time of Covid-19



**By Richard Shumann, Vitas Group CRO**

Among all the crises I have seen in fifteen years with Vitas Group, COVID-19 was by far the most challenging. However, looking back on 2020, our performance and proven systems show that we will serve more clients and improve their businesses, homes, and lives for years to come. Here are my four main takes on the past year.

## **It could have been a lot worse**

All countries faced severe lockdowns, closure of many client businesses, and massive disruption to operations. Like many others, I feared a liquidity shortage, which did not happen. During 2020, portfolio increased from \$240 million to \$246 million. Excluding the \$8 million growth from Egypt, mature companies' portfolio shrank by just under 1%. PAR > 30 increased from 9.7% to 10.1%, mostly in Lebanon and Iraq which faced severe crises before the pandemic arrived. Consolidated net income was a \$7.7 million loss, compared to a \$3.3 million profit in 2019, a change of \$11 million. Most of this change comes from Iraq.

## **Strong, flexible systems matter**

All our institutions had dealt with crises before, which helped them adapt. When our offices and nearly all businesses closed, Vitas companies built on strong underwriting, internal controls, and risk systems to revise compliance, collections, fraud, and IT procedures. Internal Auditors pivoted from auditing to advising on these changes. COVID-19 led to more urgency in digital transformation and pointed out where we need to quickly improve our technology systems.

## **Governments are important partners, but difficult to deal with**

Our companies not only had to manage a pandemic and its consequences but needed to adapt to unclear and uncertain government policies. Initial lockdowns kept cases down but harmed economies. When infections increased in late 2020, governments were reluctant to reimpose restrictions but increased strain on health systems made them do it. Regulators imposed loan moratoriums, but their communication, especially requiring interest accrued during the deferment, created confusion among clients. Vitas companies had to explain and enforce regulations. Unlike in the US and EU, there was no direct support to small businesses in our markets. Governments have also been slow to vaccinate people against COVID-19, allowing new variants to take root and spread. Iraq is setting records for new cases in April 2021, more than a year after the pandemic started. Changing policies, and lack of success in combating COVID-19, creates more uncertainty and lowers the demand for loans.

## **It ain't over until it's over**

As 2021 began, we saw fewer cases, new vaccines, and the possibility to move beyond the lost year of 2020. However, new COVID-19 waves swamped our largest markets. The chances of a return to significant growth in 2021 are slim. A lot depends on the rapid rollout of vaccines in countries where we work. COVID-19 is far from done, but we continue to work on digital transformation to expand lending to new segments and improve service to our borrowers. Lebanon and Iraq will remain challenging, but I remain optimistic we will use our knowledge, relationship with borrowers, and reputation to find new ways to continue serving our clients.

# Leadership

## Board of Directors



David A. Weiss  
CEO, Global Communities



Caroline Blakely  
President and CEO,  
Rebuilding Together



David Oser  
Former Executive Vice  
President, Chief  
Financial  
Officer, CRAFT3



Peter Woicke  
Former Managing Director,  
The World Bank/ Former  
President, International  
Finance Corporation



Diane Smith  
Senior Advisor,  
Darby Overseas  
Investments



John Duong  
Founder, Kind Capital

## Vitas Group Management



Elissa McCarter LaBorde  
Chief Executive Officer



Nordyn Yacine  
Chief Digital Officer



Khalid Kabeer  
Chief Operating Officer



Jenny Kim  
Financial Analyst



Rohit Kulkarni  
Head of Marketing  
and Communications



Richard Shumann  
Chief Risk Officer



Taylor Mills  
Program Officer



Peldun Tenzing  
Program Associate

## Vitas Group Management Field



Rola El Amine  
Digital Business Manager



Salah Qabaja  
Compliance Officer



Janet Abzakh  
Human Resources &  
Talent Manager



Sandy Salkham  
Digital Transformation  
Field Project Lead

## Vitas Subsidiary Management



Naser Darwish  
Vitas Jordan  
General Manager



Ziad Halaby  
Vitas Lebanon  
General Manager



Ahmad Lamaa  
Vitas Iraq  
Co-General Manager



Moustafa Khalifeh  
Vitas Iraq  
Co-General Manager



Cristian Jurma  
Vitas Romania  
General Manager



Alaa Sisalem  
Vitas Palestine  
General Manager



Hossam Heiba  
Vitas Egypt  
Chief Executive Officer

# Financial Statements Vitas Group

## Consolidated Balance Sheet

ASSETS	2020	2019
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 47,379,671	\$ 26,617,192
Investment in other entity	547,311	941,450
Loans receivable, net of allowance for doubtful loans	100,117,339	121,488,617
Interest and commissions receivable	2,128,889	1,592,595
Accounts receivable	4,718,556	1,985,579
Due from Global Communities	2,119,525	1,337,716
Prepaid expenses	379,255	632,312
Property and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation and amortization	2,301,347	2,638,537
Right of use asset (Note 10)	1,641,816	1,275,425
Other assets	272,904	95,405
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 161,606,613</b>	<b>\$ 158,604,828</b>

Liabilities	2020	2019
Notes payable	\$ 114,570,074	\$ 110,598,736
Due to Global Communities	6,423,004	6,179,235
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	2,508,195	1,698,271
Income taxes payable	480,066	881,969
Accrued salaries and related benefits	1,218,290	1,390,279
Lease Liabilities	1,562,017	1,233,847
Other liabilities	57,660	51,066
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$ 126,819,306</b>	<b>\$ 122,033,403</b>
Equity	2020	2019
Members' share	21,482,945	21,886,452
Minority interest share	13,304,362	14,684,973
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>\$ 34,787,307</b>	<b>\$ 36,571,425</b>

## Vitas Group Consolidated Income Statement

<b>FINANCIAL INCOME</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
Interest	\$ 27,118,873	\$ 30,751,215
Commission income, net of fees	1,888,385	3,542,593
Bad debt expense	(6,590,455)	(2,281,869)
Net financial income	22,416,803	32,011,939
Other Operating Income	492,926	398,130
Total Income	22,909,729	32,410,069
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
Salaries and related expenses	10,819,601	12,397,165
Administrative and operating expenses	5,773,644	5,555,394
Interest	8,284,176	7,725,924
Total Expenses	24,877,421	25,678,483
Net (loss) income before other items	(1,967,692)	6,731,586
<b>OTHER ITEMS</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
Other non-operating income	432,472	55,679
Provision for income taxes	(261,193)	(1,736,311)
Provision for sales taxes	(160,674)	(1,638,163)
Translation adjustment	172,969	(322,237)
Total other items	183,574	(3,641,032)
<b>NET (LOSS) INCOME</b>	<b>\$ (1,784,118)</b>	<b>\$ 3,090,554</b>

# In Memoriam



## Remembering Jihane Jawad S'oud

Our esteemed colleague Jihane Jawad S'oud passed away on July 29, 2020, in Iraq. Jihane was one of our first employees in the Access to Credit Services in Iraq program, starting in August 2003, and worked most recently as a Vitas Iraq Senior Credit Assistant in Karbala. During her time, she worked closely with many of our borrowers, and also supported and encouraged staff in Karbala and throughout Iraq. She also played an important role in promoting gender equity throughout the institution. Jihane was one of the most loved members of our staff in Vitas Iraq and will be remembered with great fondness. She leaves behind a husband and a young son.



## Remembering Bahaa Eldeen Hasan Fathalla

Our esteemed colleague, Bahaa Eldeen Hasan Fathalla, passed away on July 11, 2020, in Iraq. Bahaa had been a valued member of Vitas Iraq since July 2009, most recently as a Senior Customer Relationship Officer in Sulaimaniya. During his time, he worked closely with thousands of our clients, providing them with loans to improve their businesses, incomes, and homes. Bahaa was more than a colleague, he was a true friend to all of us at Global Communities who had the honor of knowing him. He will be remembered for always having a smile on his face, being compassionate, and for treating all of his clients with respect. On the day of his funeral, his clients closed their businesses so they could attend. Bahaa leaves behind a wife, daughter and three sons.



# Meet Our Clients



## Nofal Ali Sahib's story

40-year-old Nofal owns a glass shop in the Indian market. He is married with three children. His shop was simple and small, but he had big ambitions for his business and wanted to grow it. He applied for a business loan with CHF Vitas Iraq a few years ago. Since then, he has received a total of seven loans from Vitas. These loans have helped him in expanding his shop and also allowed him to change his business from a retail focused business to a wholesale business. This strategic change has resulted in increased revenue and profits.

Nofal says, "I thank the Cooperative Housing Corporation, Vitas, for this humanitarian initiative, which has had a positive impact on my standard of living along with my social and economic status".

## Ashwaq's story

Ashawq, was born in Basra, Iraq. She is married and has two sons. In order to improve her family income, Ashawq started selling clothes and cosmetics from her home. Initially, her revenue was well below the required level. So, she decided to improve her business, but didn't really have the financial support. She got to know about Vitas and its loan products through a close friend, so she applied for a loan with CHF Vitas Iraq. Today, after three consecutive loans, her business is thriving. She was able to get a large shop and increase her product offerings that has resulted in increased profits. She is also selling imported goods in her store. Ashwaq says, "Ambition has no limits, and I would like to thanks CHF Vitas Iraq for my success."





## Field Offices

### Vitas Egypt

54 A Emtidad Ramsis St., 6th Neighborhood  
Nasr City, Cairo  
Egypt

[www.vitasegypt.com](http://www.vitasegypt.com)

### Vitas Jordan

Farah Complex 3rd Floor #309  
Amman 11844, Jordan  
T: +962 6 583 1188  
[www.vitasjordan.com](http://www.vitasjordan.com)  
Twitter: @VitasJordan  
Facebook: Vitas.Jordan.99

### Vitas Lebanon

S&S Center 4th Floor  
Jisr el Basha Road—Hazmieh  
Baabda 2020-1013 Lebanon  
T: +961 5 959 859  
[www.vitaslebanon.com](http://www.vitaslebanon.com)  
Twitter: @VitasLebanon  
Facebook: VitasLebanon  
Youtube: Vitas Lebanon

### Vitas Palestine

Al Bireh City-West Bank  
Abu Iyad St., Near Red Cross  
Ramallah, Palestine  
T: +972 2 2410 510  
[www.vitas.ps](http://www.vitas.ps)  
Facebook: Vitas.Palestine

### Vitas Romania

Str. Simion Barnutiu  
Nr.34, Etaj 2, Jud.  
300133 Timisoara, Romania  
T: +40 256 204 550  
[www.vitasromania.ro](http://www.vitasromania.ro)  
Facebook: Vitas.Romania1996

### CHF Vitas Iraq (Affiliate)

60th street, Hilla, Babel , Iraq.  
T: +964 7717 909192  
[www.vitasiraq.com](http://www.vitasiraq.com)

## Partners and Investors

### Corporations and Foundations

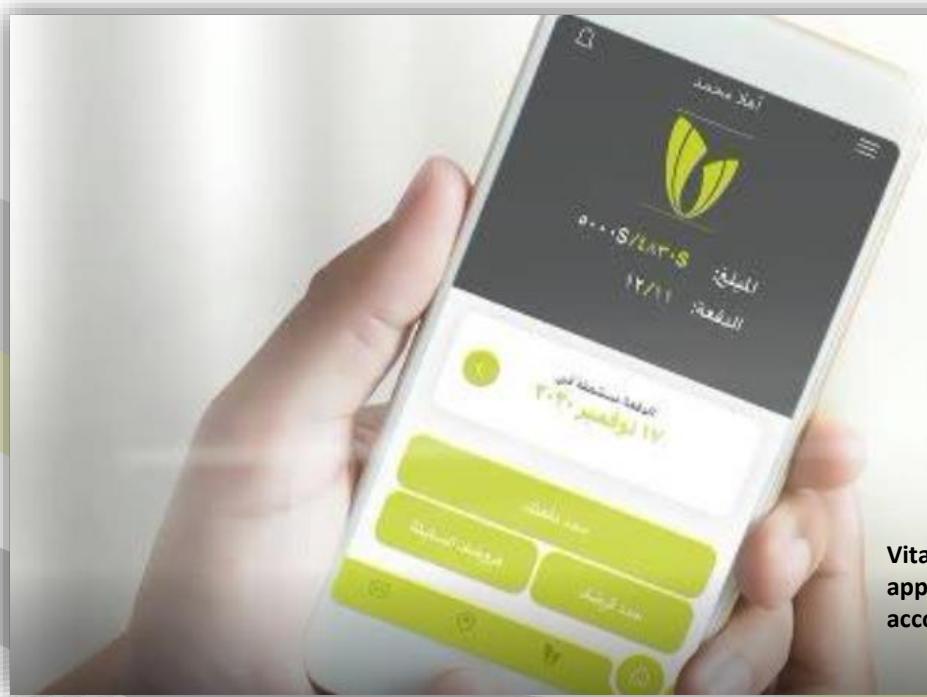
Al Etihad Bank  
Al Quds Bank  
Al Rafah Microfinance Bank (National Bank)  
Al Watany Bank, Egypt  
Arab Bank, Jordan  
Bamboo Financial Inclusion Fund  
Banca Comerciala Română / Erste Group  
Bank Al-Etihad, Jordan  
Bank of Palestine  
Blue Orchard  
Cairo Amman Bank  
Calvert Impact Capital  
Capital Bank  
Commercial International Bank  
CoopEst  
European Investment Fund  
Egyptian Arab Land Bank  
Global Microfinance Fund  
Oikocredit  
Palestinian Fund for Employment  
Raiffeisen Bank  
ResponsAbility Finance  
Symbiotics SA

### Government or Multilateral Institutions

U.S. International Development Finance Corporation  
European Commission  
EIB – European Investment Bank  
European Investment Fund  
International Finance Corporation  
SANAD Fund for MSME

### Partners

Asociatia Noi Orizonturi  
Antares Capital Advisors  
Biroul de Credit SA  
  
Cash United s.a.l.  
Credit Libanais s.a.l.  
Frankfurt School of Finance & Management  
Fransabank s.a.l.  
Habitat for Humanity  
Housing Bank for Trade and Finance, Iraq  
Housing Bank for Trade and Finance, Jordan  
IFB Finwest SA  
Iraq Microfinance Network  
Jordan Ahli Bank  
Jordan Kuwait Bank  
Kiva Microfunds  
Lebanese Microfinance Association-LMFA  
Liban Post  
LMFA – Lebanese Microfinance Association  
Palladium Group – USAID Lebanon LIFE Project  
PayPoint  
RisCo Servicii Financiare  
Safety Broker  
Sanabel Microfinance Network  
SARADAR Bank s.a.l.  
SEEP network  
Sharakeh- Palestinian Microfinance Network  
Silatech  
Société Générale Banque de Jordanie  
Tanmeyah - Jordan Microfinance Network  
The Microfinance Centre (MFC) Network  
Triodos  
ZebraPay



Vitas subsidiaries have launched a client app that allows customers to access their account and make payments.



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Above Image:  
**Edu Lab Project participants, Romania**

Back Cover Image  
**Vitas Jordan main branch office in Amman, Jordan**

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