

Increasing Access

A young child with short hair, wearing a white sweater, is sitting on a metal bunk bed in a room with several other bunk beds. The child is looking out a window towards the right. The room has a simple, institutional feel with concrete floors and metal frames. The lighting is soft, coming from the window.

The argument for closing all orphanages

The courage to intervene:
defending Dr Camelia Bogdan

A wider role in social finance
and impact investment

Ten questions for...
Senior Associate Emma Danforth

Meet Catherine Husted,
Woman Lawyer of the Year 2018

An outstanding commitment

In November this year, we announced the winners of our first Pro Bono and Community Investment Awards. We're piloting these awards in London to recognise the lawyers and support professionals who commit an enormous amount of time to volunteering and supporting our charity partners. These – along with our international champions – are the people working across our business to provide access to justice, education and employment, who don't shout about their hard work or achievements but who are changing people's lives.

As Emma Danforth, winner of the Outstanding Achievement Award, says in her interview ([page 18](#)), the skills we already have can literally change someone's life just by spending a lunch hour with them. She also credits the central pro bono and community investment team here, plus our network of 90 champions across our international network, with providing the support and opportunities that make it easy to get involved, and even after eight years of volunteering find new and interesting projects to work on.

The role of our international champions has grown in recent years and is vital in helping to build our programme of work around the world and engage people with what we do.

You can read an interview on [page 10](#) with one of our longest-serving international champions, Catherine Husted, who left her role as an A&O partner to work full time in the charity sector, before returning to lead our pro bono and community programme in Hong Kong in 2015.

Catherine has built a strong culture of volunteering, which shows in the external recognition we're getting across the Asia-Pacific region (see [pages 6-7](#)).

Catherine herself has recently won the award for 'Woman Lawyer of the Year' at the Asian Legal Business Awards – the first time a lawyer has won the award specifically for pro bono work. It's a remarkable achievement that I hope inspires more lawyers to become involved in pro bono volunteering. Catherine is an example of the opportunities and experiences it opens up for lawyers and support professionals alike.

Elsewhere in this issue, our global charity partnership with War Child has drawn to a close, raising a record GBP1.5 million (see [page 24](#)), and our next partnership with Hope and Homes for Children has started. Kate Cavelle, our Head of Pro Bono and Community Investment, makes the case for supporting Hope and Homes for Children's mission to close all orphanages in the world – it's a sensitive and emotive argument, but one that we believe in and are working towards as an organisation.



Mark Mansell

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WINNERS – A&O PRO BONO AND COMMUNITY INVESTMENT AWARDS 2018

Nominated by colleagues and selected by the London Pro Bono and Community Investment Partner Committee, these are the winners of A&O's inaugural awards:

Outstanding Contribution Award: Emma Danforth, Senior Associate (see [page 18](#))

Access to Education and Employment Award: Caroline Davis, Group Treasurer – for mentoring both young people and the over-50s in employability skills and tutoring students in financial literacy.

Access to Justice Award: Olga Owczarek, Associate – for her involvement in A&O's Human Rights Working Group, including taking action on sexual violence against women.

Global Charity Partnership Award: Angela Smith, Front of House Co-ordinator – for her long-term commitment to A&O's first global charity partner, AfriKids, and her visits to the communities it supports in Ghana.

Trainee Award: Philipp Engel (now Associate) – for his work on an innovative loan note issue providing low cost loans to vulnerable households (see [pages 16-17](#)), as well as being an active trainee pro bono champion and, outside of A&O, setting up and running two charities: Red Light Campaign and Cube Movement.

Team Award: Partner Jeff Hendrickson; Senior Associates Joana Fragata, Louise Hennessey and Alex Moezi; In-House Lawyer Claire Loxley; and Associate Jia Wei Chin – for preparing a report for charity Children in Crisis (now Street Child) which has the potential to change the lives of children caught up in the juvenile justice system in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and Uganda.

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*A&O's work recognised in
the FT Innovative Lawyers
Award for fifth year running*

A&O has again been Highly Commended in the Rule of Law and Access to Justice category of the FT Innovative Lawyers Awards for our defence of Romanian high court judge, Dr Camelia Bogdan, who was accused of a conflict of interest by a media mogul she had jailed for corruption and money laundering.

Read about the case led by partner Valentin Berea on **page 8**.

Paris Peace Forum launched on Armistice Day

An A&O team in Paris, led by partner Romaric Lazerges and senior associate Luc Lamblin, has contributed to the launch of the Paris Peace Forum – a new global platform that brings together Heads of State and Government, as well as representatives from civic society, to strengthen multilateralism and international co-operation against a backdrop of growing international tensions.

One hundred years after the end of the First World War, the Paris Peace Forum marks an urgent need to act to tackle major global issues such as destabilisation of the internet, armed conflict and global warming, by providing attendees with an opportunity for open dialogue to develop concrete actions.

Romaric and Luc, with Paris managing partner Hervé Ekué, attended the inaugural session of the Forum on 11 November – Armistice Day – along with over 70 Heads of State and international organisations, including Emmanuel Macron, Angela Merkel, Justin Trudeau, Vladimir Putin and António Guterres.

The Forum has selected 120 projects across its five themes of peace and security; environment; development; inclusive economy; and new technologies. It will bring together Heads of State directly with project leaders to progress each of the projects.

A&O's role as a Partner has been to set up the legal structure and governance of the Forum, as well as advising the Forum's team on a range of other issues since November 2017, all in a pro bono capacity. The partnership between the Forum and A&O will continue until at least the 2nd annual conference in 2019.

To follow the progress of the Paris Peace Forum, visit parispeaceforum.org



A new resource for UK schools on displaced people and migration

On World Refugee Day in June, A&O and charity Young Citizens launched a new education resource for UK schools on the legal rights of migrants.

The resource explores the reasons people are forced to leave their homes and places of origin, and examines individuals' legal rights if they choose to migrate or if they become a displaced person or refugee.

Using a combination of presentations, group work, debate and video content, the resource helps young people think critically about a state or country's obligations towards migrants – what they are and what they could or should be. To date, it has been accessed nearly 600 times, reaching over 52,000 young people across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

“Migration issues hit the news almost every day, but too often the stories are sensationalist and misleading,” says Young Citizens' CEO, Tom Franklin. “We want to make the legal issues around migration much more accessible to young people so that they can make up their own minds and influence the debate.”

After the initial pilot with two schools in London and Northern Ireland, 85% of students said using the resource had made them feel more empathy towards migrants, and 91% believed they had a better understanding of the issues around migration and displacement.

The resource supports the Citizenship area of the school curriculum for children aged 11-16 and is free for all schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to access.

Visit youngcitizens.org/migration-of-people

Contact **Emma Turnbull** to get involved or for more information.

“

We want to make the legal issues around migration much more accessible to young people so that they can make up their own minds and influence the debate.

Tom Franklin,
CEO of Young Citizens



Landmark LGBT+ rights victory in Hong Kong

A&O is part of a group of law firms and investment banks that has successfully supported a legal challenge to the immigration rules in Hong Kong relating to dependant visas for same-sex spouses.

The challenge was brought by a woman in a same-sex civil partnership, entered into in the UK, whose application for a spouse's dependant visa, linked to her partner's employment visa, was denied. The application was refused by the Hong Kong Director of Immigration on the grounds that a 'spouse' relates to the concept of a married couple being a man and a woman.

A&O and a number of banks and law firms attempted to intervene in the judicial review proceedings to cite evidence on how this immigration policy would affect the Director's aim of encouraging talented people to live and work in Hong Kong. While the application to intervene did not succeed, it did raise the profile of the proceedings and added weight to the arguments heard by the court on how the discrimination would impact the ability of businesses like A&O to create diverse and inclusive teams with the strongest talent.

In July, the Court of Final Appeal made a landmark decision in the case, upholding the right of all people, regardless of sexual orientation, to obtain dependant visas for their spouses to live and work in Hong Kong – a significant result for LGBT+ equality.

Building on this, alongside our clients we are conducting a substantial piece of pro bono research into government policies and legislation in which marital status is a factor – for example, preferential tax treatment for married couples and access to IVF. The report will analyse the impact on same-sex couples and those in other less recognised/unrecognised relationships in Hong Kong, such as cohabiting couples.

The findings of this research will be significant, as voluntary relationships other than opposite-sex marriages are only recognised in Hong Kong in very limited circumstances – but there is a growing number of such relationships and a much broader acceptance of them within Hong Kong. A recent survey showed, for example, that over half of Hong Kong residents support same-sex marriage.

"We want this research to provide a basis for a wider discussion on the recognition of relationships other than opposite-sex marriage," says Matt Bower, A&O's pro bono partner in Hong Kong. "We hope it will follow the example of a similar report in the U.S., from the late 1990s, which greatly informed the public debate over recognition of same-sex marriages there."

Stonewall ranks A&O as Top Global Employer for LGBT+ community



A&O has been recognised as one of only 13 Top Global Employers by leading LGBT+ equality charity, Stonewall. Now in its seventh year, Stonewall's Top Global Employers Index is the definitive list of the best multinational employers for LGBT+ staff.

It is compiled from submissions to the Global Workplace Equality Index, a comprehensive benchmarking tool used by employers to create inclusive workplaces across all the countries they operate in.

Partner Jim Ford is global chair of A&Out, A&O's LGBT+ network. "The Stonewall judges were impressed by the work we've done across our offices to ensure we are a fully inclusive workplace. A&Out is a genuinely global network, and over the past year we've seen great engagement and support from so many of our colleagues. To be included as a Top Global Employer alongside clients like Barclays, Accenture and RBS is a great achievement for us."

“ Allen & Overy has demonstrated a real commitment to ensuring that all their lesbian, gay, bi and trans staff and stakeholders feel included at work. These [Top Global Employers] truly are at the forefront of driving global LGBT inclusion in the workplace, and between them they reach nearly 900,000 people.

Ruth Hunt, Chief Executive, Stonewall

A&O Highly Commended in Transatlantic Legal Awards 2018

A&O has been Highly Commended in the Pro Bono & CSR category of the Transatlantic Legal Awards for a number of achievements over the past year, including:

– supporting complex asylum applications to the U.S. from LGBT+ and HIV-positive applicants

– representing six refugees seeking resettlement through the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)

– providing pro bono support and funding to a UNHCR project to make refugee case law more accessible to asylum seekers, advocates and decision-makers

– providing legal support to enable Rainbow Railroad, a Canadian-based NGO that helps LGBT+ refugees escape persecution, to set up its new UK operations.



Opportunities to learn about careers in law for New York City students

A&O's U.S. Women's Committee has hosted an interactive workshop for 29 female ninth-graders (aged 13-14) as part of a new partnership with Legal Outreach, an organisation that prepares young people from underserved communities in New York City to compete at high academic levels.

As part of a five-week intensive course that introduces students to careers in law, the girls learned about different areas of law and were challenged to draw connections with real-life situations, such as the implications for companies conducting activities that impact the environment. The day concluded with an A&O panel – including partner Elizabeth Leckie and associate Rachel Agress – answering students' questions. Following this, three A&O attorneys in New York have volunteered to mentor a Legal Outreach

student for the next three years. Rachel has also taken part in Law Week, an annual programme that provides high school students from across New York City with an opportunity to learn more about the court system. As part of this, students visited a federal New York courthouse to take part in discussion sessions on this year's topic: 'Separation of Powers.' Rachel was one of the attorneys who assisted a federal judge in presenting to the students.



Rachel Agress presenting to high school students alongside the Honorable Edgardo Ramos at the Southern District of New York courthouse.

Asia-Pacific region wins multiple awards

A&O has been Highly Commended in the 2018 **FT Innovative Lawyers Report Asia-Pacific**, with judges commenting that:

“Multiple initiatives led by the firm are increasing awareness and empathy towards the refugee populations in Hong Kong and the Asia-Pacific region.

“The firm uses local offices to tackle cross-border issues such as human trafficking, forced labour and child exploitation, and has helped change government policy for unaccompanied migrant children in Thailand.”

Asian Legal Business has named A&O its Corporate Citizenship Law Firm of the Year for the second year running, recognising the “continued efforts to bring new and original ways of thinking to the legal challenges faced by those seeking access to justice, [and] providing access to education and employment to those less fortunate.”

Asian Legal Business has also named Catherine Husted, Head of Pro Bono and Community Investment in Hong Kong, as its 'Woman Lawyer of the Year' – the first time someone has been recognised in the overall legal category specifically for services to pro bono (read Catherine's interview on **page 10**).

International Care Ministries, a key charity partner of the Hong Kong office, has given A&O its Hope Award for companies whose support has impacted more than 15,000 people in the Philippines.

In Australia, A&O has received the **Australian Business and Community Network Award** for Member Company Engagement. ABCN is a not-for-profit organisation that connects businesses with students from disadvantaged backgrounds for mentoring and partnership programmes. The Excellence in Member Company Engagement award is given to the company with the highest percentage of staff participating in its core mentoring programmes. A&O staff in Sydney have donated over 230 volunteer hours over the past year, supporting students from five public schools in New South Wales.

The courage to intervene

In August this year, an estimated 50,000 people marched towards Bucharest's parliament in the latest of a series of anti-corruption demonstrations across Romania – the largest street protests in the country since the fall of communism in 1989.

The protests are aimed at proposed judicial reforms that critics argue will make it harder to prosecute senior politicians and business people – thereby undermining a campaign against corruption in Romania that has received widespread international praise in recent years.



Valentin Berea, Partner,
Radu Tărăcilă Pădurari Retevoescu SCA (RTPR)

The expulsion of Dr Camelia Bogdan

Central to the anti-corruption campaign in the judiciary is Dr Camelia Bogdan, the first judge to issue criminal sentences against politicians and powerful business leaders in the country, as well as seizing proceeds of crime worth tens of millions of Euros.

However, as Valentin Berea – partner at RTPR, A&O’s associated firm in Romania – explains, the success of Dr Bogdan’s anti-corruption work has come at significant personal cost as powerful opponents have long tried to discredit her.

In February 2017, Dr Bogdan was expelled from the Romanian Magistracy on charges of conflict of interest, following a seminar she gave to public servants on anti-corruption.

The charges hinged on the fact that Dr Bogdan was trying a high-profile corruption case against a Romanian media mogul at the time she gave the seminar to civil servants, some of whom were from the Ministry of Agriculture, an injured party in the case.

Although the conflict of interest accusation was rejected, the Superior Council of Magistrates in Romania found that teaching the seminar, in exchange for a nominal fee, was incompatible with the office of magistrate and permanently expelled Dr Bogdan.

“Not only was this a devastating sanction for a judge,” says Valentin Berea, “it also dealt a symbolic blow to the growing anti-corruption movement in Romania and was seen as a move to intimidate other judges.

“ Dr Bogdan and I went to law school together and I felt strongly that we should challenge the exaggerated charges against her.

It wasn’t an easy decision because of the political context, but for exactly that reason she was unlikely to get help from another firm, so we took on her case pro bono.”

A first-time challenge in the Romanian Courts

The team from RTPR was led by Valentin, alongside associates Vicu Buzac, Andrada Rusan and Bogdan Nae, plus Professor Lucian Mihai, Of Counsel with RTPR and professor at the University of Bucharest.

The team’s approach was to question, for the first time in the Romanian Courts, whether the law on judges’ ‘cumulating offices’ had been correctly interpreted. Should judges’ expertise be confined to the courtroom, or should they be able occasionally to use their knowledge for the good of society – for instance by teaching courses on subjects of public interest?

The case raised many constitutional issues and, for Valentin and the litigation team, was legally fascinating.

“We worked full-time on the case, often through the night,” says Valentin. “We argued that on similar occasions the Superior Council of Magistrates had taken a different position – for instance when they deemed it acceptable for a judge to teach a seminar to future diplomats – but, in any event, Dr. Bogdan’s actions should never have warranted her exclusion from the judiciary.”

The case attracted wide support from the whole RTPR/A&O office in Bucharest, with many members of staff volunteering to help at busy times.

“We knew that Dr Bogdan desperately needed good legal representation,” says Valentin, “but this was a high-profile political matter with wide implications. The businessman who made the charges owned many TV channels and media outlets in Romania, so for a long time Dr Bogdan was under severe personal attack in that section of the media.

Being in the political and media spotlight is not a comfortable position for many lawyers, but Valentin believes it was the right thing to do. “I’m proud that all our partners were on board and that we had the courage to intervene.”

Full reinstatement and compensation

Following the court challenge, Dr Bogdan received a formal warning from the High Court of Cassation and Justice – the mildest form of sanction – and was reinstated as a judge with full financial compensation for the period during which she had been expelled.

“While the impact of the decision for Dr Bogdan personally has been huge, the case also represents a step forward for the broader movement to strengthen the rule of law and tackle corruption in Romania,” Valentin says. “Had we lost, the businessman she prosecuted would have had good reason to request a special appeal against his conviction. Her victory denied him that opportunity.”

This case also has implications for judges in Romania, who may now be able to share their expertise on anti-corruption and other public interest subjects without fear of expulsion. This, Valentin believes, has given confidence to the judiciary as a whole.

“Previously, they had seen a young, brave judge putting an influential businessman behind bars and losing her job because of it. Now, they can see that such injustice can be overturned. Not only was Dr Bogdan received back into the magistracy, there was no case for additional or exceptional appeals against her decisions in anti-corruption cases.

“Those trial decisions now form important precedents in the fight against corruption, and the outcome of the case has been highly praised by the large sections of our society who want to see an end to corruption in Romania for good.”



A&O and RTPR have been Highly Commended for our work with Dr Camelia Bogdan in the FT Innovative Lawyers Awards 2018, in the Rule of Law and Access to Justice category



A&O’s pro bono and community investment work has been recognised in the FT Innovative Lawyers awards every year since 2014



Meet the champions: Catherine Husted

Find out more about A&O's network of pro bono and community investment champions around the world.

Catherine Husted is a former A&O partner who worked in London and Hong Kong for over 20 years. She left in 2012 to join the NGO sector but returned to A&O part-time in 2015 to become Head of Pro Bono and Community Investment in Hong Kong.

This year, the Asian Legal Business Awards named Catherine '*Woman Lawyer of the Year*' in recognition of her commitment to pro bono work. This is the first time the overall legal award has been given specifically for achievements in pro bono.

“My first experience of volunteering was at the age of four, selling flags for various charities with my parents in Walsall, where I grew up in the UK. I carried on volunteering throughout school and at Oxford University, addressing issues like poverty and access to education for children. When I joined A&O, one of the first things I wanted to find out about was the pro bono and community investment opportunities.

It was important for me to know how the firm was addressing global needs and how I could help. My involvement grew over the years – working on migrant workers’ rights issues and helping child victims of trafficking and slavery. I went on to become the pro bono partner for Hong Kong and a member of A&O’s Global Foundation Executive, which distributes funds donated by all partners to charitable causes.

When I left A&O in 2012, it was to pursue a career in the NGO sector. I did a lot of hands-on volunteering but also took on roles with International Care Ministries, who support families living in ultrapoverty in the Philippines; Crossroads Foundation, a Hong Kong-based charity that connects people in need with those who can help; and Community Business Limited, a charity that works to advance responsible and inclusive business practices in Asia.

I still work with these fantastic organisations today, and combine volunteering for NGOs alongside my A&O role. I get contacted a lot by charities needing help with things like a one-off fundraising event or a training session – it’s always busy, but in a good way!



Amref Health Africa, Tanzania, February 2015

The moment you know it’s worth it

At A&O, I source pro bono legal projects for the Hong Kong office, as well as overseeing fundraising and other volunteering activities. We join up a lot with offices across the region and globally. Being able to bring resources together is immensely valuable for charities. For Justice Without Borders, for example, we provided a Foundation grant as well as pro bono support from Hong Kong, Singapore and Jakarta to help build access to justice for migrant workers who are very vulnerable to labour and other exploitation. We’ve also worked across Asia-Pacific to tackle online child exploitation and human trafficking.

One of my highlights this year has been launching Smart Start International with volunteers from A&O and J.P. Morgan, drawing on A&O’s network to adopt best practice from Smart Start in the UK, India and South Africa. We tailored this to support students from Hong Kong’s ethnic minorities and under-represented communities who face major barriers to education and careers.

One of the girls in particular had a real impact on me. She wanted very much to become a lawyer but felt it was impossible. I started to explain the different routes into law but she stopped me and said, ‘No, I can’t because of this,’ and pointed to her headscarf. She believed someone from her background just wouldn’t get into a law firm – but she also said that was exactly why she wanted to become a lawyer, to change the perceptions and discrimination girls like her face. I was so struck by her honesty and determination. We talked for a long time and then we provided one-on-one coaching and interview practice for her, but also made sure she – and all the Smart Start students – saw a real mix of our staff throughout the programme to demonstrate that people from all backgrounds can build successful careers.

That’s the moment when you know it’s all worth it, when you connect with someone and feel you’ve made a difference. Volunteering brings a lot of benefits – not least helping to build professional and personal skills – but the real personal impact is when you see that you can make a positive change in someone’s life.



International Care Ministries, the Philippines, August 2016

It's important to see things for yourself

I appreciate the opportunities to visit the communities we support so much. I've been with A&O colleagues several times to see the work International Care Ministries does in the Philippines, as well as to Ghana and Tanzania with our former global charity partners AfriKids and Amref. When you see the reality of families living in absolute poverty, you never forget it. But it's also wonderful to see the progress being made in these communities through our support. It's so important for people across A&O to witness for themselves or hear first-hand from colleagues about the positive impact we can have.

We've worked hard to build a culture of volunteering in Hong Kong. We listen to what matters to our people, what causes they're interested in and what kinds of pro bono and other volunteering people want to do. We have a Pro Bono and Community Investment Committee that helps us decide what we should be focusing on. It's made up of both lawyers and non-lawyers so we get a good spread of views from across the office – I think that's a key part of engaging people and ensuring it's not just me or the Hong Kong partners making the decisions.

Looking ahead to the future, a really interesting area of work is around rights for same-sex couples in Hong Kong. We were part of a group of law firms and investment banks that intervened in a case which resulted in a landmark ruling in the Court of Final Appeal to uphold the right of all people, regardless of sexual orientation, to obtain dependant visas for their spouses to live and work in Hong Kong. We're now conducting a substantial piece of research into government policies and legislation around marriage – for example, the benefits attached to marriage like preferential tax treatment and access to IVF – and the impact they have on the growing proportion of same-sex couples or those in relationships that aren't recognised, such as cohabiting couples.

More broadly, we want to collaborate more with clients. With challenges on the scale of the global refugee crisis or modern day slavery, it's easy to feel overwhelmed and helpless in making a difference. But if individuals and organisations can combine their efforts, it raises greater awareness of these issues and can create huge sustainable change.



Nepal Education and Development, February 2018

Find your passion and you'll always find time

I really want to continue increasing participation by A&O staff in pro bono and community investment activities, because what I personally get most from this role is not only the impact I might be able to have, but the much greater impact created by others whom I've encouraged and supported to volunteer.

I know it can be hard to find time to volunteer – deals pop up and work takes over – but this is part of A&O's values and I strongly believe it's in people's hearts here. So I always say to anyone who asks how to get started, or how to fit volunteering around work: just find your passion, find what really matters to you and you will always make time. Even if it's only one hour a month, that hour could change someone's life. But I often do wish there were more than 24 hours in the day, as there's always so much more we can do!"



AfriKids, Ghana, April 2013



International Care Ministries, the Philippines, August 2016

A wider role in social finance and impact investment

The social finance and impact investment market is expanding rapidly around the world in size, scale and complexity.

In simple terms, social finance and impact investment uses financial instruments to achieve a social or environmental outcome. It is not a typical grant or donation to a charitable cause, it is a method of funding that delivers a financial return to investors while at the same time helping to tackle social issues.

Last year, A&O's Social Finance and Impact Investment Group (formerly the Microfinance and Social Investment Group) relaunched to reflect how the social finance market is evolving, and the wider role A&O is playing in it.

Leading an evolving sector

Over the past decade, A&O has been heavily involved with microfinance and social investment, creating, for example, the first ever Social Impact Bond (SIB) in the UK in 2010.

SIBs were then a new and unique investment product, structured as a fund to direct private sector money to public sector projects. Financial returns are paid on the value or savings the social impact achieves.

The first ever SIB was created by A&O for Social Finance Ltd, a non-profit organisation that partners with the government, social sector and financial community to tackle social problems. The SIB provided funding for prisoner rehabilitation programmes, creating a financial return to investors based on how far levels of reoffending dropped among the prisoner group.

"This was a significant piece of work for us," says Greg Brown, partner and head of the Social Finance and Impact Investment Group (SFIIG). "We spent around 1,500 pro bono hours structuring and implementing the SIB, which was very well received by the Ministry of Justice and the Treasury as well as investors. It has gone on to become an important product for the wider growth of the social finance sector."

Social Finance Ltd estimates that there are now nearly 100 Social Impact Bonds in 19 countries, which have mobilised more than GBP300 million of investment to tackle complex social issues like refugee employment, loneliness among the elderly, and rehousing and reskilling homeless young people.

A&O has also been at the forefront of the microfinance sector as it has developed over the past decade, working with microfinance institutions, private investors, banks and other institutional investors.

With our first global charity partner between 2012 and 2014, AfriKids, A&O conducted a large international research project into best practice in microfinance to help prepare a business plan for AfriKids to scale up its microfinance programme. This has now grown into the Family Livelihood Support Programme, which provides start-up and growth capital in the form of small loans to women in rural Ghana – one of the poorest regions of the country. Along with business and life skills training, the loans enable women to set up small businesses and use the profits to fund their children's education and healthcare for the family, which is key to breaking the cycle of poverty in communities.

AfriKids has now provided loans to over 70 co-operative groups of around 35 women each, benefitting 15,000 people.

L-R: Greg Brown, Louise Hennessey, Yannick Arbaut





AfriKids women's microfinance co-operative in Ghana

Changes and challenges

The social finance market has seen a lot of activity in recent years since the early successes of microfinance and SIBs. Demand for investments that provide a social return or outcome is certainly growing, Greg believes, but it is not without its challenges.

“Sometimes these financing techniques – like microfinance and SIBs – have been presented as the perfect solution to very entrenched social issues. This is often followed by something of a backlash when it turns out that, unsurprisingly, the issues are much more complex and can’t be solved through finance alone,” says Greg.

“But we’ve also seen many examples of social or impact investments having meaningful results and making a positive difference to people’s lives. The challenge is scalability and finding ways to make those investment structures have an even wider impact.”

“I see a real willingness to try new methods and products to address different social issues, which makes this a very interesting and dynamic sector to be involved with,” Greg says. “It’s particularly interesting to see ideas from the world of social or impact investment cross over into the world of ‘normal’ finance.”

Green bonds are the best example of this, having been around for a decade now. “We’re currently seeing the syndicated loan markets start to introduce ‘green’ or ‘sustainable’ loans, which are provided to corporate borrowers on commercial terms. In that respect it’s becoming ever more mainstream and I can only see this continuing to grow.”

The need for creative thinking

Creativity and innovative thinking are certainly in high demand in this fast growing sector. One of A&O’s recent pro bono matters is, as senior associate Louise Hennessey puts it, “a trailblazing deal that shows very clearly the positive impact social investment can have on the responsible lending sector.”

Louise was one of the team – along with Greg Brown, senior associate Isabel Tinsley and then trainee (now associate)

Philipp Engel – that advised on the largest ever single investment in a UK community lender: a GBP5 million notes issuance for Five Lamps, a UK-based charity and responsible lender offering affordable loans to socially and financially excluded individuals. (Read about Five Lamps on [page 17](#)).

“This was an innovative funding structure which enabled four charitable trusts and five social investment funds to come together to provide an on-going source of financing of up to GBP5 million to Five Lamps,” explains Louise.

“This has enabled Five Lamps to offer over 100,000 loans to often vulnerable members of the community who are financially excluded and often caught in a cycle of high-cost debt.”

A&O’s Corporate Trust & Agency group (Morgan Krone, Tim Bates, Louisa Ingham and Georgina Page) also provided advice to Big Issue Invest in its capacity as Security Trustee on the financing.

The ‘profit to purpose’ spectrum

A&O’s work on the Five Lamps notes issuance – like the vast majority of work for charities, social enterprises and social investment intermediaries in this sector – was done entirely on a pro bono basis. The firm also provides commercial advice on impact investments, often on discounted rate agreements.

In the case of BlueOrchard, one of the world’s top global impact investment managers, A&O has worked on both a pro bono and low-cost fee arrangement since acting on the landmark BlueOrchard Loans for Development securitisations in 2006 and 2007. These provided funding to microfinance institutions across Africa, Asia, Europe and South America. 2007-1 was the first rated securitisation of loans to microfinance institutions, advancing a new asset class for investors and receiving numerous awards.

“Since then, we have built a long-term relationship with BlueOrchard,” explains Yannick Arbaut, counsel in Luxembourg, “working on its flagship Luxembourg Microfinance Fund – the first private and fully commercial microfinance investment fund in the world.

“We’ve also helped BlueOrchard to set up a fund investing with female micro-entrepreneurs in South East Asia, as well as a fund

improving access to insurance against extreme weather events for low income households in developing countries,” he explains. (Read more about BlueOrchard on [page 17](#)).

Ambitious for the future

A year on from its relaunch, A&O’s Social Finance and Impact Investment Group now has over 300 lawyers in 30 offices across the Americas, Europe, Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa. The group includes many of the leading lawyers from A&O’s Banking, Capital Markets, Corporate and Dispute Resolution practices.

“I think we stand out in this sector because we’re very good at dealing with complex financings or other corporate structures,” says Greg, “and we have plenty of creative minds who are keen to work in the area of social finance and impact investment around the world.

“We’ve been committed to this sector for over ten years now and involved in a number of firsts along the way, so we have a good track record – but we’re also ambitious to do more,” he says.

“We can see this is a growing market with the potential for new thinking and new products, so we want to attract more bright minds from across A&O and ensure we stay at the forefront of the sector.

“The role of finance touches almost every part of society, so if we can find more ways to use finance to achieve social outcomes then there’s huge potential to make a wider positive impact on the world.”

To find out more about A&O’s Social Finance and Impact Investment Group, or to get involved, contact:



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Partner

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Five Lamps

Responsible lending to the financially excluded

Five Lamps is a UK-based charity and responsible lender that offers affordable loans and other services to socially and financially excluded people. These affordable loans provide a much-needed alternative to high-cost credit (sometimes known as ‘payday loans’), which have seen a surge in parts of Europe and the U.S. in recent years.

The short-term loans, usually for relatively small amounts of money, provide quick access to cash but at very high rates of interest, and often with expensive fees if loans are not fully repaid in the short time-frame. They particularly target those struggling to manage financially each month, or who have poor credit ratings, often trapping people in long-term cycles of expensive debt with interest payments growing to more than the original loans.

In August this year, Five Lamps completed a GBP5 million notes issuance – the largest-ever single investment in a UK community lender.

A&O acted on a pro bono basis for nine investors subscribing to the notes, including specialist social investment funds Big Issue Invest, FSE, North East Social Investment Fund, Social Investment Scotland and Social and Sustainable Capital, as well as charitable trusts the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Barrow Cadbury Trust and Harpur Trust.

Five Lamps has to date provided close to GBP40 million of affordable personal loans, but the new investment will allow the charity to grow the scale and impact of affordable credit nationally. The funding is set to mobilise over GBP60 million of lending, enabling Five Lamps to offer around 100,000 affordable loans.

BlueOrchard

A leading global impact investment manager

BlueOrchard was founded by initiative of the UN in 2001 as the world’s first commercial manager of microfinance debt investments, and is now one of the top global impact investment managers. It has invested to date more than USD5 billion across 80 emerging and frontier markets, providing access to financial and other related services to over 37 million low-income individuals.

In Luxembourg, A&O has gone on to advise BlueOrchard on its flagship fund, the BlueOrchard Microfinance Fund (BOMF), which is today the largest commercial microfinance fund in the world. “This is managed as a pure fixed-income fund with currency hedging,” explains counsel Yannick Arbaut, “which provides stable and attractive returns for investors while supporting microfinance institutions in emerging markets.

“BlueOrchard helps the microfinance institutions expand their outreach and improve the quality and appropriateness of their financial services. It also supports the advancement of new products in developing countries, like weather insurance, education finance, SME development, and green finance,” says Yannick.

Since 2010, A&O has advised BlueOrchard on numerous other areas of its work, including:

- The **Japan ASEAN Women Empowerment Fund**, the first fund investing in female micro-entrepreneurs in South East Asia’s emerging markets.
- The **Regional Education Finance Fund for Africa**, the first finance fund that is specifically aimed at increasing access to primary, secondary, vocational and higher education and enhancing the quality of education overall in Africa.
- The **InsuResilience Investment Fund**, which contributes to the adaptation to climate change by improving access to and the use of insurance in developing countries, in order to reduce the vulnerability of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and low-income households to extreme weather events.



Ten questions for... Emma Danforth

Emma Danforth is a senior associate in the Banking practice in London specialising in asset management. Emma recently won the Outstanding Contribution Award in A&O's inaugural Pro Bono and Community Investment Awards – launched in November in the UK – for her long-term commitment to pro bono and charitable work, both within A&O and outside the firm.

Within A&O, Emma has been a long-serving volunteer at both Battersea and Toynbee Hall free legal advice clinics in London, and has helped to develop the strategy for legal advice clinic work at A&O through the firm's Free Legal Advice Clinics Working Group.

For over two years, Emma has been part of an A&O team working jointly with a major commercial client on a corporate governance project for City Harvest, a charity that puts surplus food to good use by collecting waste food from restaurants and supermarkets and distributing it to homeless shelters and other organisations that feed those going hungry in London.

In addition, Emma is one of A&O's pro bono champions – an international group that helps mobilise volunteers and develop the firm's programme of work – and is a regular volunteer on many other pro bono and

community projects: from the Smart Start Experience, where she provides coaching and CV advice to young people; to 'Dress for Success' which works with vulnerable women to build employability skills.

Outside of A&O, Emma sits on the board of ColaLife, a charity that is improving access to basic medicines for children in sub-Saharan Africa. She also fundraises for a variety of charities, including the British Heart Foundation and the RAF Benevolence Fund, and together with her husband volunteers her time to military focused charities.

As with all winners of A&O's new Pro Bono and Community Investment Awards, Emma was nominated by a colleague for dedicating "endless hours to schools, legal aid clinics and other pro bono projects... Juggling this alongside her professional commitments is remarkable."

Describe yourself in 30 words...

Well, my husband describes me as 'terrifyingly efficient'?!

What motivated you to start doing pro bono work?

Growing up, I was heavily involved in volunteering through my school, village and family and have always found it very rewarding. When I joined A&O as a trainee in 2010, it was something I knew I wanted to keep doing. A&O is involved in such a variety of projects that, even after more than eight years of volunteering, I'm always finding new projects I want to get involved with.

What are your proudest achievements in pro bono work?

ColaLife, the charity I'm trustee of, getting combined zinc and oral rehydration salts (ORS) on to the Zambian essential medicines list (read more opposite).

How do you fit pro bono work around your busy schedule?

I think you have to treat pro bono commitments exactly the same as other work commitments. The more people in the firm who do this, the more accepted it will become. It also helps that we have an exceptional pro bono team at A&O who make it incredibly easy to be involved – for many of our programmes you can literally just turn up somewhere within the office to volunteer for an hour over lunch, and if you need support there's a team there to help.

In what ways has pro bono helped you build your career?

In so many ways – it's a good way of making new connections in the firm, and applying professional skills in a different context really sharpens those skills. Earlier in my career, it was a great way to get experience in dealing directly with clients and managing a file. I think a lot of our clients are waking up to the importance of pro bono and community initiatives and I'm increasingly being asked about it in pitches and directly by clients. Being able to share examples of what I've done really helps in those situations.

Describe your perfect day off work...

I've recently bought a kitten, Pickle, so at the moment my perfect day is playing with her! Otherwise, I love being outdoors and travelling, so one of my favourite ways to spend a day is doing some form of sporting event in a new place. Luckily I have friends who can be persuaded to travel to new places to do open water swims or run marathons for fun! I'm debating the Marathon des Sables as my next challenge, so watch this space.

Which is your favourite city in the world, and why?

While I love travelling, I genuinely think London is the best city in the world – there is such a range of things to do and it is always changing. The only thing that could make it better is a bit more sunshine!

Tell us something not many people know about you...

I held the second fastest record for sailing round the island of Rarotonga in the Cook Islands for about 18 months, after racing in the middle of a cyclone to try and beat the record!

What words of advice would you give to someone interested in getting involved in pro bono and community investment work?

Get involved! It is hands-down one of the most rewarding and enjoyable things I do – there aren't many other instances in everyday life where you can literally change somebody's life by spending an hour with them. I recently helped with a mock interview for two ex-offenders and within an hour both of them had gone from not thinking they would ever get a job again to having the confidence to go to an interview. You really don't need to have any special skills to be involved – you'll be amazed by how much you instinctively know through the skills you already have.

Who do you admire most, and why?

I'm a big admirer of the Timpson family, behind the shoe and watch repair business. They're an incredible example of how you can use your position as a force for good, and that treating your employees well and having a social conscience doesn't prevent you from running a successful company – if anything, it helps you be a more successful manager and run an even

more successful company. Timpsons are well known for being one of the first companies to operate an ex-offenders programme and 10% of its (extremely loyal) workforce are ex-offenders. However there are countless other less well known acts and initiatives; for example, John Timpson and his wife fostered almost 100 children and Timpsons acquired a series of holiday cottages so that all employees have the opportunity to go on holiday with their family each year.

My proudest pro bono achievement is...

...getting combined zinc and oral rehydration salts (ORS) onto the Zambian essential medicines list.

Believe it or not, diarrhoea is the second biggest killer of children in the world, even though combined zinc and ORS is a cheap and proven remedy.

Since 2012, ColaLife has been operating in Zambia – where diarrhoea kills one in 20 children before the age of five – to improve the distribution and availability of this remedy. On the basis of evidence from our work, we successfully lobbied to get combined zinc and ORS added to the Zambian essential medicines list, which means it will be available in every public health centre in the country. This is an incredible achievement.

We're now working with a number of other organisations to have combined zinc and ORS added to the World Health Organisation's essential medical list, which is looking very positive. If we manage to achieve this, it would be a significant step towards reducing the number of childhood diarrhoea-related deaths worldwide.

Find out more at colalife.org



A world without orphanages



Imagine a world with no orphanages, no institutions to provide a home for vulnerable children – how do you feel about that? Kate Cavelle, A&O's Head of Pro Bono and Community Investment, explains why our new global charity partner, Hope and Homes for Children, is working to achieve exactly that.

“When we picture vulnerable children around the world – babies without parents, children living on the streets – our first instinct is to rescue them. Take them somewhere safe with a roof over their heads and people who will feed and look after them.

That had certainly always been my reaction and it's a very human and natural response. But, as we're learning so much more now, it's not the answer. Orphanages and children's institutions do not provide the best care or achieve the best outcomes for children – in fact in most cases long-term confinement causes lasting emotional and physical damage.

In 2015, A&O began supporting a small charity, Hope and Homes for Children, and provided a GBP75,000 grant to fund a project to close all orphanages in Rwanda – part of a wider programme we're supporting to rebuild the country after the civil war and genocide.

What we've learned from Hope and Homes for Children since then has helped us enormously in rethinking how we can best support vulnerable children around the world.

80% of children in orphanages have a living parent

We now know that over 80% of the eight million children in orphanages globally have a living parent – that figure still staggers me. In most cases, poverty, disability and other pressures have forced families to make the impossible choice to relinquish their children to an institution. Many of these institutions are profit-making businesses set up to solicit donations from well-meaning international visitors and organisations. Often they are not properly accredited and have high levels of neglect and abuse. In the worst cases, children are taken from families living in poverty, with promises of an education and better life, then trafficked through the orphanages into modern slavery.

When Hope and Homes for Children was first set up in 1994 by Mark and Caroline Cook, it was to help rebuild the main orphanage in Sarajevo, which had been destroyed during the Bosnian War. Mark and Caroline promised the children they would raise the money to fund a new orphanage and set up the charity to

create a worldwide network of small, well-run homes for orphans. But as they listened more to the children they visited around the world, they realised this was the wrong approach. When asked what they really wanted, the children's answer was the same every time: 'Please, please find me a family.'

Since then, Hope and Homes for Children has put itself at the forefront of a growing global movement to eliminate the institutional care of children, and to support governments, charitable organisations and civil society to focus efforts instead on moving children into stable, long-term family care.

In September this year, A&O voted to make Hope and Homes for Children our next global charity partner (read more on [page 23](#)).

For me, this is exactly the sort of partnership A&O can make a real impact with. Hope and Homes for Children is at the forefront of a huge programme of change around the world to tackle a complex issue about which relatively little is known. We can provide not only funding but much needed pro bono legal support and other professional skills, and we can help to educate people, organisations and governments.

8 million children
are confined in orphanages worldwide

The argument for closing all orphanages

Closing orphanages is a very emotive issue. Not all exploit or intentionally harm children, but decades of research show that they also do not achieve the best outcomes for children. And, as the children themselves tell us, they would all desperately rather be with a loving family. Even in the orphanages that are well run, ask yourself, where would you rather your child was?

Often these children have complex needs – psychological trauma, mental and physical disabilities – as well as the educational and social needs all children have growing up. Most orphanages don't have staff trained to deal with anything beyond the most basic needs, so the children are treated the same and often kept in confinement. It's far easier and more effective to train a family member how to care for a child with complex needs than an institution.

Even taking the emotion out of this and looking at the facts, alongside the massive safeguarding issues, orphanages are significantly more expensive to fund. Most estimates say it's ten times more expensive to care for a child in an institution than in a family. In the case of Uganda, for example, faith-based communities in Europe and the U.S., plus local orphanage tourism and 'voluntourism', pour an estimated USD250 million into its orphanage economy each year. Imagine how far that would go in creating sustainable change across healthcare, education, employment and family support within communities. Similarly, since the earthquake in 2010, millions of dollars have been donated to orphanages in Haiti every year, most of which were set up very quickly in the aftermath of the disaster with no accreditation or experience.

This is sometimes seen as an idea imposed by the West on the rest of the world, but actually one of the strongest examples of how this can work comes from Rwanda, which is on course to be the first country in Africa to close all its children's institutions. Other countries are now following its approach – indeed A&O's Johannesburg office has been working with Hope and Homes for Children as South Africa pursues its own programme of deinstitutionalisation (read more on [page 22](#)).

Communities have the skills

I visited Hope and Homes for Children in Rwanda, along with Jane Waters (A&O's COO in Johannesburg), earlier this year to see the impact of A&O's grant. The majority of institutions for children without disabilities have now been closed, and the process of closing institutions for children with disabilities is underway.

Rwanda's experience has shown that communities have the skills to spot vulnerable children, support families and prevent abandonment.

Jane and I met some of the most inspiring people in Rwanda who are totally committed to providing the best care for children. We also met the happy and boisterous kids thriving in their new homes. I was overwhelmed by the humanity and generosity of Hope and Homes for Children's staff, as well as the families who've provided homes for children.

One lovely example is Esther who, with her husband Dany, fostered Lano when he was six months old. Lano was abandoned when he was two days old and placed in emergency foster care. The authorities couldn't trace any family so searched for longer-term care. Esther told me that her parents died when she was three so she grew up in a variety of homes – some good, some bad. She said it was always her dream to learn from her experiences and give love to a child with no family. Lano is now an energetic one year old, clearly loved and flourishing.

I was equally humbled by Keren Nshakira, the social worker employed by Hope and Homes for Children, who helped Esther and Dany prepare for Lano's arrival and now provides ongoing support. Her natural warmth and calmness were beautifully abundant and showed the importance of having the right people in place to ensure that families can thrive.

A long-term process of change

Clearly, it's not possible to close down orphanages without having a better alternative, and it takes time for communities to put the framework in place to move children into stable families.



Dany and Lano

There are so many layers to this – family and community support, healthcare, education, employment – and also cultural change so that, for example, disabled children (who make up a large number of children in orphanages) are not stigmatised in communities.

It also requires a commitment from governments and policy makers. The EU has indicated it will stop funding organisations that support children's institutions, and the UK's Department for International Development has made a landmark commitment to support families not orphanages – in fact A&O and other businesses were recently the first to sign a Private Sector Pact against the institutionalisation of children (read more on [page 22](#)).

Hope and Homes for Children's objective is to educate governments and communities about how to transition from institutional to family-based care, and to help provide the funding to achieve this. Being able to leverage its funding is crucial as the charity clearly can't fund a worldwide transition on its own – that's why we are providing at least GBP500,000 in unrestricted funding for it to leverage through our partnership.

In Bulgaria, for example, Hope and Homes for Children managed to leverage 18 times its own funding to the country – from EU and increased government contributions – meaning that only 464 of nearly 2,500 babies now remain in orphanages.

Breaking the cycle now

We know that Hope and Homes for Children's approach works, and we can see that the global movement to restore children to families is gaining momentum. It's a journey we're only at the start of, though – like many other businesses and charities around the world who are rethinking how best to support vulnerable children.

Hope and Homes for Children is very clear about its goal. It is not trying to close a few bad orphanages – it is determined to close all institutions that confine children, anywhere in the world. That is the only way to break the cycle: of desperate mothers who abandon their babies; of profit-making institutions exploiting children for donations; and of human traffickers targeting the most vulnerable families and children. Unless we work to close down all institutions, new orphanages will spring up and these cycles will continue.



Ending institutionalised care for children is an enormously complex task and it will take time, but that's why we have to start now. Because every day a child spends in an institution is damaging its emotional, psychological and physical wellbeing – and with it, that child's chance of ever leading a happy life.

Department for International Development Private Sector Pact

In August 2018, A&O signed a Private Sector Pact with the UK's Department for International Development (DfID), alongside clients and peers, against the institutionalisation of children. This is a significant step forwards in influencing large companies to redirect their corporate philanthropy and CSR support away from orphanages and towards family and community-based care.

DfID's commitment makes the UK the first OECD member to formally acknowledge the harm done by orphanages – especially to disabled children – and the right children have to family care. It also enables Hope and Homes for Children to support the Charity Commission in blocking registration from organisations who intend to fundraise for orphanages overseas.

The first African country to close its orphanages



Jane Waters and Kate Cavelle with Innocent Habimfura (Regional Operations Director, Hope and Homes for Children) outside an A&O-funded community centre in Rwanda

Rwanda's National Strategy for Childcare Reform is part of a wider rebuilding programme across the country following the genocide of 1994.

Working with the Rwandan Government, Hope and Homes for Children has helped implement a transition from the institutionalisation of children – many of whose families were victims of the genocide – to a system of family and community-based care that has the rights of children at its core. Rwanda is now on course to be the first African country to close all children's institutions.

Central to this system is the introduction of Community Hubs across the country – part-funded by an A&O Foundation grant. These provide vulnerable families with vital services like healthcare and education to help them safely care for their children and remain together. In some cases, babies and children are placed in foster care until permanent homes can be found, with investment targeted at training and building a network of foster families and social workers.

Since the start of A&O's grant in 2015, ten institutions have been closed and 639 children have been moved into stable families. More widely, 30,500 vulnerable children have been supported through family strengthening and child protection services, and tens of thousands of parents have received psychosocial support, adult literacy education and wider training.

The ten closed institutions have been turned into community resources – primary and secondary schools, health centres, single mother support centres and a community hall – providing sustainable services that promote family cohesion and help children flourish. Hope and Homes for Children is also developing income generation activities to help parents build livelihoods – poverty being one of the key drivers of family separation and institutionalisation.

In May 2018, Jane Waters (COO of A&O's Johannesburg office) and Kate Cavelle visited Hope and Homes for Children in Rwanda to see the impact of its work.

"It was a huge privilege to witness the incredible success the charity has had in Rwanda," says Jane. "The progress there has played an enormous part in persuading the government in South Africa to commit to ending institutional care, and it's exciting to be part of a journey that has the potential to make a fundamental difference to South African society."

"We met Hope and Homes for Children in Johannesburg in 2016, and since then the whole office has supported it through not only fundraising but helping to influence provincial government to put children's wellbeing at the centre of its decision making. We've also hosted a conference to help key stakeholders understand how closing orphanages can be achieved in South Africa. Hope and Homes for Children is an incredible charity and now that it's our global charity partner we have the opportunity to make a real change in the world."

A&O's global charity partnership with Hope and Homes for Children



**hope and homes
for children**

In September this year, 2,500 people across A&O voted to choose our next global charity partner. Hope and Homes for Children was the clear winner. Our two-year partnership began on 1 November 2018.



72%

of the orphanages in Nepal are located in tourist destinations to attract donations from international visitors

Our **fundraising** aim is to raise GBP1 million throughout the partnership. GBP500,000 of this will fund a specific project in Nepal and India, to help 7,500 children by preventing them from becoming institutionalised or by removing them from orphanages. The other half will provide unrestricted funding for Hope and Homes for Children's wider work to tackle the root causes of family breakdown and eradicate orphanages for good.

In Nepal, 72% of the 567 orphanages are located in tourist destinations to attract financial donations from international visitors. Vulnerable families living in extreme poverty or displaced by humanitarian crises are targeted by networks of human traffickers to give up their children to these orphanages. Once inside, the children are exploited for profit or, worse, forced into modern slavery and trafficked on for physical or sexual exploitation. People think of war and conflict as the reasons for displacement, but human trafficking is also a major factor.

In terms of **pro bono support**, we will work with Hope and Homes for Children to develop a legal framework that prevents orphanages forcibly displacing children from vulnerable families and using them for fundraising or other exploitation. We will also be looking at ways to stop children's identities being changed – something that facilitates trafficking and onward exploitation –

and exploring how government legislation and policy can be developed to strengthen and protect families. In order to build legal frameworks, we will also work with Hope and Homes for Children to develop a consensus on what constitutes institutionalised care – for example what is the maximum number of children that can live in a home before it becomes an institution?

Our first piece of **non-legal professional support** has already started and will help to scope out additional support and signatories for the DfID Private Sector Pact (see [page 22](#)).

A&O's library team will research areas of connection between Hope and Homes for Children's mission and the values and CSR policies of major companies; and also research companies who support (directly or indirectly) charities or projects that fund, assist or endorse orphanages. This will enable the charity to build a list of organisations with which to target its efforts to broaden the impact of DfID's pact.

To find out more about our partnership with Hope and Homes for Children, or to get involved, please contact [Kate Cavelle](#) or [Daisy Wakefield](#).



A record-breaking partnership



Around 95% of the money we've raised for War Child has come from individual donations from our people, which shows just how much we can achieve through these partnerships.

Wim Dejonghe,
Senior Partner



As our global charity partnership ends, we look back on how much we've achieved with War Child.

In the Emirati Camp in Jordan, young Syrian refugee children are taking part in a pre-school lesson, learning about letters, numbers and shapes through play. The children are in a classroom in War Child's new education centre – the only facility that provides early education services and psychosocial support for young children in the camp.

War Child has been A&O's global charity partner for the past two years. The partnership ended in September having raised GBP1.5 million – a new record for A&O – and provided over GBP175,000 worth of pro bono and other professional skills volunteering, as well as GBP8,000 of in-kind support.

GBP500,000 of the money raised has funded War Child's Rescue Childhood programme and construction of the new education facility in Emirati Camp.





Partner Brendan Hannigan with War Child in Uganda

Rescuing childhood

Rescue Childhood provides Syrian children, aged between four and six, with vital early years education and psychosocial support to overcome trauma through storytelling and creative activities. It also supports parents and carers with a Positive Parenting Programme to help them come to terms with what they have experienced in Syria and give the best possible care to their children.

To date, the programme has helped 304 children with early education and 386 children with psychosocial support. By the time it concludes in July 2019, 2,310 children and 1,185 adults in Emirati Camp will have benefited from Rescue Childhood.

The need for flexible funding

Having fully funded the Rescue Childhood project just six months into our partnership, we have been able to provide War Child with a significant amount of unrestricted funding, which it uses to invest in its own operations and direct towards underfunded or emergency situations.

It is vital that we provide this type of funding as it helps charities plan for the future, beyond our relationship, and allows them to invest in parts of their operations that grow income over time.

“This type of unrestricted funding has helped us in so many ways over the last two years,” says Rob Williams, CEO of War Child. “For instance, we recently hired two specialist fundraisers in our computer gaming team, who together have doubled our income from that industry to GBP1 million a year.

“This income has also enabled us to continue vital work which is difficult to fundraise for – often because it’s happening in a region that is out of the media spotlight,” Rob says. “In Central African Republic, we’re working with children who are struggling to reintegrate into their families or communities having been formerly recruited by armed groups as soldiers or slaves.

“We’ve found that the current funding cycles to support these children are too short, so we’re embarking on longer-term programmes and advocating to big funders to follow suit,” explains Rob. “We couldn’t do that without this type of donation.”

Fundraising and pro bono support combined

A&O has also provided War Child with pro bono and other professional skills support throughout the partnership: on the legal side, ranging from advice on electoral rules in the run-up to the UK general election, to commercial, IP and employment matters; and, on the non-legal side, translation support, graphic design and presentation skills training.

The largest pro bono project has been helping War Child with a review of its safeguarding policies and procedures in the wake of allegations made about other international charities (none of which related to War Child) – read more on [page 26](#).

Overall, 41 offices have contributed to our partnership through global fundraising campaigns and over 100 fundraising events – including two 70km treks across the Dana Nature Reserve in Jordan to the ancient city of Petra.

Reaching children when the need is greatest

Back at the Rescue Childhood centre in Emirati Camp, a year after it opened its doors a group of 275 children are getting ready for graduation day, when parents and the camp community come together to celebrate their achievements throughout the programme.

War Child’s support facilitators are working with children in the ‘Little Fellows’ classroom, where creative activities are helping them discuss daily life and overcome their trauma. The children have prepared a play, song and exhibition of their artwork for graduation day.

As well as having a safe place to play and socialise, the early years curriculum will help prepare these children for continued education and a more positive future.

“The broadest impact of our partnership with A&O has been to ensure that we can reach children when and where the need is greatest,” says Rob, “both in creating the new space in Emirati Camp and in supporting our emergency responses elsewhere in the world. The difference A&O has made in the last two years has been enormous and invaluable to us. From all of us, thank you so much.”



Watch the video to see the difference our support has made



War Child doesn’t walk away until the job is done, so we feel hopeful that the children and parents in Emirati Camp – and children affected by conflict elsewhere in the world – can look at their future with a greater sense of optimism.

Kate Cavelle,
Head of Pro Bono and Community Investment



Fundraising performance of 'Anything Goes'

ONE HUNDRED FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Trek Jordan in 2017 and 2018: 42 people from 15 offices completed the 70km trek across Jordan's most beautiful nature reserve, ending in the ancient city of Petra, and met War Child's team in Jordan.

Performance of the Cole Porter musical 'Anything Goes' at London's famous Hackney Empire theatre, organised, staged and performed by 140 A&O staff and alumni.

Five-a-side football tournament with 20 A&O teams from across Europe competing in Amsterdam.

Refugee Run in Hong Kong: a simulation putting 70 people from A&O and our clients in the shoes of a refugee. Also in Hong Kong, a silent auction to see A&O partners running a tea trolley service in fancy dress and staffing the office's reception.

Uganda Feast cooked and enjoyed by A&O teams in Warsaw.

Sydney Harbour Splash: a team of eight completed the famous one-kilometre open water swim in Sydney Harbour.

A week of War Child in the U.S., with cake sales, an office yard sale and silent auctions at office summer parties.

Welsh Three Peaks Challenge: an A&O team climbed three mountains in Wales and cycled between them – 26km of walking and 230km of cycling, all in 24 hours.

Best practice in safeguarding procedures

In early 2018, a number of allegations of sexual harassment and exploitation rocked the international charity sector, prompting calls for organisations working with vulnerable people to strengthen their safeguarding practices.

War Child was in no way associated with any of those complaints but nonetheless asked A&O to undertake a large scale 'culture and operations' review of its safeguarding procedures to ensure its practices continued to meet the highest standards.

Sarah Hitchins and Helen Lightfoot, both senior associates in the London Litigation department, led the work by A&O to review War Child's safeguarding policies and governance framework, including around recruitment, training, health and safety and security.

This has become the largest single pro bono project undertaken for War Child during our partnership, and drew

on the advice already pulled together by A&O and specialist private client firm Maurice Turnor Gardner (MTG) in the aftermath of the allegations.

In response to the scale of enquiries about safeguarding and governance procedures, A&O and MTG produced a detailed checklist and seminar for the charity sector on how to conduct a review of governance structure and the policies and procedures for dealing with sexual exploitation, as well as trustee responsibilities in this area and how to deal with a Charity Commission investigation. The seminar also covered employment issues and how to formulate a disaster recovery plan.

"A&O's review for War Child is drawing to a close now," says Sarah. "As well as bringing a fresh pair of eyes to a number of War Child's policies, we've also reviewed them against applicable legal requirements and relevant market standards and expectations."



Rescue Childhood, Emirati Camp, Jordan





WAR CHILD PARTNERSHIP IN NUMBERS

GBP1.5 million

in fundraising and donations –
a new record for A&O

GBP175,000

worth of pro bono support –
both legal and other
professional skills

GBP8,000

in-kind support

100

fundraising events
across 21 offices

Supporting nearly
3,500

children and adults in
Emirati Refugee Camp, Jordan,
plus thousands of other children
through War Child's work

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Email

ProBonoTeam@allenovery.com
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