ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This year we focused on putting our values into every part of HAG: our processes, our policies, our partnerships.

Our policies have been overhauled to ensure we are living our values each day – whether it be enabling staff to volunteer with emergency services or protecting the environment. We are the first to admit there is real tension between building the structures a growing business needs and not becoming the bureaucracy we were all seeking to escape in the first place. There is often a slight feeling of loss or sadness as we leave the start-up phase, but conversely we now have that depth, experience and capability to produce more, produce better and do so in a way that makes our values sing.

When it comes to procedures, we worked on reducing unconscious bias in our hiring and adopted the Atlassian approach of Objectives & Key Results (OKRs) to advance our strategy as a business. And no, our OKRs are not all around profit, in fact only one of the four focuses on money. We seek to hold ourselves to account for our social impact and how we add value to the humanitarian sector.

Partnerships are really what defined 2018–2019 for us – working alongside organisations like the Pujiono Centre and Pacific Islands Association of Non-Government Organisations (PIANGO). We are so grateful to those organisations for walking alongside us on a journey from project contracts to productive and mutually respectful partnerships. We are wanting to redefine how we and others in the humanitarian sector value, learn from and work with organisations which are pioneering new ways of working in their communities. We are excited to work with partners which are pushing for inclusion, expecting higher standards and asking more from the traditional relationships they have had in the past.

We hope that together we are generating the evidence base for change as we continue to challenge the status quo on humanitarian aid.

Kate Sutton  
Director

Beth Eggleston  
Director

HAG (n). From ‘hægtesse’, a wise female orator, a figure greatly feared and respected.

From ‘hegge’, a foot in two realities – the world of the village (home) and the wild world beyond
LIVING OUR VALUES

Humanitarian Advisory Group (HAG) brings fresh thinking to challenge the status quo of humanitarian aid. As an ethically driven business, we combine humanitarian passion with entrepreneurial agility to think and do things differently. In our last annual report, we were delighted to have defined our beliefs into a set of five core values. This year, we are proud to say that those values were an intrinsic part of everything we did. In every project that we’ve undertaken, we have drawn on each HAG value in one way or another – they have become the backbone of our culture, our approach and our products.

This year we’d like to show you just how far these values have taken us. Our values shine brightly through our flagship Humanitarian Horizons research program. This year, the program began to truly flourish and thrive, with more research products, partners and reasons to be proud emerging from the frontiers of our work.

We are proud to be a values-driven business, where living by our beliefs is our first priority. Our work, when viewed through this lens, takes on a richness and depth that pushes us on to continuously bigger and better things. This year, HAG has been bigger and better than ever, with the whole team working in unison to achieve some amazing things that we are chuffed to be showcasing in this report.

Unfailingly curious
We constantly test our own assumptions and those of the humanitarian world. We explore both the why and the how. We are eager to listen and learn, recognising that knowledge and wisdom often comes from unexpected places.

Ridiculously flexible
We understand that life and work don’t run to schedule. We support each other and our partners through changing deadlines, competing priorities and evolving goals to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Brave
The humanitarian world has many contentious issues. We explore them bravely and authentically because we believe the best solutions lie in the art of an honest and evidence-based debate.

Continuously enabling
We believe in giving generously of our ideas, energy, time and networks. We start from a position of ‘yes’.

Ethical
Boundaries can get blurred. We want ours to be crystal clear and we want to be held accountable. We work with B Corps and adhere to ethical standards so we can hold our heads high and have confidence in our practices.
WHAT DID WE DO?

27% Research

23% Monitoring & Evaluation

31% Advisory Services

19% Training

More than 43 days of staff time for Pro Bono or Independent work

WHERE DID WE DO IT?

This year we worked in 17 countries in 4 regions.
UNFAILINGLY CURIOUS

We constantly test our own assumptions and those of the humanitarian world. We explore both the why and the how. We are eager to listen and learn, recognising that knowledge and wisdom often comes from unexpected places.

At HAG we are constantly striving to test our own assumptions and better understand the sector’s most contentious issues. Our work is fuelled by the belief that progress stems from curiously searching the horizons of our current practice for a hint at what the future of humanitarian action looks like, moving forward on the grounds of rigorously excavated evidence. This belief is exemplified nowhere more so than in our Humanitarian Horizons research program.

Humanitarian Horizons

About the program
The humanitarian space is facing unprecedented challenges. The humanitarian landscape is changing rapidly, with greater need than ever before, funding shortfalls and increasingly complex disasters. With the pressure mounting, there is a need for the sector to respond to crisis even more effectively and efficiently. Through the Humanitarian Horizons program, we aim to push the boundaries and stimulate transformative change together with traditional and new humanitarian partners. This research program underpins our aspiration to thought leadership on humanitarian action in the Asia Pacific region. The program is supported by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
Consolidating and elevating
Our strategic research program, Humanitarian Horizons, entered its second year. We established new research partnerships, published ten research papers, presented at Australian, regional and global conferences, conducted field research in partnerships with local research actors, held launches and events, and witnessed the influence of our research around the world.

Two research streams, *Intention to Impact: Localisation of humanitarian action* and *Diverse Humanitarian Leadership*, continued to build on the work conducted in our first year, and a third research stream, *Building a Blueprint for Change*, was established. The fourth *Partnerships and Practice* research stream continued to provide ongoing real-time analysis of humanitarian issues, as well as supporting the partnerships and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) that underpin all four streams of work.

The importance of ‘how’
How we undertake research is as important for us as the outcome. This includes a commitment to working in partnership to support locally led research across the region and co-designing methodologies and research approaches. We are proud to have worked closely with our national partners and consultants who elevate, contextualise and maximise the impact of the research in their contexts. We worked with six partners and four consultants this year, across six countries.

Broader impact and influence
We witnessed the emerging impact and influence of the research program across the course of this year. We held events to launch our research, such as the Rohingya roundtable, Women in Media, consultations across the Pacific and launches, supported events such as the Australian Localisation Experts Dialogue convened by ACFID.

Our research was presented at global, regional and national forums, including the 2019 Australasian Aid Conference, the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) annual partnerships conference in Bangkok in 2018, Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP) Disaster READY workshops in Vanuatu and Fiji, the ICVA Annual Conference in Geneva (March 2019) and the International Humanitarian Studies Association Conference in The Hague. We focused on enabling our national research partners to also present and engage in these forums.

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Localisation in Vanuatu: Demonstrating Change
Protecting People in Locally Led Disaster Response
Charting the New Norm? Local Leadership in the First 100 Days of the Sulawesi Earthquake Response
Diverse and Inclusive Leadership Workshop Report
Localisation in Tonga: Demonstrating Change
Stream 1
Intention to impact: Localising humanitarian action in Asia and the Pacific

This stream explores the activity and impact of localised approaches to humanitarian action in the Asia and Pacific regions with key research and operational partners. PIANGO, together with its national liaison units in Vanuatu, Tonga and Fiji, held a series of localisation consultations with stakeholders to inform the Tracking Progress on Localisation: A Pacific Perspective. Our research teams then collaborated to design the methodology for localisation baselines in the Pacific, with PIANGO and its national liaison units taking a leadership role in data collection and analysis in producing and launching the first two localisation baselines in Vanuatu and Tonga. The Vanuatu baseline was translated into Bislama and launched in Port Vila by PIANGO, the Vanuatu Association of NGOs (VANGO), civil society, international agencies and government representatives. It also included exploring protection in locally led response in the Pacific with Humanitarian Policy Group and Australian Red Cross.

Stream 2
Diverse Humanitarian Leadership

This stream explores how the impact of diverse and inclusive leadership can contribute to tackling some of the challenges that face the humanitarian system, in partnership with operational humanitarian agencies. In year two, a framing paper for the research was developed, drawing on private sector research to inspire and identify possibilities for better understanding and leveraging diversity in and out of the sector. A workshop in April 2019 in partnership with Palladium brought together key stakeholders in the sector to identify potential operational research partners and identify approaches to field research to be undertaken in the coming year. The team also conducted the largest diversity survey of its kind in the sector globally, reaching over 1400 humanitarian staff, to demonstrate the current state of play of diversity and inclusion in humanitarian leadership teams. Throughout the next financial year, HAG and our partners will conduct fieldwork to determine if the diversity and inclusiveness of humanitarian leadership teams has a measurable effect on the quality of a humanitarian response.
Stream 3
Building a Blueprint for Change

Transformative systemic change is complex and challenging. This stream aims to take on those challenges, and progress operationalisation of systemic humanitarian change in Asia and the Pacific. HAG completed the inception phase in 2019 and is progressing the research in Indonesia. Scoping consultations were held in 2019 in Canberra, Suva and Jakarta to assess feasibility and identify countries best positioned to implement change using the research. Indonesia was identified as an excellent context, with the potential for the Building a Blueprint for Change research to result in action. A methodology workshop was held in Jakarta in August, bringing together key stakeholders to inform prioritisation and approach for the next two years. At the workshop, participants formed a reference group, identified key areas in the humanitarian system for change, and potential outputs to facilitate action. Throughout the next financial year, HAG and Pujiono Centre will work with stakeholders to map the humanitarian system in Indonesia, existing system-strengthening initiatives and identify the most catalytic interventions through Building a Blueprint for Change.

Stream 4
Partnerships and Practice

The research's practice papers are critical to inform and engage practitioners and influence policy in real time. Often shorter papers produced relatively quickly, practice papers aim to synthesise and progress humanitarian policy debate at key junctures. In response to the Sulawesi earthquake and ensuing tsunami, we undertook research examining how the response brings us closer to the new and improved way of delivering humanitarian assistance (as per commitments at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit) and how actors adapted to this change. We also kicked off research, due out in the next financial year, on China's evolving and expanding global aid program. Already prompting considerable interest from the international humanitarian sector, the paper will explore how Chinese and traditional actors can engage on humanitarian reform.

We also developed an M&E framework for the research program. The program will take an exploratory approach to its M&E to allow for innovation, testing and learning. The systematic outcomes to which the research program contributes are:

- Humanitarian action in the Pacific is more localised
- Humanitarian organisations in the Indo-Pacific have more diverse leadership
- Humanitarian response at a country level is improved systemically
- Contemporary issues are debated in a more informed manner.

Our Research Advisory Committee, consisting of experts across the private, non-government and academic sectors in the Indo-Pacific region, met twice in this period, significantly shaping and strengthening the research agenda and strengthening influence and research engagement.
The way we work with each other

We have continued this year to be ridiculously flexible in our work practices. Even as the staff has shifted and the team has expanded, all HAGs continue to support each other to balance the ever-changing priorities of life and work. We work from near and far, with a spread of locations around greater Melbourne, and welcoming Executive Jo-Hannah back from maternity leave to work from sunny Mackay! Co-director Kate even began working from the UK at the end of this year. The team flows and flexes to everyone’s needs, to get everything done, at work and at home.

The way we work with you

The frequency with which clients or external colleagues will remark “But, how do they get so much done?!” has become a running joke within the team. The answer, in large part, is our flexibility. Our flat structure and adaptable practices allow us to juggle deadlines effectively between all our highly qualified team members. We work hard to deliver high-quality, timely products for our clients – full of beautiful infographics, of course. And we could never do it without the essential support of our greater HAG family – from our brilliant graphic designers and editors, to our fabulous regional consultants, and our long list of brilliant interns.
Partners in practice

This was a big year for us in strengthening existing partnerships and building new ones. Two years ago we set out to test a new way forward in the way we work and commit to elevate national and local leadership through our partnerships and work internationally. We are still learning what this means for us in practice – how we embed and apply localisation principles in project and partnership design. We are particularly excited to see how much our partnerships have evolved.

What has this looked like?

Our partnership with PIANGO in the Pacific, under our thematic exploration of Localisation in Humanitarian Action, continued to strengthen. We established principles to guide our work over a multi-year partnership, explored new ideas together, designed and implemented research in three countries in the Pacific, represented our research across the region and globally, and sought ways to influence change together. We continue to look for new ways to collaborate on research and increase our collective influence on the future of the sector. We pride ourselves on being able to have robust discussions when the need arises, emerging as stronger partners.

This year has also seen the exciting evolution of our partnership with the Pujiono Centre in Indonesia. In a short space of time we’ve progressed from a HAG subcontract to the Pujiono Centre, to the Pujiono Centre subcontracting HAG, and then the scoping and co-ideation of a concept that seeks to progress systems reform in Indonesia under the Building a Blueprint for Change stream of Humanitarian Horizons. We’ve recently committed to a three-year, principles-based partnership that seeks to bring together our different skill sets for greater collective impact.

These mutually beneficial and principles-based relationships underpin the way we work. We are indebted to the knowledge, expertise, networks and vision of our national consultants and research partners. We hope that 2020 will see our current partnerships evolve further, and that we can embark on new and exciting relationships together with more partners.

We worked with 9 partners and 7 national consultants across 16 contexts. We transferred more than $96,880 to our partners and national consultants this year.
The humanitarian world has many contentious issues. We explore them bravely and authentically because we believe the best solutions lie in the art of an honest and evidence-based debate.

**Off the Record**

Our belief that progress in our sector will be forged in the fire of open, honest and evidence-based debate is best exemplified by our continuously successful Off the Record events series. This year, we hosted the brilliant Neil Townsend. Neil has worked in the not-for-profit sector for 18 years, and has a wealth of experience. Neil was Country Director for Côte d’Ivoire with Save the Children, and a Regional Humanitarian Coordinator with Oxfam, before making his way to the START Network where he served as Programme Manager for their Innovation Labs when he came to chat with us in late 2018. All this contributed to a fascinating and fresh conversation about the current and future state of play in the humanitarian sector.

**Partnership with the University of Melbourne**

Our partnership with the University of Melbourne continued to bring together emerging humanitarians from the University of Melbourne Master of Development Studies program and wonderful industry professionals to form new networks and strengthen old ones. We jointly conducted four events at the University across the 2018–19 financial year, including three professional practice seminars and one industry engagement day, covering fascinating and highly pertinent issues for the aid and development sector today, including:

- Security and Development: Conflict, Complexity and Counter-Terrorism;
- The Promise and Pitfalls of Technology for Global Development; and
- The New Geography of Global Development.

We enjoyed another year of hosting lively debates and encouraging the fresh thinking and the challenging ideas of a new generation of humanitarians and aid workers.
To evaluate the effectiveness of a humanitarian response is a task that requires an unbiased, resolute dedication to collecting and honestly reporting on often sensitive data. We are always proud to work on the monitoring and evaluation of Australia’s foreign aid, and this year we covered old ground and new. This included our evaluation of the response following Tropical Cyclone Gita in Tonga, in which we continued to elevate and amplify the voices of our Pacific neighbours, from whom we hope to continue learning as they push the sector toward better humanitarian action for all. Our evaluations also took us further afield, with co-director Kate travelling to Lebanon and Jordan for our evaluation of the response to the Syria crisis.

We continued to work closely with the Australian Civil Military Centre, the Australian Defence Force, and the Royal Australian Air Force to bring up-to-date humanitarian knowledge and best practice to the military space. This work included training and research on the Protection of Civilians in the current global context. Our own Co-Director, Beth Eggleston, was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to improve international response to humanitarian crises, both in how aid is delivered and how civilians are protected. Beth will join the Humanitarian Response Program at the US Naval War College, a leading institution in thinking and training decision makers in this field, early in the FY19–20 financial year.
This year saw a suite of fabulous, talented and hard-working internship recipients pass through our workspace. We love to give generously of our time and energy to these enthusiastic young aspiring humanitarians, and we get so much from them in return. Our interns work across the whole spectrum of our projects, supporting research and events, and exploring the aspects of HAG work that most interest them. Our internship program supports students engaged in advanced university study to develop their skills in research, training and technical support. This year we supported six interns.

**Jonathan Buckley**

Jonathan Buckley’s internship with HAG was completed during his final semester of his Masters’ of Development Studies at the University of Melbourne. He now works as a REACH Junior Assessment Officer with IMPACT Initiatives in South Sudan.

**Eliza Clayton**

Eliza Clayton undertook an internship with us while completing her Bachelor of Humanitarian and Development Studies at Western Sydney University, double majoring in Human Rights, Protection and Development and Humanitarian Preparedness and Response. She now works as a Literacy Educator in rural Victoria.

**Bridgette Hogan**

Bridgette Hogan interned with us while she completed the final year of her Masters’ of International Development at RMIT, as part of her research capstone project. Bridgette is now working as a Research and Reporting Assistant at IOM in Micronesia.
Indiah Money
Indiah Money is a young queer Wiradjuri woman, who interned with us while studying at the University of Melbourne, completing Gender Studies & Australian Indigenous Studies.

Agnieszka Zuchora
Agnieszka, originally from Vancouver, Canada, joined HAG for her final capstone for the Master of Environment at the University of Melbourne. She has since volunteered with Action for Education in Chios, Greece.

Henry Storey
Henry Storey completed his internship during his final year of his Masters’ of International Relations degree at the University of Melbourne. He now works as a Junior Analyst at Dragoman, as well as being part of the Young Leaders Program of the Pacific Forum, and as Editor of Young Australians in International Affairs.

Inaugural HAG Internship Alumni Lunch
This year we hosted our first Internship Alumni Lunch for all our past interns to come together, connect with each other, and reminisce with us. We were excited to welcome back these familiar faces, including Jonathan Buckley, Aga Macura, David Ross, Monica Keily, Zoe Fawcett Enticott, and Henry Storey. We had a fun and fascinating lunch at Vapiano in Melbourne’s CBD.

Training
Our training work this year was spread across the country with clients like Act for Peace, the Royal Australian Air Force, and Melbourne-based universities La Trobe and RMIT, just to name a few. We spent a collective 85 days researching, developing materials, planning, and implementing training which seeks to bring up-to-date best practice learning on a range of key humanitarian issues.

637+ hours of training
**ETHICAL**

**Boundaries can get blurred. We want ours to be crystal clear and we want to be held accountable. We work with B Corp and adhere to ethical standards so we can hold our heads high and have confidence in our practices.**

**Being B-Corp**

In 2018–19, HAG continued to participate in and learn from the B Corp community. Aspiring to push ourselves to the very highest level of corporate social responsibility and beyond means that our decision-making processes often look different to those of other businesses. And that’s not always easy.

**Walking the talk**

In all of our research papers there is a little line in our methodology that says “conducted using ethical research principles”. What does this mean? In all our work we pride ourselves on putting ethics first, which among other things means protecting the anonymity of our many brilliant research participants, without whom we couldn’t do the work we do. In this financial year, we conducted the largest online survey in the company’s history, the State of Diversity survey, which received over 1400 responses, crystallising for us how important our ethical research principles are to our ability to deliver high-quality, sector-challenging research. We want to thank everyone who agreed to be interviewed, surveyed, or let us pick their brain this year, for trusting us and being honest with us, for participating, and for understanding the importance of what we are trying to do.

**Understanding protection**

This year HAG began to conduct research and provide technical advice to our partners and clients about how they can better understand protection within their own policies and programs. We walked alongside international NGOs to help review, renew and implement the global best practice approaches to protection, including protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, both within their organisations and for their operational programs. We are grateful to be able to provide this critical service to the sector, and we continue to engage in the frontline debate to keep pushing ourselves and the sector to do better.

*This little logo means we work hard to ensure that our business is a force for good. We have chosen to hold ourselves accountable to highest social, environmental and ethical standards, setting ourselves apart from business as usual.*
Supporting local legends

Wherever possible, we like to support other local businesses striving to help our community and make the world better. For our various events and meetings throughout the year, we used several Victorian social enterprises, not-for-profits and for-purpose companies to deliver delicious delights to our guests. We’d like to take this opportunity to highlight the good work of these organisations that have helped us meet our own standards too.

When Goodwill Wine CEO David Laity lost most of what he owned in Victoria’s 2009 Black Saturday fires he was overwhelmed by the support and inspired to ‘pay it forward’. With his $15,000 Red Cross Bushfire grant, David decided he wanted to do something constructive with this gift from the Australian public and so began Goodwill Wine: a certified social enterprise that sources quality boutique wines from around Australia and sells them online. They pass on 50% of their profits to the charity of their customer’s choice, while employing both long term unemployed people and people living with disabilities. They’ve now been running for a decade, and have passed on nearly $300,000 to many Australian charities.

There is rarely a HAG event that is not improved by their fabulous wines with their fun-loving labels that delight our guests and our staff. We love these guys and everything they’re about. Keep an eye out for their future endeavours, which we’re sure are going to knock our socks off, and keep them in mind for your next event, gift, or personal date with your favourite wine glass.
This year we said farewell to Sally Shevach (Executive) and Alex Lia (Researcher). We warmly welcomed Jess Lees as a Leader, and Hannah Blackney as a Researcher.
Thank you to all our wonderful clients this year, who enable us to do what we do best:

Australian Red Cross
Australian Defence Force
Act for Peace
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
CARE
Caritas Australia
Trocaire
GLOW
Royal Australian Air Force
Australian Volunteers International
BHP Billiton Foundation

UNHCR
International Medical Corps
RMIT University
La Trobe University
Australian Lutheran World Service
University of Melbourne
Australian Humanitarian Partnership
Pujiono Centre
Australian Civil Military Centre
Transform Aid International

And more.

FINANCIAL BREAKDOWN

1 July 2018 - 30 June 2019

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