The IARS
International Institute
10 Years Anniversary

The IARS International Institute

IMPACT REPORT 2015

10 YEARS OF COMMUNITY-LED SOLUTIONS FOR A FAIRER SOCIETY 2005-2015

The IARS International Institute

10 Years Anniversary

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The IARS International Institute is user-led and user-focused charity with a mission to give everyone a chance to forge a safer, fairer and more inclusive society. Over the last 10 years, the Institute has been providing world-class and cutting-edge educational, research, policy and networking services of local, national and international significance. We are focused on empowering the most marginalised communities through direct service delivery, while enabling organisations to achieve, measure and improve their social impact.

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Welcome by our Founder & Director

Welcome to this special edition of our impact report. This year, we celebrate 10 years of official operations (although I remember, as if it was yesterday when in 2001 I set up IARS in my kitchen!) Why did we set up the charity in the first place?

As a young person (then), I felt that my voice did not matter while being asked to join and support a society that often rejected my choices and values. A number of my peers felt the same, so very quickly we gathered momentum by spreading our passion for youth-led change internationally. The Internet was a novelty at the time, so those who had access to it also had great power. With the support of the European Commission, a number of national and local funders and organisations, we soon got into a position to register ourselves as a community-born, non-profit company and then in 2008 as a charity. The demand for our services and the evidence that we were collecting led us to conclude that it is not only young people who feel that they want to be listened to in decision making processes, policy, legislation and the service delivery. This was particularly true for groups who tend to be disenfranchised by the system or who are marginalised due to their membership in a minority group. We responded to this call and expanded our remit from being youth-led to being user-led and user-focused. In fact, this year, we were approved as an International Institute meaning that all the educational programmes that we provide to our users are not only free, but also accredited and recognised worldwide.

Mandela said: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world".We use this weapon to armour our users with the skills, knowledge and confidence to produce "Community-led solutions for a fairer society".

Over the years, we have established training courses for young people, voctims, offenders, black and minority ethnic groups, abused women and women with refugee and asylum seeking background, but also for those servicing these groups such as youth workers, employers, legal and justice professionals, criminal justice agents and activists. But the journey of our users doesn't end with education. It continues until "they change the world"by putting their new "weapons" in use for the benefit of others. We have seen improvements in the drafting and implementation of a number of national and international laws while countless practices are now more in line with the needs and wishes of those they aim to serve.

I have always said: "IARS will close its doors when society is a more equal place where voices that want to be heard are organically empowered to do so". We are not there yet, and thus I use our 10th year anniversary to humbly say a big thank you to all those who supported us.

Special thanks to the few individuals who did not believe in us as they made us collectively better and stronger. I am proud to be leading a team that can only be characterized as passionate, dedicated, expert in what they chose to do and extremely loyal. We are all united by our belief that the best solutions to our society's failure are not found in high ivory towers, but in the sufferings of our communities. We are also united by our founding values of: User & Civic Participation | Restorative Justice & Dialogue | Individual Empowerment & Responsibility. Join us if you also share the same beliefs. Here's to another 10 years!

Dr. Theo Gavrielides
IARS Founder and Director
October 2015

Thank you from the Board

In this our tenth year, The IARS International Institute has truly established itself as a world-class and cutting-edge charity, offering a diverse programme of educational, research, policy and networking services. We are widely recognised for our distinctive user-led and user-focused approach, giving everyone the chance to forge a safer, fairer and more inclusive society. Our progress this year has been marked by a number of important milestones. We became and International Institute. Our Youth Voice Journal is now an approved member of the Committee on Publications Ethics (COPE) and is indexed by SCOPUS. And we continue to thrive in a turbulent funding environment that has challenged every-one working in the third sector.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without all of those who support IARS: the brilliant staff team, the interns, our Patrons, donors and sponsors. And of course our Founder and Director, Dr Theo Gavrielides, who has guided IARS so skilfully over the last decade. On behalf of my fellow Non-Executive Directors, I would like to record our thanks to everyone who has supported IARS on this journey.

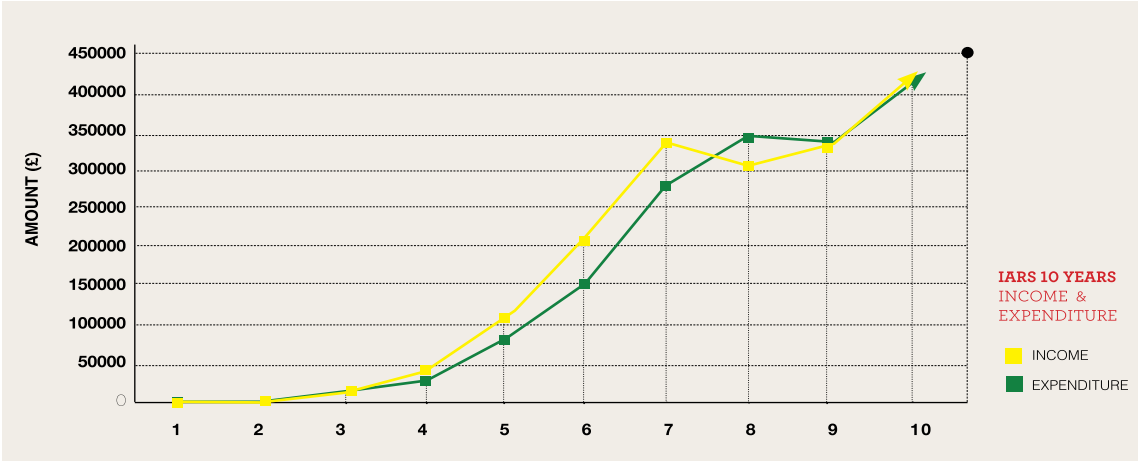
We have come a long way but there remains much to do. It is a sad truth that the world is becoming more divided and unequal, not less, and so the work of IARS is needed now more than ever. We have the tools and the expertise; please continue to support us as we look ahead to the next ten years.

On behalf of the IARS Board

Richard Harries

IARS Trustee
October 2015

OUR GROWTH



The IARS International Institute
Community-led solutions for a fairer society

Our Mission, Vision and Values

OUR VISION

"A society in which everyone is given a chance to actively participate in social problem solving".

OUR MISSION

"To give everyone a chance to forge a safer, fairer and more inclusive society. We do this by producing evidence-based solutions to current social problems, sharing best practice, and by supporting young people and the community to shape decision- making from the bottom- up."

OUR CORE ORGANISATIONAL VALUES

We were founded upon the principies of:

1. User & Civic Participation
2. Restorative justice and dialogue
3. Individual empowerment and responsability

OUR BUSINESS MODEL

By carrying out action research that is independent, credible, focused and current.

By supporting the individual (with an emphasis on young people) to carry out their own initiatives to shape decision-making .

Giving everyone a chance to forge a safer, fairer and more inclusive society.

By acting as a network that brings people and ideas together, communciates best practice and encourages debates on current social policy matters.

By being an authoritative, independent and evidence-based voice on current social policy matters

By building the appropriate organisational capacity

YOUNG PEOPLE – JUSTICE – EQUALITIES

Our stated mission is *"Giving everyone a chance to forge a safer, fairer and more inclusive society"*. Focusing on our three areas of expertise; Young People | Justice | Equalities, our research programmes aim to collect evidence that will allow us to do justice to this statement. For us, social change is an organic process that should directly involve those individuals and groups that have traditionally been excluded and ignored. As an established user-led Institute with 10 years of experience under our belts, we facilitate this organic process by empowering marginalised and disenfranchised groups, (*let that be our young people, victims or asylum seeking and refugee women)* to produce evidence themselves, and through engagement with peers to effect change.

The IARS International Institute
Community-led solutions for a fairer society

Research Programmes-Young People

YOUNG PEOPLE

Youth empowerment has always been at the heart of IARS' mission. The IARS youth programmes take the organisation back to its very youth-led roots. Using well-tested and innovative youth-engagement models, IARS young people are empowered to become future leaders in their communities. Focusing on the most vulnerable and marginalised youth groups including Black and Minority Ethnic, migrants, offenders and young people at risk of offending, we provide them with high quality community-based, alternative educational and volunteering opportunities enhancing their skills, civic engagement and employability while diverting them from harm.

Roland Mortimer,
99% Campaign young project participant

"The 99% Campaign gives the youth the exposure they properly deserve and provides a platform for them to demonstrate why they are such an intrinsic part of society. As young people, we are consistently being depicted as a failed generation which lacks the skills, motivation and interest to compete in an increasingly globalized economy".

Rebecca Harrison,
99% Campaign Magazineyoung writer

"I wanted to inspire and make people listen. The 99% Campaign is all about bringing voice heard"

Annika Small
CEO Nominet Trust

"The 99% Campaign is a truly innovative example of youth-led engagement, dispelling negative stereotypes of young people and promoting their involvement in civil society. At Nominet Trust we know that difital technology offers young peaople the opportunity to get their voice heard and participate in their communities in ways that were simply not possible previously, and it is fantastic to see the inspiring individuals, projects and organisations that are really making a difference celebrated in this way".

Sarah Champion,
Labour MP

"In Britain today, over a million young people are still unemployed. We need to act urgently to change this, or we will be faced with a generational problem that manifests itself well into the future. Our young people are our future business leaders, engineers, and scientists so it great to see initiatives like the 99% Campaign champion the voice of young people and provide them with the much needed space to express their views on issues that really matter to them. I have seen this work (99% Campaign) first hand, and it is a real inspiration to see young people at the heart of policy and campaigning. In today's society where youth unemployment is high, student loans are being sold off, and funding is being cut to colleges, it is more important than ever that young people have organisations like IARS helping get their voices heard".

Young People involved in IARS' Youth Programmes

IN 2015 ALONE WE

- Provided *300 part-time internships* at our offices and *1000 volunteering opportunities.*
- Continued the youth-led 99% Campaign.
- Delivered *14 youth-led training sessions* to *119* young people across schools and youth clubs .
- Launched the youth-led 99% Campaign website which has had *30,000* visitors.
- Attended 2 pan-European meetings, the Partnership of the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth
- Published the 2nd Issue of the youth-led 99% Campaign Magazine which has received over 2,000 views
- Held the 3rd IARS Annual Research and Youth Leadership Awards attended by 120 young people and professionals in the field of youth
- Concluded and evaluated the 5-year London Youth Now Programme that provided skills development opportunities to *477 young* people across London and supported over *300 youth service providers*
- Strengthened the Youth Advisory Board
- Submitted various consultation responses to national and European bodies on hate crime, immigration and youth policy, led by the Youth Advisory Board.
- Held various meetings with 22 policy makers to discuss current youth and policy issues

89,5% Reported that they would consider volunteering again

89,47% Reported that after their engagement with IARS felt more ready to participate fully in the society as equal citizens

72,7% of the 3rd IARS Research and Leadership Awards attendees reported that they felt inspired to advocate for a better understanding of young peoples' role in their communities

Research Programmes - Justice

JUSTICE

In 2015, IARS took the lead on numerous justice projects with a particular emphasis on the European Union 'Victims' Directive'. Placing at the centre of our work those who are effected by existing practice and policies, we ensure that the rights, needs and wishes of victims and other parties, including offenders and professionals, are reflected in policy and practice at both national and international levels. Through our work, we have developed protocols and guidelines for restorative justice services in the best interest of all parties involved, raised awareness of victims' rights, and trained professionals and practitioners in safe practices of restorative justice across the UK and Europe.

IN 2015 ALONE WE

- *Empowered 550 victims and offenders* to have their voices heard
- *Trained over 1,131 individuals and 383 organisations on the implementation* of the Victims' Directive across Europe
- Shared best practices with over *5000 organisations across Europe*
- Published *10 articles* in international academic journals
- Held *40 meetings* with MPs, government officials and victim service providers
- Launched the *Victims' Voices in Restorative Justice Campaign* giving direct voices to victims of crime
- Had over *80 organisations* and individuals to commit to our International Victims' Pledge.
- Submitted over *5 consultation responses* to the Ministry of Justice and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)
- Acted as *advisors and expert* consultants to governments on the setting up and implementing of restorative justice strategies.

Mike Penning MP
UK Justice Minister

"The work that was carried out by IARS helps us to really understand how legislation can affect victims' lives. It is so important victims are heard throughout the justice system and placed at the forefront of reforms. Recovering after a crime can be difficult but we have taken a number of steps to help victims cope with what they have been through, and to make sure they are a priority".

Rosalyn Hollidge
Victim of serious crime commended on IARS Annual Conference "A Victim-led Criminal Justice System"

"It has been a very powerful experience to witness people from all around the world and different agencies debating the potential for a victim-led criminal justice system. For me this is the way forward".

Research Programmes-Equalities

EQUALITIES

Our Equalities strand is committed to improving the conditions of lives of thousands of people by improving services provided to marginalised community groups, promoting fairness and human rights. We have developed a range of research and policy programmes that aim to identify and address inequality patterns within various service providers including probation services, the criminal justice system and the health care system with an ultimate goal to bring cultural and institutional change. Using user-led action research and empowering those who are directly affected, we produce evidence and support services to develop their own bottom up models for user involvement in the planning and delivery of the services.

24 **Refugee women involved in the Abused No More programme reported**

- **Improved self-esteem and confidence**
- **Gained ability to disclose sensitive information**
- **Improved ability to cope with their lives**

In 2015 alone we

- Developed the accredited training programme *"Gender Sensitivity in the Asylum Process"*.
- Held 4 face to face training sessions led by refugee women, addressing health and legal practitioners.
- Trained over 80 organisations on improving their services to refugee and asylum seeking women.
- Trained 24 refugee and asylum seeking, abused women.
- Developed online training on *"Gender Sensitivity in the Asylum Process"* that reached 2,100 people.
- Reached over 2,132 professionals providing them with cutting-edge research and practical recommendations on treating women who experienced gender-based violence.
- Held a celebratory event at the University College London attended by 70 people.
- Attended national and international conferences and events to disseminate project findings.

CASE STUDY

Maimuna Jawo has been involved in the Abused No More Programme since 2014. She is an anti-FGM activist, campaigner for women's rights and an expert by experience. Maimuna is herself a survivor of FGM and comes from a family of traditional cutters. Despite huge challenges that Maimuna faces as a refused asylum seeker, she facilitated delivery of our CPD accredited Gender Sensitivity in the Asylum Process training, greatly contributing to debates on forms of gender based violence, including FGM, as well as on language and cultural barriers to disclosing gender based persecution when seeking asylum. It was great to watch her confidence grow, especially given that she struggles to read and write. We have been arranging for Maimuna to speak at various FGM-related events. On 29 May 2015 IARS Project Coordinator was interviewed by VICE News, and spoke about the project in the context of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Maimuna's asylum claim.

Educational Training Programmes

With over ten years' experience in developing and delivering high quality educational training programmes to individuals and organisations, in 2014 the IARS International Institute becomes an accredited Continuous Professional Training (CPD) provider. CPD accreditation is another mark that displays our commitment to empowering others to bring change from the bottom up. Our face to face and online programmes are based on extensive user-led research, and aim to build knowledge, raise awareness, and exchange best practice on key areas of Youth – Justice –Equalities.

IN 2015 ALONE WE

- Delivered face to face training to over 1,500 individuals.
- Delivered face to face training to 450 organisations in 5 countries in Europe.
- Delivered online training to 3,100 individuals.

VICTIMS' RIGHTS IN RESTORATIVE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE TRAINING PROGRAMME

96% of training participants agreed that the knowledge gained during the training would enable them to perform their role better.

85% of the participants agreed that the course helped them to clearly understand the Victims' Directive and its restorative justice related articles.

80% agreed that the information they received will help them to collaborate better with victim related services and other providers in the victims' service areas.

PARTICIPANTS IN OUR GENDER SENSITIVITY IN THE ASYLUM PROCESS TRAINING PROGRAMME

33% of the participants reported knowledge increase about asylum process

96% of the participants reported knowledge increase about women's needs and rights

62,5% of the participants reported that they learnt how to facilitate disclosure of sensitive information

Organisations

77% of theorganisations that were involved in our projects reported that they would consider changing the way they deliver services to young people

Young people

Before entering the IARS Youth training programme 51,06% reported that they never share their views and opinions online. After the programme 69,23% reported that they feel more confident in having their voices heard using social media and other ways of online engagement

Participants in our Youth Training Programme

Abused No More training participant
Expert in asylum issues

"I've never attended a training run by refugee and asylum seeking women before. It was amazing to see how empowered they were by taking part in the project".

Abused No More training participant

"I feel that the session equipped me with more insight into the complex needs of asylum seeking and refugee women."

Evaluation Charitable Services: Measuring Social Impact

In a highly competitive local, national and international funding environment, now more than ever, measuring social impact has become a key factor for the sustainability of both small and bigger scale organisations. Utilizing robust, user-led research methods we provide tailored, independent, credible and evidence-based services, helping social ventures to measure and improve their impact and develop outcomes frameworks.

IN THE LAST YEAR WE

- Became an approved Cabinet Office provider of the Impact Readiness Fund.
- Continued delivering the evaluation of the Big Lottery Fund Realising Ambition 'The Anne Frank Trust's Schools and Ambassadors programme' aiming to reduce prejudice and hate crime among young people.
- Developed a 3-year evaluation programme to support Detention Action to measure their social impact with interventions with migrant detainees and translate them into strategy.

Robert Posner
Chief Executive of the Anne Frank Trust

"The Anne Frank Trust's partnership with IARS is under the Big Lottery Realising Ambition funded programme. IARS has been an integral part of this programme in helping to understand the impact of the work, and whether we are achieving our objectives to reduce prejudice and discrimination, to increase young people's respect for others who may come from different cultural or religious backgrounds, and to increase socially active behaviour amongst these young people. Through in-depth qualitative research, IARS have given the Anne Frank Trust a deeper understanding of how our education programmes are performing."

Jerome Phelps
Director of Detention Action

"IARS have been supportive and valuable partners throughout our collaboration. Because they 'get' the project and can relate it to their wide range of experience in related fields, they are able to provide valuable input as we develop the project. Their evaluation report has captured the progress and challenges of the project so far, and highlighted its wider significance and potential for dissemination."

Simon Fulford
Chief Executive of Khulisa

"Over the last five years Khulisa has developed a successful and mutually beneficial partnership with IARS covering multiple strands of work. IARS have provided expert evaluation services to us while, together, we have delivered seminars, training and other initiatives that furthered the justice sector and, most importantly, delivered tangible and positive outcomes to our participants and their communities. We look forward to many more years working together."

A Publishing House with a Charitable Mission

COPE
Member since 2015
JM10908

As a small publisher, specialising in social science books and research studies, our 10 year commitment to the production of high quality credible publications was rewarded with our Committee on Publications Ethics (COPE) membership.

IN THE LAST YEARALONE WE

- Published one peer-reviewed edited collection; ***"A Victim-led Criminal Justice System: Addressing the Paradox"***
- Published three e-books
  "Restorative Justice and Domestic Violence: A Critical Review"

  "Gender Sensitivity in the Asylum Process: The Voices of Refugee and Asylum-seeking Women Training Manual"

  "Race in Probation Toolkit on BAME User Involvement in Probation Services"
- Published the ***4th Issue of the Youth Voice Journal which is now indexed by Elsevier's SCOPUS,*** the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature.

Bringing People and Ideas Together

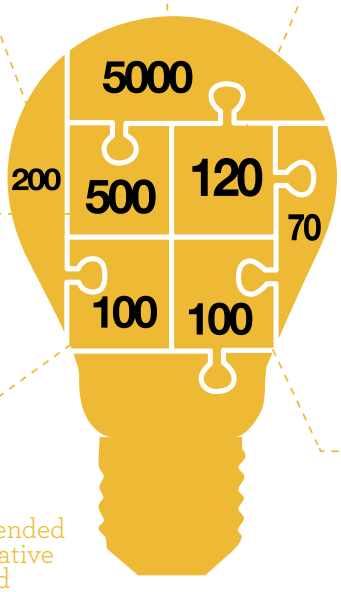
IN 2015 ALONE WE

- *Held our 3rd IARS Conference on Victims' Rights and Restorative Justice .*
- *Established our Annual Restorative Justice Expert Seminars.*
- *Launched IARS Annual Spring Lectures.*
- *Rewarded our Women's Users Group with a celebratory event.*
- *Held our 3rd IARS Research and Youth Leadership Awards.*
- *Shared best practice via our e-newsletter with 5,000 organisations and individuals*
- *Spoke at various national and international conference and workshops.*
- *Held over 70 workshops for young people, professionals and practitioners to exchange best practice and promote debates on key policy and practice issues.*

5000
organisations receive our monthly newsletters

200
organisations and individuals and 22 countries across Europe were represented at our annual Conference

120
young people, representatives of youth organisations and policy Leadership Awards 2014



70 people attended our 1st Spring Lecture on Hate Crime

500
members joined our Restorative Justice Research Network

Over **100** registered members

100
people attended our Restorative Justice and Domestic Violence Conference

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Community-led solutions for a fairer society

Our User-Led Way

As a user-led, user focused and community-born charity, we involve our users in the design, development, delivery, monitoring and quality control of our projects and services. Since its inception, IARS' charitable business and strategic direction have been steered by user groups. Our User-led Involvement Principles

WHAT MAKES IARS TRULY USER-LED IS AN ORGANIC PROCESS OF USER-LED SERVICE, WHICH INCLUDES:

a) project design and development
b) project delivery
c) project monitoring and evaluation

On a day-to-day basis, the IARS staff team facilitates the engagement, skills development, recruitment, confidence building, project design, project delivery, project evaluation and monitoring of our services and service users. All our users have the opportunity to be involved in IARS projects, by attending workshops, assisting with how the projects are managed, writing in the IARS newsletter, updating the website and setting up events. All members are awarded with a certificate for their active participation.

10 YEARS YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD

IARS Youth Advisory Board (YAB) consists of a team of young volunteers aged 15 – 25 from different backgrounds and circumstances who are aware of the problems facing young people in today's society, and who are interested in an opportunity to do something positive about these issues. They meet on a regular basis to inspect IARS services and policies, monitor and quality control its youth projects, carry out research and respond to youth consultations, apply the REACH evaluation framework, advise on specific youth project, review and update the volunteer and user engagement policies, the Equal Opportunities policies and any other IARS policy impacting on its young users.

WOMEN'S ADVISORY BOARD

The Women's Advisory Board (WAB) consists of users from our women-focused projects. The WAB meets quarterly enabling refugee, asylum-seeking and other marginalised groups of women to scrutinise our projects and take on a responsible role within the organisation.

As community experts they guide our work by sharing their experiences, such as going through the asylum process in the UK. We also involve them in strategic discussions on the context of our work and campaigning, so that they can input into every aspect of our work. Recommendations are submitted to the IARS Management Committee and Board. This ensures that our female users are involved in a structured way in our strategic development and decision-making procedures.

OUR MEMBERS

Our ingrained user-led culture couldn't be complete without the invaluable contribution of our members. As a membership organisation, we are proud to have over 100 like-minded individuals and organisations that support us on a daily basis to deliver our mission, and enable us to continue providing our services to those who need them most. Our members include professionals, researchers, experts and users that work closely with us as critical friends exchanging best practices and providing us with recommendations based on their experience that further helps us shape our work in the best interest of our beneficiaries. To show our appreciation to our members for their invaluable input we offer them various benefits including access to free events, training and developmental opportunities. To join us as a member please contact contact@iars.org.uk

Faisal Kassim
Youth Advisory Board Member

"I firmly believe that true democracy cannot exist if those deemed young in society are excluded from the decision making process. This is why I joined the Youth Advisory Board. It, essentially, provides a platform for young people to get their voices heard and their issues addressed"

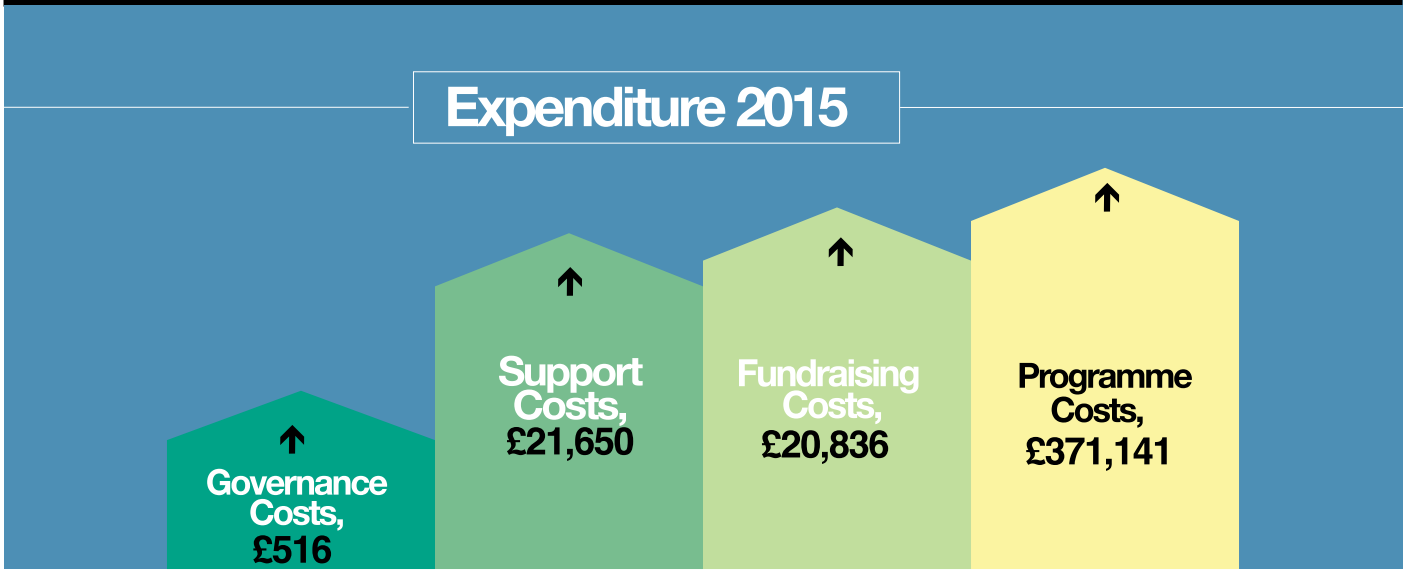
Sir Bert Massie CBE
IARS Patron

"As a disabled person, I know that one thing that infuriates the disabled is when we are not involved in making the decisions that affect our lives. At the heart of IARS are its programmes to promote the involvement of people to empower them to control their own lives and to promote justice and equality. Long may it continue".

Sandra
Abused No More Project Volunteer

"For me the best thing has been being able to communicate without being judged, I've been able to be listened to, and give my opinion freely, and that anyone can take it into consideration ".

Where does our money come from and go to



The IARS International Institute
Community-led solutions for a fairer society

Meet the Team

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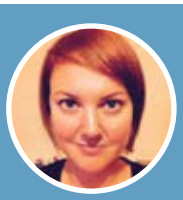
Projects Coordinator (Justice) Rachel O'Brien

Projects Coordinator (Youth): Andre Demushi

Office Administrator: Lorela Demushi

Our Sponsors

As a charity, IARS relies on grants, sponsors and charitable funds to deliver its charitable aims and make with our funders and sponsors to ensure a difference for society. We work closelythat their expectations and vision are met.

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