



Irish Penal Reform Trust

Strategic Plan 2011-2015

September 2010

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Foreword

The Irish Penal Reform Trust's strategic plan for 2011-2015 comes at a crucial stage in the development of the organisation. This plan will act to consolidate IPRT's achievements, which are many and major, which have occurred since the organisation's foundation and particularly over the course of the most recent strategic plan (2008-2010). It will also catalyse further activity, to shift emphasis in some areas and to develop our expertise and activities in new ones. Our core mission remains the same: to campaign for the rights of all those in the penal system and to advocate for imprisonment to be a last resort. This plan will allow IPRT to take forward this mission over the next five years from a strong position and with a clear direction for its future.

The strategic plan for 2011-2015 has arisen out of an extensive and in-depth planning process as well as continued reflection on the objectives and activities of IPRT. Critical questions such as the deepening of IPRT's engagement with those most closely affected by prison policy, prisoners and their families, the relative balance and prioritisation of our operations, sustainability and the way in which IPRT can advocate for broader social reforms have been examined. This plan provides IPRT with the strategies and understanding necessary to develop these areas.

This process was made significantly easier thanks to the strong position in which IPRT currently finds itself. Over the last two years IPRT has established itself as the leading authoritative voice on penal reform in Ireland, produced high quality research, position and briefing papers across a range of topics, engaged constructively with policy-makers and established valuable relationships with other organisations and formed key alliances. Critical to this success as well as the process by which this plan was created has been the involvement of a highly motivated and expert voluntary Board and a committed, enthusiastic and skilled staff team. IPRT has also put in place robust governance structures, considering this to be essential to the success of the organisation's mission and objectives.

The next five years in the development of IPRT will build on significant success and learning from its experiences to date. This plan seeks to guide IPRT through a period which is likely to contain many challenges. Penal reform and advocating for it has always been difficult and along with an uncertain economic environment the context for our work is unlikely to be an easy one. There are, however, also many opportunities to bring our extensive research-base and ability to articulate the benefits and necessity for penal reform to fruition in the form of policy change.

None of this would be possible without the generous and continued support from our principal funders, Atlantic Philanthropies and the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. Along with the crucial support of our donors and members, their commitment to penal reform has allowed IPRT to be able to create this ambitious and confident plan for the next five years of its development.

Dr. Mary Rogan, IPRT Chairperson, 8th September 2010

Introduction

About IPRT

IPRT was founded in June 1994 as Ireland's first national non-governmental organisation focussed on penal reform. Among our founder members were prominent academics, religious leaders, lawyers, medical practitioners and concerned citizens. IPRT quickly established itself as a strong independent voice on penal policy matters. During the early period of our development, IPRT was led by committed and talented voluntary board members and has had a small number of highly motivated and skilled staff. We were sustained largely by the financial support of a number of charitable trusts, most notably Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, and by the subscriptions of our members. IPRT published a large volume of independent research and succeeded in raising the profile of penal reform issues in public discourse.

Strategic Plan 2008-2010

In 2008, IPRT's board agreed a Strategic Plan for the period 2008-2010 and we made a successful grant application to Atlantic Philanthropies to increase our capacity and range of our activities, based on that plan. With the recruitment of a staff team of four, we have expanded our work and have had successes in many of the policy areas in which we are active. IPRT has now set out a broad and comprehensive platform of policy positions and research documents; we have established IPRT as the leading independent voice in public debate on the Irish penal system; and we have established key relationships with the main stakeholders within the system, including Government, Oireachtas, the legal professions and service providers working directly with prisoners and their families. In addition to the support of our two main philanthropic supporters, IPRT also receives some grant support and also donations from our members and supporters.

IPRT's Vision

Respect for rights in the penal system with prison as a last resort

IPRT's Mission

IPRT is committed to respecting the rights of everyone in the penal system and to reducing imprisonment. We are working towards progressive reform of the penal system based on evidence-led policies and on a commitment to combating social injustice. IPRT will achieve our goals through affecting changes in policy, in practice, in law and through influencing public opinion.

IPRT's Values

All of IPRT's work is underpinned and informed by our Values as an organisation:

- *Respect for human rights and a commitment to combating social injustice*
- *Advocacy based on research and evidence-led policies*
- *Working constructively with others in the penal system*

Background to the Strategic Plan 2011-2015

In 2010, in advance of preparing our next Strategic Plan we commissioned an independent external evaluation of our work over the period 2008 and 2010. This report, conducted by Pamela Montgomery during the first part of 2010, highlighted our achievements and identified a number of key learning points to underpin the next stage in our development:

- The targeted outputs of the Plan have been largely achieved during the period and these outputs have significantly advanced the cause of penal reform in Ireland.
- IPRT is now firmly established as the principal organisation concerned with penal reform in Ireland and is perceived as professional and authoritative.
- For the next stage in our development, there are opportunities to capitalise on our existing research and policy outputs to effect change in law and policy.
- IPRT can maximise its impact by developing mechanisms to link policy work to issues experienced by prisoners and others affected by the penal system.
- IPRT can play a key role in linking penal policy deliberation and agencies in the penal system with policy and practice in related areas of social policy.
- Informed by a realistic assessment about what a small team can deliver, we will seek to ensure a balance between planned activities and flexibility to respond to good opportunities in our areas of interest.
- We also need to address the issue of IPRT's medium term sustainability and put in place effective strategies to address issues of capacity and funding.

Context for IPRT's Work in the period 2011-2015

Based on that evaluation and on our own analysis of the policy environment, we are basing this Strategic Plan on a number of initial assumptions:

- Crime will persist as a major social problem and aspects of crime may worsen during the predicted period of economic uncertainty.
- Ireland will continue to have a significant prison population during the period. This will mean that issues such as prison overcrowding, sentencing and the use of imprisonment will continue to be relevant.
- Within the prison system, significant issues concerning the protection of human rights will persist. The structural nature of many of the problems currently facing the Irish penal system are profound and will not be resolved in the short term, although measurable progress can be achieved.
- Important opportunities for change in penal policy, law and practice will present during the period, with the potential for significant political change and the certainty of a general election by 2012. IPRT will be well-placed to contribute to these processes of change.
- There is growing and significant potential for IPRT to contribute to wider processes of change around social policy, particularly in contributing to greater understanding of the social context of crime and imprisonment as well. IPRT has the ability to work within and contribute to the creation of a broader alliance of those working to combat social injustice, feeding its expertise into the work of others and presenting these concerns to a penal-policy making audience.

Structure of the Strategic Plan 2011-2015

The period of the plan reflects IPRT's analysis that the core issues with which we are concerned are systemic in nature and will persist over the medium-term. For this reason, we believe that the next stage in our development requires us to identify our priority areas of work and objectives over a longer period. This will allow us to make real and coherent progress towards strategic goals. Detailed work-plans for each year of the Plan will be developed by staff and approved by the board on an annual basis, allowing us flexibility to prioritise particular issue or activities in response to external developments over the period. The plan is set out in three main parts:

- A. IPRT's priority areas of work and objectives
- B. IPRT's Main Activities
- C. IPRT's organisational development

Monitoring and evaluation

Progress in achieving the objectives identified in this Plan will be monitored in a structured way over the period of the Strategic Plan. The Board will conduct regular reviews of progress in relation to the Plan every six months. We will also commission an external independent mid-term evaluation of the work of IPRT in early 2013.

More specific targets for outputs and activities will be set out in detailed work-plans for each of the five years of the plan and we will monitor progress in meeting these targets at each board meeting.

An essential step to facilitate these processes of evaluation will be setting up systems of measurement and baseline indicators with regard to our key areas of work and our objectives and to establish a process by which those indicators can be monitored, reviewed and measured. This process will be undertaken in the period leading up to the beginning of the Plan.

A. Priority Areas of Work and Objectives

Overview of Priority Areas of Work and Objectives

The identification of the four priority areas of work outlined below reflects IPRT's analysis of the most important issues facing the penal system as well as the key structural issues informing penal and related social policy. We see these areas as interrelated and overlapping and we see all of these issues as being underpinned by our Vision and Values.

- Established as a penal reform organisation, concern with respect for human rights within the prison system has always been at the heart of our work. We have identified persistent human rights issues within our prisons as well as structural issues around the regulation and oversight of the prison system. The human rights issues evident in our prison system are inextricably linked to the overuse of imprisonment and the disproportionate interference with human rights that this involves. IPRT also believes that the reality of prison life is a critical expression of the values of our society and we see these issues in their wider social context, informed by our understanding of imprisonment as a product of the failure of social policies.
- In line with our vision of imprisonment as a sanction of last resort, the use of imprisonment is a second focus for IPRT. We have identified a number of key legal issues around the role of the court in opting for detention as a sanction, both in terms of the availability of alternative responses to offending behaviour and in terms of the length of sentences imposed. IPRT sees the decision to imprison in a wider social context and as not separable from an understanding of the profile of who we imprison and the need for investment in related areas of social services.
- At the wider level of Irish crime policy, IPRT has identified an imbalance in an approach which prioritises punishment over prevention. We are concerned with the failures of planning which contribute to regressive responses to crime focussed on treating symptoms rather than the causes of crime. We are targeting the misplaced attempts to address complex and profound social problems in the criminal justice system and will promote an understanding of the social context of crime and the potential to address the causes of crime and imprisonment through investment in related areas of social policy.
- Finally, we have identified the area of youth justice as meriting a particular focus. All of the issues raised in the three preceding areas in relation to human rights, the use of detention, the coordination of crime policy and the connections with wider social issues also arise in the youth justice context. However, the emergence in recent years of youth justice as a parallel system of justice in its own right and the specific children's dimension it presents demand a focussed response from IPRT.

1. Human rights and prison

Context

As set out in IPRT's Vision, a commitment to respect for human rights is a core principle of IPRT's philosophy and underpins all of our work. IPRT sees respect for human rights within the prison system as more than a question of compliance with legal standards; but rather as being informed by a deeper commitment to solidarity and to combating social injustice. At the level of law and institutions, significant issues around the rule of law, accountability and independent complaints mechanisms, including the investigation of deaths in custody, remain urgent. Prison conditions, prisoner safety, and access to health, education and other services also continue to give rise to human rights issues that are acute and systemic in nature. IPRT will continue to focus on the special circumstances and vulnerabilities of certain groups within the prison population, including the position of women prisoners and prisoners with mental health difficulties.

The central issue of prison overcrowding and the impact of even short periods of imprisonment on the enjoyment of human rights also illustrate the human rights dimension to related issues of sentencing. A key expression of the links between human rights issues in prison and wider social issues can also be seen in relation to the economic and social rights of prisoners after their release and in relation to their reintegration to society.

Objectives

- The development of effective legal and administrative structures for the protection of human rights in a prison context, including the establishment and adequate resourcing of robust accountability systems.
- Measurable improvements in the level of protection of human rights in key areas, including with regard to physical prison conditions and the regimes which prisoners experience.
- Measurable improvements in meeting the needs of identified groups of prisoners with special needs of categories of vulnerable prisoners, including women prisoners and mentally ill prisoners.
- Creating an awareness of the human rights dimensions of the use of imprisonment and penal policy.

Key Activities

To advance IPRT's work in this area, we will continue to develop a strong policy base in line with evolving human rights standards. Engagement with international human rights bodies will remain a key priority for IPRT, as will engagement with the key statutory bodies charged with protecting human rights; particularly the Irish Human Rights Commission and the Inspector of Prisons. We believe that use of the law can be a key means of advancing protection of prisoners' rights and we will explore means for IPRT to support and stimulate legal advocacy in this area. Articulation of prisoners rights issues in relation to the wider social and political significance of our prisons will also be of strategic importance in broadening IPRT's message.

2. Use of Imprisonment

Context

IPRT is committed to restricting the use of imprisonment to a measure of last resort. In recent years there has been a dramatic increase in prisoner numbers and we will continue to raise awareness about this trend. There is a growing body of evidence that imprisonment is being overused as a sanction at the District Court level, while at the same time there is a trend towards longer sentences being imposed in the Circuit and High Courts. A key issue in this area are the availability and use of community sanctions as alternatives to custody. We also believe that sentencing practice can be made more coherent and transparent and have identified the possible expansion of mandatory sentencing regimes as a key challenge.

Promoting an understanding of the use of imprisonment in relation to the wider social issues, IPRT will be raising awareness of the profile of who we imprison and the demonstrated pathways to imprisonment from identified groups in society. In this way, we will work with others to promote opportunities for intervention and diversion in areas of related social policy, including mental health policy and drug and alcohol policy.

Objectives

- The principle of imprisonment as a last resort embedded in policy and expressed in legislation.
- Coherent and transparent sentencing practice, based on principles of proportionality and imprisonment as a last resort.
- A review of existing mandatory sentencing legislation and no expansion of mandatory sentencing laws.
- An increase in the use of community sanctions as a response to crime as a means of diversion from detention, including an expansion of the community service system in line with Government targets.
- Identification and promotion of diversion and intervention opportunities as alternatives to imprisonment, with particular reference to mental health policy and drug and alcohol policy and to initiatives such as the Drugs Court and the Central Mental Hospital's Court Liaison Project.

Key Activities

Engagement with policy-makers will be central to our work in this area as will the development of our engagement with the legal professions and especially with the judiciary. This will be underpinned by legal and policy analysis and research and will be supported by appropriate awareness raising work to inform the public of the reality of current sentencing law and practice, its costs and its consequences, as well the potential benefits of alternative approaches. Specific priorities will be awareness raising work around the use of and consequences of short prison sentence and the use of and consequences of mandatory sentencing legislation. By identifying and promoting awareness of the social context of imprisonment, IPRT will promote diversion mechanisms to meet identified needs outside the criminal justice system.

3. Penal Policy and Social Policy

Context

Imprisonment and sentencing take place within the context of a wider State response to crime; a response that has traditionally seen poor coordination between the various justice agencies, significant divergence between policy and practice and deficits in the evidence-base behind policy generally. A key issue in this regard is the balance between punishment, detection and prevention and also in linking between the work of crime agencies and community services, in terms of diversion from the justice system and in supporting those leaving prison. Informed by our commitment to evidence-led policy, IPRT can play a significant role in contributing to reforming how policy is developed as a critical step in reform of law and practice.

Crime is a social phenomenon in both its causes and in its effects and penal policy must be seen in the context of wider social and economic marginalisation and exclusion. IPRT believes that more effective means of responding to and preventing crime are available and that many of these means lie outside of the criminal justice system itself. IPRT has a key role to play in contributing towards a wider shift in Irish economic and social policy away from reactive response based on addressing the failures of social policy and towards addressing the causes of those problems. In particular, we will be emphasising the benefits of preventative approaches to social problems linked to crime such as addiction and mental health, as well as the social and community context of what happens in prison and after release from detention.

Objectives

- Greater integration of the different elements of crime policy and planning, with a measurable shift in balance from punishment to prevention.
- A measurable shift in public discourse towards an understanding of the social dimensions of imprisonment, particularly around policy areas which directly impact on the penal system including drug policy and mental health policy.
- The building of broad-based networks connecting those working within the penal system to those combating social injustice in related areas of policy.

Key activities

Engaging directly with policy-makers and presenting accessible research and policy work, IPRT will contribute to a more coherent crime policy. While retaining IPRT's penal policy focus, we will continue to deepen our alliances with other agencies working in related areas such as addiction, mental health, education, and child protection. By providing IPRT's expertise in penal matters to peer organisations working in related fields we can help build capacity in those organisations to address the criminal policy dimensions to their work. IPRT will also present those networks' concerns to a penal policy-making audience, working towards integration of our work with wider reform processes. We will also engage directly in public discourse around the links between crime and wider social and economic policy and crucially, IPRT will articulate our work on penal policy in the context of a wider shift in social policy towards addressing the causes of exclusion and marginalisation.

4. Youth Justice

Context

IPRT is established as an important voice in Irish youth justice policy. This area of the justice system has developed very significantly over the past decade to the point where a quasi-parallel system of law and administration has been established to address youth offending. IPRT regards this area as one of key strategic importance for a number of reasons: first, because of the importance and specificity of the human rights issues relating to young people in conflict with the law; secondly, because many of the progressive changes in law and practice being introduced to the youth justice system may act as models for the adult system; and thirdly because of the link between the youth justice system and the pathways from that system into the adult justice system and with social issues around children's rights more broadly.

In this regard, youth justice is a key area for IPRT to engage with wider issues around social policy and the promotion of preventative strategies to crime and social problems more generally. Examples of important issues to be addressed in this area include the connections between youth justice and childcare, education and health. There will be a strong overlap between our work in this area and our work in relation to penal policy and wider social policy identified in area 3 above.

Objectives

- The transfer of all children from St. Patrick's Institution to an appropriate child-centred facility in the shortest possible timeframe.
- The provision of the highest standard detention facilities for all children detained within the youth justice system.
- Increased use of appropriate diversion options within the youth justice system, ensuring the child detention population remains stable or is reduced.
- Integration of youth justice policy with wider children's policy and the establishment of youth justice as a children's rights issue. In particular, the prioritisation of youth justice within the National Children's Strategy.

Key Activities

Policy work will continue to constitute the focus of IPRT's work in this area and developing our relationships with the key children's statutory agencies will remain a priority. We will be centrally involved in the development of new National Children's Strategy and in the reporting process around Ireland's third report under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. There may also be avenues for developing legal work and advocacy in this area by working closely with new and existing agencies working in this sphere and around monitoring the application of the Children Act 2001, and in particular the operation of the diversion options set out in that legislation. We will also continue to use IPRT's established expertise in the area of youth justice to support the work of non-governmental organisations working with children and to build capacity for these organisations. The development of our links and alliances with children's rights organisations and those working directly with marginalised children will be critical to our success in this area.

B. IPRT's Main Activities

Based on the analysis contained in the evaluation report, IPRT will adopt a slightly amended range of activities over the period of its next plan, representing an evolution in our means of working. During the period of our Strategic Plan 2008-2010, our concentration was on establishing a strong policy base, raising awareness about our work and the issues we are concerned with, and establishing strong working relationships with key stakeholders. These objectives have been realised and our emphasis will now shift to achieving real change in policy and law over the period of the next five years building on this platform. We will continue to develop our research and policy functions and our awareness raising work, building on the success of the past three years, but we will also seek to utilise new tactical approaches to achieving positive change in the Irish penal system.

In addition to engaging key stakeholders or building alliances with key stakeholders and through awareness raising work, we will also explore new and creative ways to use the law to effect reform. More work in the legal sphere is consistent with our commitment to the protection of human rights. We will also deepen our links with service providers and with prisoners and their families. This will help to ensure that IPRT's policy work is informed by current practice and will also help provide policy support to other organisation more directly involved in working in the penal system. In this regard, our plans are based on a careful analysis of the particular strengths of IPRT, the limited resources available to us and the capacity and strengths of other agents in the penal system.

Areas of activity for IPRT 2011-2015:

- Research and Policy
- Awareness Raising
- Effecting Change through the Law
- Building Alliances and Prisoner Engagement

Research and Policy

IPRT is now working from a strong policy base, established in the last phase of our development, and is well placed to leverage significant change in penal policy. This platform of policy positions has now been established and in the next phase our output in this area will reduce as we focus on more concise responses to discrete policy issues as they arise.

IPRT will continue to carry out strategic research to address knowledge gaps identified in relation to the Irish penal system and will continue to develop our role as a focal point and resource for the growing body of research in the field of Irish criminology by further collaboration with the principal academic and research bodies and by encouraging and promoting further research. In identifying such opportunities and needs, we will ensure that IPRT "adds value" to the work of other experts in the field by building on the particular strengths of IPRT as a campaigning organisation.

Crucially, we will move to integrate all of our work around policy outputs with structured engagement with policy-makers and legislators to ensure that we maximise the impact of our work towards achieving reform. The relationships which we have now established with Government and statutory agencies, the Oireachtas and the other key stakeholders and decision makers in the penal system will be developed further to ensure that IPRT is centrally placed as an important element in the Irish penal policy-making process.

Awareness Raising

IPRT now enjoys a high profile as a leading voice in public discourse on penal policy in Ireland. We have established an authoritative reputation with the media and with the wider public as an articulate, informed and reasonable voice in our area of expertise. Through the production of a comprehensive and coherent policy platform, our messages are set out clearly and these core messages are proving to be effective in influencing change. We are also firmly established as the principal source of information in relation to Irish penal matters and as a resource for all the key stakeholders in the system, particularly through our website, publications and public events. Our events are well-attended and we continue to identify new avenues for communicating our messages in creative ways. During the period of this Plan, IPRT will expand our audiences by exploring new means of communication, include through use of the arts.

We can utilise our access to media and other means of disseminating information to raise awareness of penal policy matters, including the work of service providers working with offenders. We will also now move to address wider issues around the demonisation of offenders and articulating the links between crime policy and wider social policy. Recognising the central role of public opinion in influencing policy-making, of central importance to our work will be working to shift discourse towards an understanding of the social dimension of imprisonment. We are confident that we can contribute to raising the level of public discourse more generally by our use of evidence-based analyses and by retaining and developing IPRT's distinct voice as a penal reform organisation working to illustrate the social dimension of crime.

Effecting Change through the Law

The serious human rights issues which prisoners continue to experience has led IPRT to consider that there is great potential for more use of legal means to advance prisoners' rights in Ireland. The continuing absence of an independent complaints mechanism for prisoners and the profound marginalisation which prisoners and their families continue to suffer from make the need for legal advocacy more profound. Whereas IPRT does not envisage taking on a formal legal representative role for prisoners and their families in the immediate or near term, we believe that the legal system will present an important arena for advancing the enjoyment of prisoners' rights over the next period of our development.

Through our collaborative and educational initiatives with the legal professions, we believe that IPRT can play an important role in stimulating the development of

prison law and supporting the work of the legal community. With our legal and human rights expertise, we will build on our existing relationships with the professional bodies to identify additional tactical means for IPRT to support, to assist or simply to stimulate litigation on behalf of prisoners. Key actions which IPRT can take in this regard include providing research support and resources to lawyers in relation to international human rights jurisprudence and comparative prison law analysis. Engagement with the judiciary will be a key target in this area as will collaborative work towards creating the conditions in which the legal system will become more accessible to prisoners both in terms of access to legal knowledge and expertise and in relation to existing barriers to litigation.

Building Alliances and Prisoner Engagement

It is increasingly apparent to IPRT that prisoners and their families remain acutely marginalised and excluded from public life and from many essential services. It is also clear that there are a wide range of public and community services working with and for persons within the penal system. Many of these groups have little policy capacity and the sector is generally disjointed, with agents often having limited knowledge of the work of other agents. With our policy and legal expertise, we can provide support and resources to these agencies and by creating structures and opportunities for former prisoners, family members and relevant key service providers to regularly feed into IPRT's work we will further ensure that we are up to date with the issues of significant to prisoners and their advocates. Most importantly, deepening our links with both those with direct personal experience of the penal system and those who work within the system will greatly enrich the credibility of IPRT as an informed actor in penal policy-making.

There is also great potential to place IPRT in a more central role in relation to wider discourse on social policy in Ireland, by deepening our links with peer organisations working in related areas of policy and towards shared goals around social justice and the protection of human rights. The growth of networks and alliances across disciplines and the associated potential for collaboration are important developments in this regard and IPRT will create the capacity to make new connections with complementary organisations.

Organisational Development

Board

IPRT's highly skilled and committed voluntary Board has been a main factor in its success to date and we will continue to strengthen the board to reflect the expertise and skills needed to effectively govern IPRT. Some slight improvements to governance were identified in the Evaluation Report and these will be implemented to further enhance the robust governance structures already in place.

Objectives

- IPRT will meet best practice standards of governance at board level and will continue to broaden board expertise and skills.

Patrons

Our patrons add prestige and credibility to IPRT and we will utilise their public profiles to bring our messages to different audiences.

Objectives

- IPRT will develop an active body of 3-5 patrons as champions of our work.

Membership and Supporters

IPRT currently has a membership of between 100 and 200. We also have over 600 social-networking supporters through Facebook and Twitter and a constituency of over 100 lawyers who are closely integrated to our work. Our members and supporters give strength and credibility to IPRT and we will continue to identify potential for our membership to contribute more directly to our core work.

Objectives

- Our membership will grow in strategic categories of stakeholders, supporting our policy work and our broadening our fundraising capacity. We will develop a strategy for enhanced member participation in our work.

Staff

From the Montgomery evaluation report it is clear that we can improve the management of our existing staff resources, by setting more realistic staff work plans in the future and by enhanced sequencing of activities with regard to staff capacity. However, based on our experience of operationalising our Strategic Plan 2008-2010 and our assessment of the demands of the proposed range of activities and objectives for 2011-2015, IPRT projects that we will also need to expand our existing staff capacity over the period.

Specific gaps in our current staff resources that we have identified over the period of the current plan or areas we plan a significant expansion of our work over the period include (i) fundraising; (ii) building alliances and prisoner engagement; (iii) research and policy and (iv) effecting change through law.

Objectives

- IPRT will expand our staff capacity in a sustainable manner over the period to meet the needs of our objectives as set out in this Plan.
- By providing a budget to contract out work as needed in identified areas, most notably in relation to fundraising, IPRT will benefit from flexibility in meeting targeted needs which cannot be met by the existing staff team.
- We will also expand our intern capacity by retaining interns for longer placements and by exploring opportunities to collaborate with other bodies in the management of interns.

Financial Sustainability

IPRT operates and will continue to operate at a modest and “lean” level of spending. Our main asset is our small team of paid staff and we believe that we can continue to achieve our main targets without a significant increase in our overall budget. As outlined in the section on staff capacity above, we currently project that we may be able to increase staff capacity without expanding our staff team during the period. However, we do project some increases in certain areas of operational spending, such as in relation to awareness raising where we have not yet been able to exploit potential with regard to public campaigns.

It is clear from our experience to date and our analysis of the current funding environment, that an organisation such as IPRT will face great challenges in broadening our funding base to meet our projected needs at the present time. By setting informed and realistic targets for funding growth and increasing our fundraising capacity, we believe that we can sustain our current level of activity and also contribute towards the sustainability of IPRT beyond 2015. Our priority in this area is to retain the financial support of our two main funders over the period of the Strategic Plan. However, we believe that there is potential to increase our range of funding sources if we can increase our capacity in this area.

As we have limited capacity to carry out fundraising activities from within the existing staff team, without seriously detracting from the core activities of the organisation, we will source contracted support in relation to our fundraising strategy and in relation to carrying out certain fundraising activities, (including events and individual donations). In this way we can gradually broaden our funding base to achieve medium-term funding stability over the period of the Plan.

Objectives

- Finance the activities and outputs identified in this plan and secure the financial stability of IPRT over the period of the plan.
- Increase our fundraising capacity and expertise over the period of the plan.
- Broaden our funding base for core funding purposes towards the objective of reducing our reliance on our two core funders.
- Retain the financial support of our two core funders.