



PROGRESSIO **75**
1940-2015

Trustees' Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2015

Progressio is both a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee and the Trustees are also non-executive Directors of the Company. As such this report represents both a Directors' and Trustees' Report. Progressio is the working name of the Catholic Institute for International Relations.

Registered charity 294329
Registered company number 2002500

Progressio
Units 9-12, The Stableyard
Broomgrove Road
London SW9 9TL, UK
020 7733 1195
progressio.org.uk

Progressio is a UK-based organisation with Catholic roots, working internationally to help people, especially women, gain power over their lives and overcome the barriers that keep them poor and deny them their rights. We don't impose solutions – we ask people what needs to change, and give them the right help so they can make it happen.

We work for gender justice. Women make up 50% of the population but account for 60% of the world's extreme poor and suffer widespread discrimination including high-levels of sexual violence in the countries where we work.

We develop respectful, long-term partnerships with local organisations and community groups. We provide them with practical support through expert development workers, who share skills, know-how and training. Over 90% of our development workers are from the Global South. They range from agro-ecologists to marketing specialists; from human rights activists to HIV advisers.

We also support local partners and communities through young adult volunteers in the ICS (International Citizen Service) programme, half of whom are from the UK and half of whom are local. Working together in this way, we can cost-effectively help to improve the lives of thousands of people.

Progressio builds the ability of people and of communities to tackle poverty and injustice. That means not only teaching practical skills but also giving people the ability and confidence to stand up for their rights and tackle the unjust systems and policies that keep them poor. By bringing the voices of poor and marginalised people to policy-making processes, we help to ensure decision making is resolutely pro-poor. This is backed up by public campaigning in the UK on issues like women's participation, food, climate change and access to water.

Organisational information:

President

His Eminence Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor

Trustees

Martin McEnery, Chair

Michael Doris, Treasurer

Chris Smith (re-elected for 2 years, October 2014)

Kevin Tunnard

Carolyn Williams

Jean Casey (elected for 3 years, October 2014)

Ranila Ravi-Burslem (elected for 3 years, October 2014)

Rocco Blume (co-opted December 2014)

Belinda Calaguas (co-opted December 2014)

Lynda Kerley (co-opted December 2014)

Dennis Sewell, (resigned, June 2014)

John Barker (resigned, October 2014)

Dan Cook (resigned October 2014)

Susana Edjang (resigned, June 2014)

Andy Waites (resigned October 2014)

Rukayah Sarumi (resigned January 2015)

Senior Staff

Mark Lister, Chief Executive

James Collins, Director of Finance and Administration

Gemma Hayes, Director of International Programmes

Lizzette Robleto de Howarth, Head of Policy

Dan Hale, Campaigns and Communications Manager (left December 2014)

Sarah Sandon, Head of Fundraising (left September 2014)

Letter from the Chair of Trustees

Once again it has been a year of considerable change externally - in the world of development and development funding – and internally, within Progressio. All the while we have continued to focus on our work amongst marginalised communities and on ensuring that their voice is heard across the world. Here are some of the highlights from the year:

Our programmatic work

In Yemen we worked in the year with staff at the Reach Out Foundation for Human Development on their gender-based violence programme to enable them to promote rights and methods of behavioural change with key stakeholders and the community.

In Somaliland we have worked to build the governance and management capacity of the Somaliland National Human Rights Commission.

Some highlights in our work on raising awareness of HIV and AIDS

In Somaliland, our longstanding work supporting the Somaliland National Aids Programme to establish a testing and treatment service continued in the year. Alongside further training for hospital nurses, Progressio sponsored new training for counsellors to offer support to people with AIDS in the community and thus develop community-based prevention. This national programme, heavily supported by Progressio through development workers and funding, has made a major contribution to keeping the impact of AIDS at low levels compared with the epidemics in many other African countries.

In the recently completed phase of our HIV and AIDS project in prisons in Zimbabwe, the evaluation showed that the percentage of prisoners reporting positive HIV-prevention practices increased from 58% in mid-2011 to 75% by mid-2014.

Highlights of our work on sustainable environment

In Malawi we have provided training in environmental agricultural livelihoods and in savings and loans which has resulted in 1,650 households no longer reporting poverty as a pressing need.

In Zimbabwe similar work with 600 farmers has resulted in greatly improved harvest yields of between two and three tons per hectare compared to a conventional farmer yielding 0.3 tons per hectare on similar land.

International Citizens Service (ICS):

This year ICS has continued to be very successful, raising our profile with young people in the UK and integrating well with our work with our local partners. We have managed a total of 279 UK volunteers in placements in Malawi, Zimbabwe, Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador. In each country the UK volunteers work alongside local volunteers, of whom there were 330 last year.

The future of our ICS programme is looking strong for the next year.

“Young Progressio ICS volunteers have given us a presence in the community... Before ICS, we did not have the capacity or the idea to engage young people through schools... With the ICS volunteers, we are now working in 20 schools and delivering life-saving information and training to a much wider audience at a key stage in their

lives.” - Dominic Nyirongo, Executive Director of Ungweru, of Progressio's

Malawi ICS partners

Highlights of our international policy work:

The policy team hosted a successful event at the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York looking at women's and girls' Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights.

We submitted a written statement on "Faith & Social Norms, Women's Rights, Natural Resource Management and the Role of the Private Sector as a Development Player" to the UN 58th Commission on Status of Women (CSW) Committee which was accepted and distributed to policy makers.

We delivered a total of 42 policy interventions, including meetings with MPs on select committees and briefings on women's rights for the UN, maintaining the main focus on gender justice in fragile states.

Fundraising

Fundraising remains a key challenge for Progressio, as it does across the charity sector. We have continued to implement fresh approaches and new strategies. We are building up our expertise in this area, ensuring we recover our core costs from donors where possible, and we are broadening our networks of partners and donors. These efforts continue into this current year.

In March we organised an event at the House of Lords, hosted by Baroness Lister of Burtersett, for women in business and aimed at gaining their interest and commitment to Progressio, to our aims and to our finance needs.

Campaigning and Communications

We have improved our ability to measure evidence and stories of the impact of our projects. Our campaigners played a significant part in lobbying 330 MPs on climate change.

We are delighted that following pressure and support from many including ourselves Parliament has enshrined the 0.7% law - putting into legislation the commitment to spend at least 0.7% of national income on overseas aid.

A major upgrade of our website ensures use on mobiles and tablets and this is now becoming the main way that supporters find out about Progressio.

We are looking forward to receiving and working with the new Sustainable Development Goals after they are decided in New York at the end of September.

Our New Strategy

The year has seen us further develop and implement our current strategy

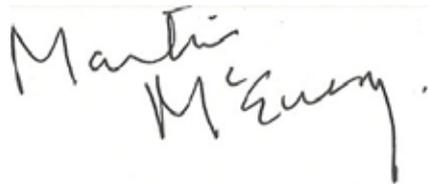
- Work on themes of Good Governance & Gender Justice, and on Sustainable Environments & Rural Livelihoods;
- An increased focus on fragile states and the African continent;
- Work in particular with women and young people.

We have continued to update and clarify our identity as a faith organisation and to re-energise our relationship with the Catholic Church.

Thank you

On behalf of the Board, I thank all of our staff both overseas and in the UK for their dedication and commitment in this challenging year. Furthermore I'd like to thank all our supporters and donors, large and small, for your contributions which have enabled us to complete a year of change, consolidation, and progress, together with considerable successful delivery.

Martin McEnery, Chair of Trustees

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin McEnery". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

About Progressio

Vision

A world in which marginalised people take into their own hands the power to transform their own lives.

Mission

We equip some of the poorest and most marginalised people, especially women, to claim their rights and overcome the causes of poverty, injustice or exploitation.

We do this by listening closely to our community partners, sharing skills and strengthening voices so that people can transform unjust power structures.

Values

Respecting dignity, standing in solidarity, acting boldly.

Our values are inspired by our Catholic roots and particularly Catholic Social Teaching. We seek to speak to all people and identify the common ground where people of any background can work together to tackle poverty and injustice. Working with and for people of all faiths and none is important to us.

How we work

Imposed solutions, however well meaning, are not the answer to tackling the complex root causes of poverty and injustice. Progressio believes that to ensure full human development, people must be authors of their own future and have the power to address their own problems. That is why we work through skilled development workers and young adult volunteers working with local organisations to benefit poor and marginalised communities in developing countries. We seek to build and strengthen the skills and experience of our partner organisations so that they are better placed to organise, influence and participate in local, national and international power structures; and to deliver results in poverty eradication and social justice including respect for people's rights, gender equity and greater accountability.

We describe the way we tackle poverty as "People Powered Development":

- **People** – we work through and alongside women and men – giving practical support in a spirit of partnership to local organisations and community groups through our development workers and young adult volunteers.
 - **Power** – we seek to support poor and marginalised people, especially women, to raise their voices to challenge unfair power structures, locally and nationally, and to influence policies internationally that affect them. Material poverty is compounded by and flows from injustice. So we will work to support women and men to claim their rights and live with dignity.
 - **Development** – we work hand-in-hand with people of all faiths and none to help them transform their own lives, inspired by a combination of Catholic Social Teaching and the best development practice.
- ## We tackle poverty and injustice in three ways:
- We place skilled development workers and young adult volunteers with local organisations, where they support local people and communities to tackle poverty and improve lives.
 - We listen to the needs of our partners, bringing their voices to the global policy debate and advocating for changes in policy, practice and attitudes that keep people poor and marginalised.
 - We engage with members, supporters, returned volunteers and others in the Global North, enabling them to be more informed on issues of injustice and poverty and to act in solidarity. We also help the Christian community to be more aware of the connections between issues of poverty and their faith.

Our charitable aims

Progressio's purposes as set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association include the objectives:

- Relieving poverty, sickness and distress around the world;
- Promoting public education and research on the nature, causes and effects of poverty;
- Promoting Christian or moral consideration of these issues;
- Promoting a greater understanding of the contribution of faith-based groups to development and international affairs;
- Encouraging faith reflection by Catholics and others on development issues;
- Fostering tolerance and respect between different faith groups working together to tackle poverty, inequity, sickness and distress.

Making sure our aims and public benefit requirements are met

The trustees have taken account of the statutory reporting duty to illustrate how the activities of Progressio meet the legal public benefit requirement. We have noted the guidance from the Charity Commission when reviewing the activities of the past year. This report highlights some ways in which we fulfil our mission and bring benefits to:

- Individuals and communities living in poverty in the countries where we work around the world, regardless of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation;
- People in churches and communities in the UK who are concerned about global poverty and justice issues while seeking for ways to be more informed about or take action on those issues.

Progressio's achievements and performance

The nature of our work – building the skills, capacity and confidence of local people and organisations – is not as easy to quantify as building hospitals or digging wells. Yet the impact of this people-centred approach is clear from the illustrations given below. When people have the skills to bring about change for themselves, they make a sustainable difference that will last long after the development workers and volunteers have fulfilled their roles.

Over the course of the financial year, Progressio development workers in our programme countries directly supported 20,139 people (10,125 women and 10,014 men) through 94 partner organisations. In addition our ICS young adult volunteer programmes supported thousands of other people through our work alongside 14 local partner organisations. We do not as yet collect data on numbers of beneficiaries from ICS but three ICS projects in Malawi directly benefited over 10,000 people.

More than 1,130,000 people have indirectly benefited from our development workers' programmes. For example people equipped with skills from our development workers' training have helped their families or others in the community. Others have benefited indirectly from national and international policy change. In addition our ICS programme indirectly benefited many thousands of other people - for example one Malawi ICS project reached over 300,000 with HIV and AIDS awareness messages via a regional radio campaign.¹

Progressio's work has focused on three main programme areas together with policy, advocacy and campaigns work to support long-term policy change. In addition we continually strive to improve our organisational effectiveness.

¹ We have changed our monitoring process to ensure we do not double count beneficiaries across two reporting periods. This means the figure this year is substantially lower than last year, but is much more robust. We do not collect data about beneficiary numbers from our ICS programme.

1. Participation and effective governance

We believe that in order to reduce their poverty, poor and marginalised people, especially women, need to have a greater influence on decisions and policies that affect their lives. Women, who are often the most marginalised, are at the heart of this work. Effective participation underpins all of Progressio's work.

We take a two-pronged approach:

First, we develop partnerships with local groups, networks and organisations and connect them with our professional development workers, over 90% of whom are recruited from the Global South. Development workers bring skills and practical support, and help our partners in six countries to empower local people to bring about changes to their own lives, and to find ways they can influence local policies and practices to make a positive difference to the way of life of the whole community. Our young adult volunteers from the UK and from the local country under the ICS programme operate in five countries (two countries where ICS volunteers and development workers work together and three where ICS works alone).

Secondly, we conduct research and analysis of international policy issues that contribute to the causes of poverty and marginalisation. We bring the voices of grassroots communities to decision-making processes, and we campaign to influence policy at national and international levels.

What have we achieved this year?

Progressio's work building effective civil society participation has supported 4,341 people. This includes those who have been supported, coached or received specialised training within partner organisations and people who participated in training or capacity-building workshops. Our work across the nine countries in 2014/15 is broad and varied and includes, for

whereby the community has a say in how government budgets are spent and support for greater participation of women in decision-making. Alongside this work, our ICS young adult volunteers supported further work at grassroots level in five countries.

2. Effective responses to HIV and AIDS

Progressio has been working on this issue for many years. HIV and AIDS is not just a health issue, but also one of the world's biggest challenges to development. Those who are poorest are disproportionately affected by the disease, while the high and growing prevalence among women and girls represents a global 'feminisation' of HIV and AIDS. Our goal for tackling HIV is to seek an effective and appropriate response in policy and practice from communities, faith leaders, civil society and governments. This will result in lower prevalence rates, greater access to treatment and removal of stigma and discrimination against women, men and children living with or affected by HIV and AIDS.

What have we achieved this year?

Progressio's work on HIV and AIDS has directly benefited 10,477 people and includes supporting greater awareness of HIV and AIDS and the reduction of stigma. Alongside this work, our ICS young adult volunteers supported further work at grassroots level in five countries.

3. Towards a sustainable environment

What have we achieved this year?

Poor communities are at the sharp end of climate change that threatens their already fragile livelihoods. Drought and deluge combine to damage the soils and destroy harvests among small farmers whose small-holdings are often restricted to the least fertile soils. Progressio has supported small farmers with training in agroecology so that they find affordable and sustainable ways of countering climate change, for example planting hedgerows from locally

available tree species that protect from heavy rains and wind to improve yields.

Progressio's work on sustainable environment has directly benefited 5,321 people. It encompasses a wide range of activities designed to support partners to reduce poverty while ensuring a sustainable environment, such as training farmers to use agro-ecological techniques and supporting integrated water resource management that harnesses precious rainfall to boost yields. Alongside this work our ICS young adult volunteers supported further efforts at grassroots level in five countries.

4. Changing unfair policies and practice

We seek to strengthen the skills of our partner organisations so that they are better placed to organise, influence and participate in local, national and international power structures. This can lead to concrete improvements in poverty eradication and social justice including improved livelihoods, respect for people's rights, gender equity and greater accountability. Our expert international policy team also strengthen poor communities' voices in international policy decisions that affect their lives.

What have we achieved this year?

We believe that poverty can only be tackled for the long term if there are changes in unjust power structures and policies. As well as our direct work supporting local civil society to influence change in the Global South, Progressio works on international issues in two ways.

First, we help people in the South to get their voices heard among UK, EU and UN policy makers and influencers. We do this indirectly through Progressio's publications and policy briefings, where Southern people's experiences are central. For example, 87% of the blogs on our website are written by or feature people from the Global South, sharing their perspectives on the issues they face.

Second, we help our partners to make their voices heard. For example, one of our partners, Abigail Matsvai from the Zimbabwe Women's Lawyers

Association, joined Progressio's panel of women speakers at the 2015 UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York, where she helped to raise women's rights issues alongside UN, government and civil society leaders.

Third, we work to increase understanding of poverty and its underlying causes and to inspire our supporters to campaign and lobby with us to change the unfair policies that keep people poor.

Progressio has continued to make our mark in the coalitions of which we are part. We were a prominent member of the Turn up Save Lives campaign which advocated for a 0.7% aid commitment to be enshrined into UK law. Our supporters were committed to the cause, with over 400 of them contacting their MPs asking them to attend the readings that eventually resulted in a campaign win.

As part of the climate coalition, we were able to get our supporters involved with sending David Cameron to the EU2030 climate conference with a strong mandate for leadership; over 300 supporters lobbied the Prime Minister to ensure he fought for the best possible deal in Europe. We were part of a petition handed in to Parliament, with Christian Aid and WWF. Finally, as part of the Action/2015 coalition, we have been able to amplify the work of Progressio and voices of the grassroots communities we work with to build momentum for improved UN Sustainable Development Goals in the run up to the United National General Assembly UNGA working alongside all the agencies involved. In total our supporters took 2,289 awareness-raising actions, including attending events, lobbying MPs and signing petitions.

Our website is a key lobbying and campaigning tool, enabling us to inform and inspire visitors on a wide range of issues, and to reach supporters quickly with urgent mailings or campaigns. In 2014/15, 175,065 people visited our website, a significant increase on last year.

5. Improving the organisation's effectiveness

To support the achievement of these programme objectives, and to operate as effectively as it

can, the strategic framework highlights 12 organisational objectives. The trustees receive reports on progress against these objectives in their quarterly board meetings.

Financial review

Full financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2015 are appended to this report.

Progressio is deeply grateful to all our funders and supporters, small and large, for their ongoing commitment to us, without which none of our work would happen.

Given the difficulties faced by the third sector in general, Progressio's year-end position is good.

Overall income for the year is £5,757,985, slightly up from £5,727,671 in the previous year. The main unrestricted and flexible funding grant continues to be the Department for International Development (DFID) Programme Partnership Arrangement, at £2,025,015, which has been further extended until December 2016.

We received £3.6 million in restricted grants and service delivery contracts, including £2,247,246 from Voluntary Service Overseas (for the ICS programme); £247,230 from Small Voluntary Contributions and Donations; £145,607 from the Global Fund; £7,708 from Comic Relief; £80,307 from United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; £315,462 from Big Lottery Fund; £103,527 from the European Union; £71,811 from British Embassy Small Grants and £81,650 from Multi Partner Trust Fund.

No income was received from legacies this year. Membership and donations from individuals amount to £147,695, a small increase on the previous year. We have invested in new strategically placed funding resources, especially during the upcoming celebration of our 75th anniversary to ensure that this key area of unrestricted income sees incremental growth year on year.

Overall expenditure for this year was £6,108,404, compared to £6,015,546 in 2013/14. 94% of our expenditure was on our charitable objectives (an increase on last year's figure); 5% on fundraising and publicity and 1% on governance. We are delighted to report that activity was of high

quality and our output fulfilled all our contractual obligations to external funders. We were able to do this in the context of challenges faced over the past year such as working in fragile states where continuing uncertainty can threaten delivery. Over the year, we delivered on the bulk of our development worker targets in our power purchase agreement log-frame and, for strategic reasons, completed our programme in Timor-Leste during the early part of the financial year and have now ceased operations.

We have an overall deficit of (£350,419) for the year, made up of a surplus in unrestricted income of £43,606 and a decrease in the movement of our restricted funds held of (£394,025) having expended previous year's restricted funds held for our charitable activities in the year. This is an excellent financial year-end position that was anticipated and planned for by the Board of Trustees, especially given the continuing economic uncertainty and the challenges of securing new income from both unrestricted and restricted funds. We continue to strive for a good balance of both. The year-end figures show that we have increased our unrestricted reserves by £43,606, which is deemed prudent during these difficult economic times over the last period, a situation which is expected to continue. Our restricted funds have decreased in the year by £394,025 due to the delivery of direct programme activity relating to funds held from the previous financial year.

- **Cash flow management**

We have had no issues during the year and we continue to monitor this area carefully to ensure appropriate action is taken early if any issues arise. We closely review our incoming and outgoing funds on a monthly basis to ensure that any unforeseen circumstances are handled swiftly.

- **The donor profile, fundraising and business development**

The diversification of Progressio's income sources is pivotal to our organisational strategy moving forward. Fundraising from the public is being

systematically developed to engage more people. We have implemented new financial guidelines with a view to greater cost recovery to maximise each specific project towards a full cost-recovery model. We are working closely with donors, other international NGOs and local partners to take a thorough examination of our own cost-recovery mechanisms and are seeking to improve this further in the year ahead as the funding climate continues to be very challenging. For the longer-term financial stability of both Progressio and our partners, we have developed our work on new income sources through exploring major donor potential and will continue to work towards initiatives that improve our profile and income portfolio.

- **Reserves policy**

The trustees have examined the charity's requirements for reserves in the light of the main risks to the organisation, and have established a policy whereby the current target for unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be a minimum of four months of expenditure.

Progressio strives to balance the priorities of enabling the organisation to grow and maintaining a necessary level of reserve in order to fulfil contractual obligations. The trustees are pleased with the level of unrestricted reserves taking into account the continuing challenges of the current economic climate. The level of reserves is reviewed by the Board on an annual basis taking into account risks, liabilities and contractual requirements.

- **Risk management**

An annual risk appraisal is submitted to the Board and the register of risks is reviewed and updated each year. Risk analysis is central to management decision making. Risk assessments are part of the ongoing project cycle and the Leadership Team regularly reviews risk at its meetings. The Board is confident that, where necessary, procedures are put in place to mitigate the risks that Progressio might face.

There is a regular programme of internal and external audits that identify risks, assess systems and ensure checks and balances are in place and in the year we have no reported instances of any issues in this area.

- **Investment policy**

Clear calculations have been made on the organisation's contractual liabilities and the reserves level covers these with only a small amount of excess allowing maximum expenditure on charitable activities. Therefore the priority for the trustees is to invest the reserves in a low risk context. In the light of the banking crisis, the trustees and Finance Director are only too aware of the importance of maintaining a low level of risk rather than seeking high financial gain. Progressio therefore looks to invest our funds in short-term secure deposits of up to six months with availability of instant access where deemed appropriate. Progressio also has small balances in both US Dollars and Euros to cover forecast expenditure from restricted external donor funding. The trustees have agreed that the key areas of our low risk Investment Policy have been met during the last year and have agreed no changes in the coming year ahead.

Structure and governance

Progressio is a medium-sized organisation with (at 31 March 2015) 78 employees, 28 full-time equivalent staff in London and 50 in our country offices. It should be noted that this number includes security staff in certain countries, who are essential for risk management.

Our sister agency Progressio Ireland unfortunately was unable to secure sufficient funding to continue and closed in 2014. As had been planned, in Central America, we scaled back support for Progressio Latina, a social enterprise seeking to continue people powered development alongside our vibrant ICS programme in the region.

Staff and management

Staff report to the Board of Trustees. Delegated authorities to the staff are in writing and reviewed periodically. A Leadership Team leads the staff. The team reports to the Board quarterly and works closely with relevant subcommittees.

The Chair of the Board line manages the Chief Executive and provides support, guidance and performance review. The Director of Finance and Administration works closely with the Treasurer and the Finance and Audit Committee.

and the Finance and Audit Committee.

The Leadership Team is made up of the Chief Executive, Director of International Programmes, Director of Finance and Administration, Head of Policy and Director of Public Engagement (who left in December 2014).

The Director of International Programmes manages the country-based staff through sub-regional managers and country representatives. They are responsible for project and development worker assessments, reviews, placements and recruitment, as well as liaison, networking and reporting. They also manage and work closely with the country-based Programme Funding Officers, who assist in the development of projects and finding funding.

Progressio is committed to close and respectful working relationships with partners overseas and with beneficiaries. The country offices have advisory reference groups that include representatives of local organisations and communities.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has the main governance role in Progressio. On 31 March 2015 there were seven members of the Board of Trustees, and three co-opted members (the constitution requires between eight and 14).

Recruitment and Trustees

Board members serve a period of time in line with written documentation. Board members can serve up to a maximum of seven years (12 years if taking on an officer's role) and they are elected or re-elected by the membership at the AGM periodically.

Trustees are nominated to the membership at the AGM by the Board, but trusteeship is open to anyone, in line with a written policy on trustee recruitment. The Chair and any two other Board members must be Catholic. As well as receiving information about Progressio's work and policies and the NCVO 'Good Trustee Guide', trustees have a thorough induction process with Board and staff members.

There are two sub-committees that have terms of reference and report to the main Board at

quarterly meetings.

During the year, the Board recruited five new trustees as part of succession planning and skills renewal. The Finance and Audit Committee is responsible for overseeing the financial security of Progressio, including fundraising. The Officers Committee is responsible for handling any issues of concern to the Board between Board meetings. 'Link' trustees have been appointed, and both programmes and fundraising have their own link trustee to work as an interface with the Board, getting more detail and information on their area than is normally possible in a trustee meeting.

Board meetings

The Board usually holds four meetings a year plus an Away Day jointly with the Leadership Team. This year, the day focused on the new strategy and income generating.

As well as the sub-committees, Board members are encouraged to engage with Progressio's work through Reference Groups. This year, travel abroad by Board members was limited to financial audits because of cost limitations, although we hope to enable more Board members to experience first-hand Progressio's programmatic work.

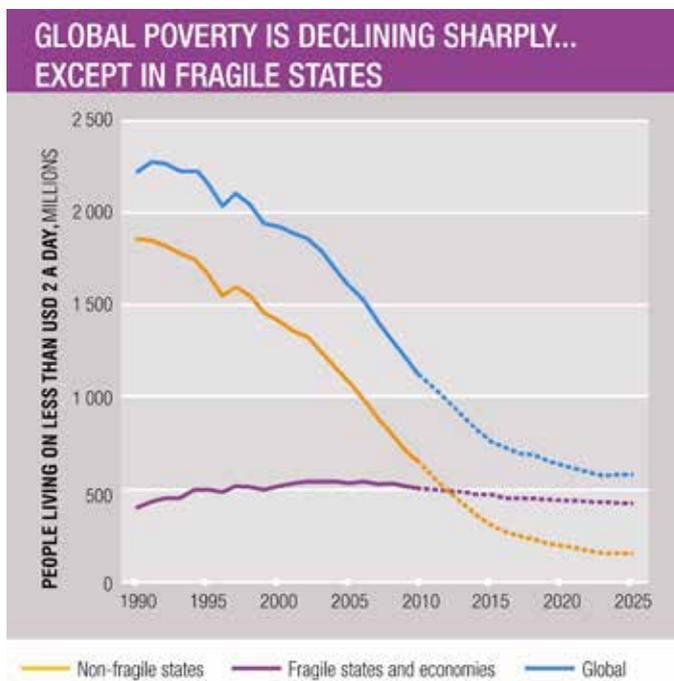
Membership

Another vital part of our governance, and essential to our achievements, is the wider membership. There are around 2,500 members and supporters who are active in supporting our work and campaigns. Some of these are legal members of the Company who have a key decision-making role at the AGM, responsible for the governance measures of electing the trustees, ratifying the Chair, approving the annual report and accounts, and appointing the auditors. In 2014 we held an event, called "Joining the Generations for People Powered Development" that brought together Progressio young adult ICS volunteers and an experienced development worker for a well-attended panel discussion chaired and creative drama to highlight social justice issues in post conflict settings.

Progressio's new people-led strategy

2015-18

As the global community enters 2015 there are some notable post-Millennium successes lifting millions out of poverty, but these are mostly in more stable countries. There are special challenges facing 'fragile and conflict-affected states' such as Yemen, Somaliland and Zimbabwe which appear stuck or are even going backwards (see table below). In these countries gender inequality and violence against women and girls are at their worst.



Focusing on fragile states, a new people-led strategy is needed that:

- Has the active participation of and is led by local citizens and civil society organisations (people-led)
- Seeks to address the complex root causes of poverty and injustice, addressing unfair power structures
- Is tailored to each country's specific needs
- Has a special focus on women's rights and equity

Progressio has a unique heritage and longstanding successful specialist experience in support of civil society organisations pursuing

“Women previously could not speak during public meetings but now they can speak [...] one woman asked the representatives from the Ministry of Health why it took them long to attend to patients at the local clinic.” - A woman member of a new Parish Advocacy Committee, pushing for improved health care in St Pius Donga, Zimbabwe following Progressio and CCJP training in Action for Better Governance.

people-led solutions to transform unfair power structures in the face of some of the most challenging obstacles in the world.

This positions Progressio well to make a substantial contribution in the fragile countries where we work and indeed beyond. Our skill-sharing, young adult volunteering and international policy approach builds on local people's and especially women's capacity and strengthens their voices so they can achieve lasting change for themselves and their whole community.

These are crucial years for the people of fragile states to begin to turn the corner. Progressio works alongside some of the world's poorest and most marginalised people and their organisations who are seeking to transform their own lives. These people are resilient, courageous, resourceful, innovative, and are often making remarkable progress in the face of formidable odds. But alone, they are unlikely to achieve the transformation that is needed. Progressio is committed to work in partnership to strengthen their immensely challenging undertaking.

In response to marginalised people's changing

needs and the shifting context in which we operate we have updated our vision mission and values (see 'About Progressio' page 4 above) and set a new strategic direction for 2015-18 building on our distinctive approach:

- **Rights-based approach to our work:**

Human rights are an essential foundation for our development work. We also draw on Catholic Social Thinking that recognises the importance of human development and dignity of every person, working with people of all faiths and none.

- **Build capacity and share skills:**

strengthen Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and governments to promote the rights of marginalised people, so these communities can engage effectively with institutions to effect change

- Support poor and marginalised people to have a stronger voice and bring their views to influence local, national and international decisions that affect their lives.

Our strategic direction includes:

A tighter geographic focus

Over the next three years Progressio will focus its resources and support on fewer countries where there is a high level of fragility. We will:

- Consolidate and expand our work in Yemen, Somaliland, Zimbabwe and Malawi.
- Complete our transition away from Dominican Republic and Haiti by end March 2016
- Gradually transition our ICS work away from Central America and expand ICS in Africa if we secure ICS2 funding for 2015-18
- Identify and possibly begin work in one or two other African countries near to existing programmes in 2017-18 where there is a high level of poverty and fragility where our work can contribute the most

New strategic goals with a tighter thematic focus

Theme 1: Participatory and Accountable Governance

Goal 1:

Poor and marginalised people actively and effectively participate in and hold to account key institutions to enable them to be transparent, accountable and responsive to the needs of poor and marginalised groups.

. Progressio prioritises gender justice.

Objective 1.1: Local, national and international governments and institutions (both formal and informal) are transparent, accountable and responsive to the needs of poor and marginalised groups and promote and practise gender justice
Objective 1.2: In order to challenge unjust power structures for the realisation of people's rights and gender justice, CSOs are:

- Accountable
- Better equipped to strengthen the voice and influencing skills of marginalised women and men
- Stronger in their own direct influencing



Theme 2: Women's rights

Goal 2: Women take decisions and have control over their sexual and reproductive health, live free from violence and harmful cultural practices.

Theme 3: Sustainable and resilient livelihoods

Goal 3: Poor and marginalised women and men achieve increased income and food security through sustainable, resilient livelihoods

Objective 3: Sustainable farming
Women and men practise sustainable, equitable farming approaches, to achieve stronger, resilient livelihoods

Incorporate and strengthen poor and marginalised communities in Disaster Risk Recovery in agricultural work – hazards, vulnerability, resilience.

Internal priorities and objectives

We will achieve our People Powered Development ambitions over the next three years through the best strategic use of us: our people, skills, knowledge and funding.

- i. We will review the internal structure required to deliver the new strategy. We will design the correct model and implement a scalable structure by April 2016 which can adjust in size to support lower or higher volumes of programme and policy work
- ii. We will transform our income generating including a whole organisation approach to maximise income for People Powered Development building on our strengths, increasing cost recovery and diversifying our income sources:
- iii. We will build our internal people development and capacity setting and achieving high quality standards on our key competencies supporting staff to deliver them e.g. project design, planning and management; funder relationship management;
- iv. We will adopt a new strategic approach to learning and innovation