

Free Press Unlimited annual report 2017



**FREE
PRESS
UNLIMITED**

People deserve to know

PEOPLE DESERVE TO KNOW

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Mission

In our ideal world everyone has access to independent, reliable and timely information. To make this possible, Free Press Unlimited supports media and journalists worldwide.

Our vision is short and to the point: People deserve to know. All over the world.

Our mission stems logically from that. Everyone has the right to independent, reliable and timely information. People need that information to control their living conditions and to make the right decisions.

To that end, press freedom and freedom of information are indispensable. That is why Free Press Unlimited supports local media professionals and journalists, particularly in countries with limited (press) freedom. They are close to their audience and are the best guarantee for a sustainable, professional and diverse media landscape. We enable them to give people access to the information that helps them survive, to develop themselves, and with which they can monitor their governments.

These are our core values:

- **Independent**
- **Inspirational**
- **Inventive**
- **Dedicated**
- **Tailored approach**

Key figures 2017

Highlights

Total income

€ 14,082,197

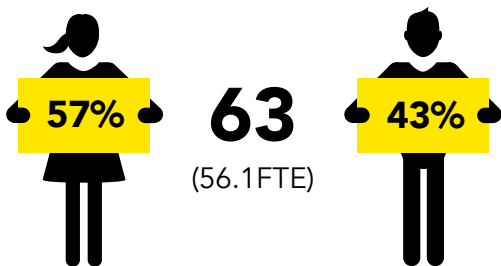
Spent on the organisation's objective

€ 13,303,362

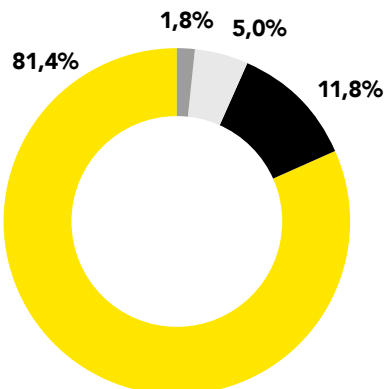
Operating expenses

€ 765,258

Employees

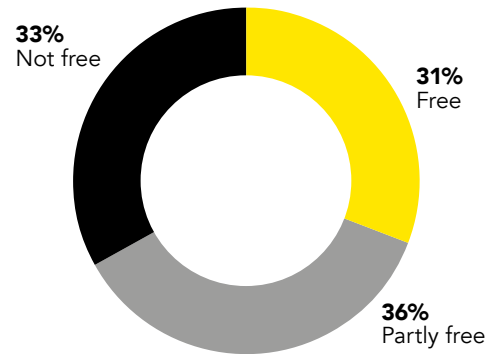


Our income



- Government subsidies € 11,469,865
- Dutch Postcode lottery € 1,655,187
- Other non-profit organisations € 698,290
- Other € 258,855

Press freedom monitor

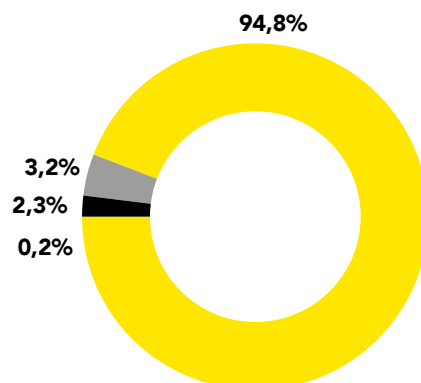


Source: Freedom House 2017

Postcode Lottery Fund for journalists

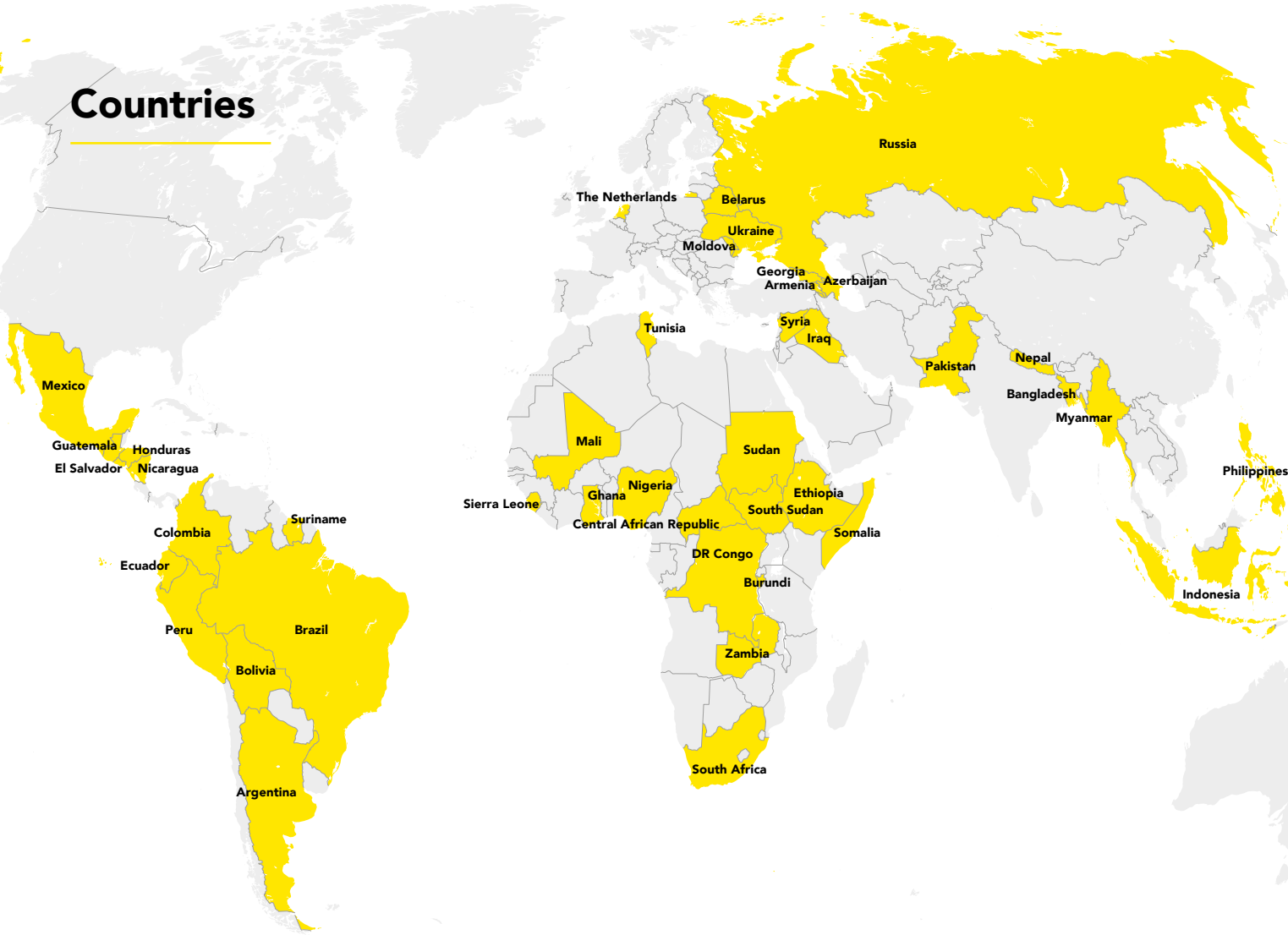
- ✉ 80 applications
- 👤 36 travelling journalists
- 📖 62 publications

Our expenses

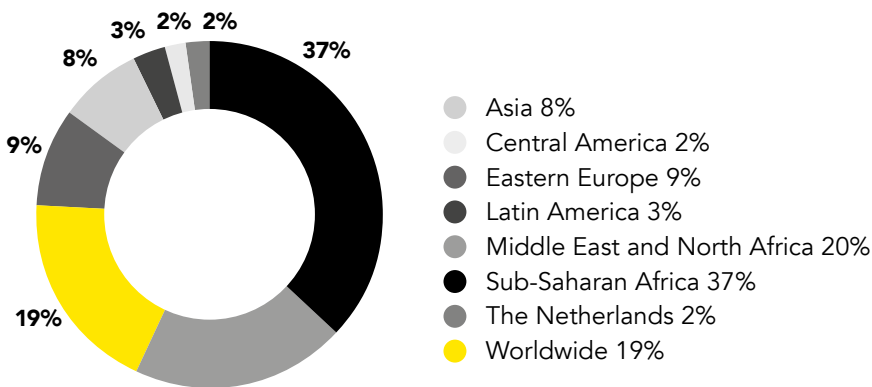


- Organisation's objective € 13,303,362
- Acquisition costs funding € 316,441
- Management & Accounting € 448,817
- Reserve € -30,566

Countries



Geographic distribution of grants



Online reach

Twitter
6,912 followers

Facebook
18,143 likes

LinkedIn
1,033 followers

YouTube
9,876 views

Website
69,823 visitors

Newsletter
4,700 subscribers

Numbers



67 Projects



100 Partners



42 Countries



2,960 Friends

Management Report

In a year in which the media seemed to be in complete crisis, independent local media offer a welcome perspective. They are the often-underestimated factor that can make a difference in people's lives. Courageously and tenaciously they expose abuses and bring stories that matter to their audience. These are the heroes who Free Press Unlimited helped in 2017 to do their work more professionally, safely and financially more sustainable.



Fake news and the omnipotence of social media giants largely determined the media discussions in 2017. What earnings model can help a newspaper or radio survive, now that the bulk of the advertising budgets go to Google and Facebook? How to counter fake news, if the algorithms of those same giants keep people in their filter bubble?

Key role for local media

Media all over the world want to restore the trust of an audience that has difficulty distinguishing reliable reporting from fake news. Free Press Unlimited is convinced that independent local media play a key role in this. They give their audience the information they need to control their own lives and their society. In Zambia, for example, where we train citizen journalists to report the news professionally from their slums. 'Now people come to us because they know that journalists can help solve their problems.'

Cooperation is another part of the solution to the current media crisis. For example, in 2017 renowned Indonesian magazine, Tempo, together with local media, published revealing stories about the exploitation of Indonesian fishermen on Taiwanese ships. Free Press Unlimited insisted on the cooperation and supported the training of local investigative journalists. Thanks to the reports, Indonesia and Taiwan reached an agreement about labour conditions on the fishing boats. That's what journalism should be: professional and independent, journalism that serves its audience and holds the powers that be to account.

Impunity

2017 was unfortunately also the year of authoritarian leaders like Erdogan and Duterte who, like Trump, want to silence independent media. The list of least press free countries no longer consists of just the usual suspects, and in countries like Slovakia and Poland, press freedom deteriorated even more. In 2017, a record number of journalists were thrown in prison, hundreds had to flee their countries and once again, many did not survive their choice of profession. Like the Maltese investigative journalist, Daphne Caruana Galizia, who after long-term threats was killed in a car-bomb attack.

Impunity continues to be an enormous problem: crimes against journalists are seldom seriously investigated, never mind punished. Not only does Free Press Unlimited support journalists in need through its Reporters Respond fund, it also lobbies at all levels for the protection of journalists and punishment of their murderers. Internationally, in 2017, we set up the Civil Society Safety Coalition; by now, twenty organisations have already joined.

Solidarity is crucial

During our Free Press Live event on November 2nd we were proud to realise how many courageous journalists all over the world continue to serve their audience, despite the threats to which they are exposed. For example, the winner of the Most Resilient Journalist Award, TV-journalist Mwape Kumwenda from Zambia. She courageously and tenaciously exposes illegal murders, government corruption and illegal land

expropriation. Her reports have led to investigations, resignations and hundreds of arrests. She is one of our heroes, the journalists we support with heart and soul every day.

Solidarity with these journalists is crucial, if we want to combat impunity. Free Press Unlimited asked media and journalists to openly speak up for the protection of the journalistic profession and to tell stories about violence against journalists worldwide. Already, more than sixty (international) media organisations have promised to do so. We also drew up a petition calling on policy makers to protect journalists. This petition now has more than 190 signatures, both from international organisations and individual journalists.

Organisation

In 2017, much of the work was dominated by three large, multi-year programmes. It is full steam ahead in all seventeen countries of No News is Bad News, our strategic partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Thanks to the five-year support of the Swedish Sida, we could help media in Syria to further professionalise and organise effectively. In addition, the Russian-language News Platform has more than proven its worth: the number of stories that media partners shared and spread among 24 million readers in seven countries, rose from one or two per week to no less than fifty.

In September 2017, Free Press Unlimited unexpectedly became the subject of negative media attention itself. De Correspondent published an article in which Free Press Unlimited was accused of censorship. These unfounded and unjust accusations touched us deeply, right in our heart. The story was mainly based on the vision of vindictive former employees of the Radio Tamazuj radio station. The lecture and the facts from the editors of Radio Tamazuj and from Free Press Unlimited were not or were hardly investigated and included in the article. Free Press Unlimited immediately and firmly denied the allegations and regrets that De Correspondent hardly applied the journalistic principle of an adversarial process. There was no response to our repeated invitation to visit us at our offices. This means that the author concerned has not seen many of the e-mail exchanges and documents, which in fact prove the opposite of all the allegations in the article. Naturally, we immediately informed our donors, Friends and other stakeholders about the publication.

What the article in De Correspondent does show is that our work is complex, particularly when it takes place in a conflict area. Setting up a radio station is not black and white, or something you just do. It takes time, money and energy, from all stakeholders. It asks the utmost from the donors, the Free Press Unlimited team, and last but not least, the radio journalists themselves. The fact that we continue anyway, is because we are fully committed

to our mission and draw motivation from the positive reactions from the audience we reach with the station. Their support and their voice give both the Radio Tamazuj journalists and Free Press Unlimited the strength and courage to go on. Even in difficult times.

Professionalisation

Once again in 2017, Free Press Unlimited made great strides in making its results visible. We look at more than just the hard numbers; the Most Significant Change stories express what our projects mean for journalists. Like the experienced journalist who followed our comprehensive safety training in El Salvador, where his work is becoming increasingly dangerous. 'Now I understand how important it is to protect yourself, so I can help others when we work in conflict areas.' We also experimented with Outcome Harvesting in Somalia and Pakistan. Together with our partners we set out the planned and the not previously envisioned outcomes, with a fantastic result.

In 2017, we put our gender policy into practice worldwide: we worked hard and patiently with our partners on focusing more attention on women in the media and on a stronger position for our female journalists. We also drew up a new, integral safety policy. Basically: how can our partners protect our journalists as effectively as possible against digital, legal, physical and psychosocial dangers? Plus: what can we, as Free Press Unlimited do to guarantee that safety?

Friends and donors

Our income dropped slightly in 2017, mostly due to the termination of several projects. The good news is that, thanks to multi-year funding from donors like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Sida, in 2018 we can continue to build on what we achieved in the past year. We are also delighted with the significant increase in annual contribution from the Dutch Postcode Lottery. In 2017 we welcomed almost 200 new donors – where would we be without our loyal Friends?

Last but not least we would like to express our enormous gratitude to all the staff of Free Press Unlimited. They are the backbone of our organisation – without their patience, cooperation, drive and enormous expertise we would only have achieved a fraction of the results that you can read about in this annual report.

Leon Willems, Director Policy & Programmes
Ruth Kronenburg, Director Operations



Our approach

Free Press Unlimited believes that everyone has the right to reliable information. Access to information, independent media and freedom of expression are crucial to citizens and social organisations that want to combat poverty and inequality in their society.

Conversely, media need these organisations, so they know what is important to their audience. By reporting independently on them, and making public debate possible, media can contribute to positive change in their society. That is our main goal: a diverse, professional information landscape consisting of independent media and journalists that drive (social) change in their society.

What is the best way for us to achieve that goal? What needs to change to create the most diverse and professional media landscape possible? And what intermediate goals can we set for ourselves?

Three crucial goals

Three issues are crucial to ensuring local media can fulfil their important social role. These are our intermediate goals:

1. Journalists must be able to do their work. This requires, among other things, proper legislation that guarantees their safety and the freedom of expression, and that (government) information is accessible.
2. Media and journalists must work for the interests of the population, act as its watchdog. It is therefore necessary that they have the right contacts – and cooperate where appropriate – with other social players, such as media organisations or stakeholder groups. Media must reflect the diversity in society.
3. Media professionals must be properly educated, so they can deliver the quality to which their audience is entitled. Media must be able to be and remain independent of government or major donors.

What is the effect of our work?

Naturally, we want to know if we are doing our work well. We measure that, not only in systematic facts and figures, but also through stories. We interviewed project-participants and asked them: what is the most important

change that this project has brought about in your life? In 2017, among others, we applied this Most Significant Change method to our Speak Up Zambia project. This teaches citizens and journalists show they can monitor the public expenditure of their local government.

Thanks to Most Significant Change, we learned that the citizen journalists from the slums had significantly more influence when they worked for established community radio stations. It earned them more respect and appreciation from their community. It cuts both ways: the radio stations gained an unbelievably rich source of information. The Most Significant Change-stories revealed that the training was twice as important for women. 'The training taught me to never underestimate myself just because I happen to be a woman.'

That is our main goal: a diverse, professional information landscape consisting of independent media and journalists that drive (social) change in their society.

Harvesting Outcomes

In 2017, we experimented with the evaluation method Outcome Harvesting. Together with our Somali partners we investigated the (interim) results of the programme No News is Bad News. They wrote down all the results, presented them to each other, updated them, and together they analysed what the programme had delivered up to that point. This produced an impressive picture.

For instance, prior to 2017, there was no journalism curriculum at universities. Our Somali partner Media INK developed such a curriculum, based on that of UNESCO, together with Hogeschool Windesheim, the universities of Mogadishu and Puntland, among others. No less than five universities (instead of the planned three) now train their students according to this journalism curriculum. This way, the programme contributes to a more professional journalism sector in Somalia and Somaliland.

Our work

Together with 100 partners, we help media and journalists in 42 countries to become more professional and independent. In nine stories we show our approach and the results. And we will give a brief update of our three biggest programmes.

But first we will say something about our fight at the political level: our lobby for the protection of journalists worldwide. Without that protection, everyone's right to information is a farce. The same applies to gender equality: if half of the world's population has no voice in the media, who actually represents them?

Lobbying for the protection of journalists

In 2017, Free Press Unlimited, together with UNESCO and local partners succeeded in forcing governments in countries such as Iraq, Pakistan and Nigeria to fulfil their international obligations as of now: to report on how they intend to prosecute the murderers of journalists. On November 2nd during Free Press Live, Diane Foley, mother of the journalist James Foley who was killed by ISIS, gave an impressive speech against impunity for this type of crime. She delivered an equally impressive speech together

with Free Press Unlimited in the House of Representatives. Two weeks later, D66 successfully submitted a motion for a fund that journalists in need can call upon for legal aid, insurance or (safety) training.

Internationally, we joined forces with about 20 organisations in the Civil Society Safety Coalition. Together, we successfully lobbied for more emphasis on prosecution in the UN Plan for the Safety of Journalists. But we also want to make the link between influencing policy and the work we do on the ground with media organisations and journalists.

New safety policy

In 2017, Free Press Unlimited drew up a new safety policy. We believe that safety is not only about protecting journalists from physical threats. Digital, legal and psychosocial threats also greatly limit the freedom of journalists. So, also on those fronts, they must be on their guard, given instruments with which to protect themselves and receive support from publishers and media organisations that take safety very seriously. Free Press Unlimited wants its partners to establish policy to that end, with a keen eye for the different needs of men and women when it comes to safety. We have fine-tuned our own safety regulations (see Our organisation) and we are even more careful than before in our external communication, to safeguard to the safety of our partners, programmes and employees.



Gender equality in practice

In 2017, we worked hard with our partners to promote gender equality, both in media organisations and in the content that media produce. Partners in countries like Mali, Somalia, Nepal and Syria systematically recorded the extent to which women were represented in newspapers and radio programmes. And in what role: as housewife or as economics specialist?

In Nepal, media partner Freedom Forum publishes a gender media monitoring report every three months and discusses it with representatives from different media. One of the most remarkable results of this was that the absolute laggard in the rankings at the end of 2016, used the most female sources in the first quarter of 2017. In DR Congo, one of our partners put together a guide of more than 4,000 female experts who can be consulted by Congolese media.

Three major programmes

Thanks to the multi-year support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Swedish Sida, we can execute three major programmes that will make a (long-term) difference to the lives of millions of people. Sida has made a five-year commitment to the **professionalisation of Syrian media** through Free Press Unlimited and Syrian media organisations. We describe the 2017 results in one of the nine stories.

In **No News is Bad News**, in our five-year Strategic Partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with the European Journalism Centre (EJC) we support media in seventeen countries. In this second year of the programme year, inevitably, the results are minimal in war-torn countries such as the Central African Republic

(CAR) and Burundi. We are extremely proud of our partners who continue to try to achieve the programme goals in these difficult circumstances. For example, the 11 radio stations that we support in CAR, play an important role in conflict prevention and reconciliation.

This is balanced out by the success story of our partner BNNRC in Bangladesh. BNNRC actively brings social organisations and media together in a platform. In 2017, the organisation trained 13 Dalit-men and 23 women, 10 of whom were Dalit, from community radio stations to report on the problems of disadvantaged groups. The broadcasts should result in concrete improvements. For example, if a journalist makes an item about domestic violence, at the same time a talk show is organised with victims, representatives of women's groups and the local police on measures to prevent these practices.

The **Russian-language News platform** that Free Press Unlimited established last year, doubled its potential reach in 2017 from 20 million to 40 million people. Staggering numbers, but the platform also serves readers in 7 countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Russia. Around 40 media professionals learned to deal better with a public that is accustomed to getting their news and information via social media. Together they created more than 1,200 stories that found their way to readers and viewers throughout the region.

A central editorial team coordinates and supports the exchange of stories, including data analyses and infographics - things that often cannot be funded by financially constrained media. Their stories are catching on to such an extent that media are translating them to national languages of audiences they serve.

Thanks to the multi-year support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Swedish Sida, we can execute three major programmes that will make a difference, also long term, to the lives of millions of people.

Our work in **nine stories**

1. **Future for Bengali radio stations**

Community radio stations are the only source of information for the millions in Bangladesh who are illiterate. But the radios to struggle from donation to voluntary contribution: they are uncertain of their existence. At least, until recently. Thanks to lobby by BNNRC and Free Press Unlimited, the radio stations may broadcast advertisements so financial independence is moving within their reach. Good news for all the listeners who are kept up-to-date and are given a voice, thanks to these radio stations.

News and soap operas in rural areas

In December 2017, the Bengali Ministry of Information ratified a new law, allowing community radio stations to sell 10 per cent of their broadcasting time (usually about 2 hours). Using advertising revenues, the radio stations will soon be able to finance their own studios and equipment and employ staff. A milestone for our partner Bangladesh NGO Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC). Free Press Unlimited has been supporting BNNRC since 2008, also during its lobby for advertising broadcasting time. Together we paved the way for the current network of 18 local radio stations, spread over Bangladesh.

Thanks in part to BNNRC and Free Press Unlimited, dozens of women and men in remote areas have been trained as journalists in recent years. They now make radio reports about matters that are important to the people in their own environment. This is crucial in a country where state media focus on the capital and 160 million people are unable or hardly able to read and write. The local radios report on health care, women's rights and agricultural techniques, but also broadcast music programmes and soap operas. And for children who cannot attend school, they also provide English lessons.

Saving lives during disasters

Just how important the survival of community radio stations is, became clear last summer when millions of people in Northern Bangladesh were hit by huge floods. Thanks to 5 local radio stations that continuously broadcast for 23 consecutive hours, the victims were





not deprived of news. The broadcasters stationed more than 40 reporters with local disaster teams and authorities, so they could inform their listeners immediately. For some time before, all 18 community radio stations were trained by BNNRC in fast and adequate reporting during disasters.

A completely different example is that of the 9 radio stations that in 2017 helped break persistent taboos on, for example, family planning. In this broadcast they discussed contraceptives, sex education for young people and organised 'courtyard meetings' during which local authorities told newlywed couples where they could go for help with family planning. Listeners could call in or join in with many programmes via text messaging.

The new policy for community radio stations will contribute to the independence of existing radio

stations. The law also makes room for the creation of more radio stations, so that the network can spread itself over the entire countryside of Bangladesh. In 2018, Free Press Unlimited and BNNRC, will develop a strategy to help the radio stations make the most of the new opportunities.

Partner since: 2008

Donor: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Contribution: € 110,000

Collaboration enhances the safety of Iraqi journalists

2.



On 26 December 2016, Iraqi female journalist Afrah Shawqi was kidnapped by armed men from her house, shortly after she published an article about armed groups in Iraq. For Free Press Unlimited this was the immediate reason for bring together international and Iraqi civil organisations and journalists. Together they want to expose the ongoing crimes against journalists in Iraq.

Shawqi is living proof of the power of solidarity. She was freed after 9 days, specifically thanks to ‘support from the population, solidarity and political pressure,’ says the journalist. Often, it doesn’t end this well. In the few months between May and November 2017, 3 journalists were murdered, and another 3 reporters attacked. Prosecution of the perpetrators is a rare thing in this country. In the past eight years, Iraq has continuously been at number 1 or 2 on the Global Impunity Index of the Committee to Protect Journalists.

Iraqi government takes the first steps to stop violence

To encourage the Iraqi government to take action against this impunity, media, civil society organisations and politics must form a united front. That is not easy in the extremely divided Iraqi society. Still, Free Press Unlimited and UNESCO booked an important lobby success in 2017. As a member of the United Nations, Iraq is obliged to make known how many journalists

have been murdered in its country every year. And what judicial action has been taken to find the perpetrators. Until 2017, Iraq had in fact never complied.

On 3 May, Free Press Unlimited, UNESCO and the International Federation of Journalism organised an event in Baghdad on safety and impunity. Representatives from the government, civil society organisations and media discussed how together they could break the silence about crimes against journalists. Millions of Iraqis were able to follow the event live via 8 TV channels. Sensitive to so much media attention, in that same month, the Ministry of the Interior published statistics on the number of journalists murdered. It was finally brought to light that since 2006 – according to the ministry – at least 125 journalists were murdered in Iraq.

Solidarity is crucial

This report is a crucial step in the fight against impunity: if the murders of journalists are brushed under the carpet, the murderers will never be punished. Free Press Unlimited has now been asked, together with civil society organisations, to advise the government: what is the best way for them to deal with individual cases of crimes against journalists? And what will it take to increase the safety of journalists? A difficult task, because many organisations are strongly divided. So, we will also continue to organise more media solidarity and joint action against impunity. That solidarity is a prerequisite for the effective protection of journalists.

Start project: 2017

Donor: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Contribution: € 60,000

3. **Safety training** in Central America

What do you need to know and be able to do as a journalist in violent countries? That is what media professionals from Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua learned in 2017 during our safety training. Free Press Unlimited invests worldwide in this type of training. Because safety - physical, digital and psychological - is a basic condition for independent journalism.

Looking for cover when bullets fly over your head, coping with a kidnapping and completing a long march through hostile territory with heavy equipment on your back: it's like a military exercise. But the Central American journalists didn't carry a gun during the training we organised in El Salvador, just a camera.

Breathe calmly

The participants learn to prepare themselves well; to think about where they are going and to distinguish safe from unsafe terrain. The right equipment, such as GPS, maps and a medical kit, is also important. Last but not least, the trainers pay a lot of attention to psychological preparation. Training in mental resilience during emergency situations is really not a luxury in these countries.

Alex Cruz, a journalist in Guatemala, knows that all too well. While filming gangs extorting minibus drivers, he was backed into a corner, had a gun put to his head and was robbed of his equipment. Alex lived to tell the story: during an intense simulation training he had learned not to panic. That saved him that night.

Trauma

Some journalists go out every night to report on the bloody tracks left by drug gangs and death squads. Almost without exception, they themselves are traumatised. An extensive extortion industry is active in Central America. Drug gangs routinely infiltrate journalistic organisations to get information. So, journalists leave home with the question: which life-threatening risks am I taking today to report the news?

Knowledge can be life-saving for these journalists. Drug gangs use a special language and stick to specific codes and signs. If you don't know them, you are in immediate danger. If you want to enter an area run by a drug gang, you need to know who to talk to. What do you do if you are approached for information via social media? How do you deal with online threats, with shifts in the power of the cartels? The training also attempts to give answers to these types of questions.

Journalists in Central America work under extreme pressure, sometimes seven days a week. That can cause extreme behaviour that impacts the quality of their journalism. Surrounded by violence, they become edgy loners. For that reason, our safety training also works on self-insight, calmness and a better work-life balance. That too is a prerequisite for being able to deliver reliable news every time. News that matters to their readers, listeners and viewers.

Start project: 2016

Donor: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Contribution: € 60,000



4.

Indonesian investigative journalism exposes exploitation

In the past, the Indonesian media's main fear was censorship. Now their biggest challenge is to remain independent in a society where every stakeholder demands attention to their own agenda. For 46 years, Tempo has been the only independent publisher in Indonesia to publish investigative stories. Even during the Suharto regime, the weekly magazine and digital platform always managed to maintain its role of fierce watchdog.

Tempo doesn't bring just any news; it's always 'the story behind the story'. They do so excellently, but the weekly also misses stories that are relevant to many citizens, because they happen far from the capital. Together with Free Press Unlimited, they therefore organised a training programme in 2017 for investigative journalists from local and national media from all over Indonesia.

Of the ten nominated proposals, six remained after they were pitched to a jury of prominent journalists. They received intense training in investigative journalism and four or five months of personal guidance from a senior investigative journalist. They also worked actively with organisations like Greenpeace Indonesia that have unique sources and contacts. Campaigning, discussions on Facebook and parties in dialogue with each other... it's all part of the training programme. That is how investigative journalism brings about real change.

Slave labour on fishing ships

One of the stories brought to light that over 40,000 Indonesians on board of Taiwanese fishing ships work

as slaves. They work more than twenty hours a day, get very little to eat and have no clean drinking water. The men are beaten, sometimes to death if they work too slowly. They must also carry out repairs to the ship under water without an oxygen tank. The Indonesians earn much less than was promised by the illegal recruitment agencies and are only paid their minimal salary afterwards – so they won't run away. The recruitment agency gives them false papers, and because they are not registered for work anywhere, they are uninsured and are not protected against abuse.

With help from the Taiwanese The Reporter, Tempo exposed these injustices at sea with hard evidence. Within a few days of publication, the Indonesian





government and national police created a working group to close the gaps in the system that made this exploitation possible. They also demanded better treatment of Indonesian employees in Taiwan. After high-level talks between Indonesian and Taiwanese authorities, officials were arrested, civil servants fired, and regulations and supervision tightened.

With these types of investigative stories, Tempo lays a crucial foundation for professional, critical and independent journalism in Indonesia. This is also demonstrated by the Pulitzer Prize 2017 for the Panama Papers research team, of which Tempo was a part. Wahyu Dhyatmika, managing editor at Tempo: 'We attach great importance to our independence, because

our main reason for existing is to serve the public and thus build a more just society.'

Partner since: 2013

Donor: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Contribution: € 110,000

5.

Young **journalistic watchdog** in Guatemala

Crimes against journalists combined with a shortage of funding made it difficult to publish stories about corruption and impunity in Guatemala. At least, for media that don't bow to meddling investors who have little affinity with freedom of expression. Digital news platform Nómada is one such shining example of independent investigative journalism.

Nómada wants to enable Guatemalans to hold the political and business elite to account. With powerful stories it exposes corruption and misappropriation issues. Nómada is innovative: it makes many multimedia productions and initiated the Latin American feminist women's magazine Volcánica. In 2017, with the support of Free Press Unlimited, Nómada published 24 research articles and blogs on transparency, justice and impunity. The quality is high, and the research is thorough; Nómada won first place in the National Prize for Journalism in Guatemala.

Transparency around elections

In July, for example, Nómada revealed how conservative parties in the election committee of the House of Representatives tried to put the High Electoral Council offside. This council was installed in 2015 in response to the population's demand for more transparency in the electoral process. Thanks to the secret recordings that Nómada published, the High Electoral Council was able to intervene and the conspiring parliamentarians were called to account. For example, Nómada was able to secure openness surrounding the 2019 elections for the time being.

Journalism is also a risky business in Guatemala. The bitter downside of more openness is an increase in threats and violence against journalists. In 2017 alone, eight journalists were killed. Nómada also experienced the downside of its success. In 2017, the website was hacked and blocked, and the private tweets of the chief editor ended up on the street. With financial support from Free Press Unlimited, Nómada was able to take a number of safety measures, such as bullet-proof glass, an armoured car, extra security for the website and training in digital security protocols.

Beer and pizza

With its bold approach, Nómada attracts 350,000 visitors to its website every month: mostly young people, but also politicians, decision-makers and CEOs. Videos and interactive productions are viewed more than 150,000 times a month. After 3 years, Nómada has its own audience of mostly millennials, with whom it regularly talks during informal 'beer & pizza nights'. It also organises discussion evenings on controversial issues such as abortion, for which Nómada brought 250 readers together in 2017. Also, the platform directly involves its readers in the topics on which it publishes. Furthermore, the events are also a welcome source of income for Nómada and part of its sustainable business strategy to not only remain professional and appealing, but also independent.

Partner since: 2016

Donor: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Contribution: € 25,000



6.

Online platforms for whistle-blowers

All over the world you find governments, large corporations or criminal gangs who sweep incriminating information under the carpet. Since 2017, whistle-blowers in Nigeria and Indonesia have been able to share information safely and anonymously with the press via two online platforms. After all, for investigative journalists and their audience, it is crucial that people dare to open their mouths about abuses.

Independent media must be able to expose corruption and abuse of power. But what if sources are afraid to say anything because they have been threatened with violence or legal action? In 2013, Free Press Unlimited

set up a secure online platform in the Netherlands for those whistle-blowers: Publeaks, which has already generated more than 200 revelations. In 2015, a platform followed a country where unsafe communication can be life-threatening: Mexicoleaks. Free Press Unlimited used this experience and together with local media, developed two new platforms in Nigeria and Indonesia in 2017.

Nigeria

In November 2017, Nigeria got its own whistle-blower platform Leaks.ng. And it was not an unnecessary luxury: in Nigeria you can be prosecuted if your leaked information is labelled as incorrect. A coalition of seventeen media and social organisations, brought together by Free Press Unlimited, set up the platform. Leaks.ng is managed by the Coalition for Whistle-blower and Press Freedom (CWPF), which actively works for whistle-blowers in Nigeria. It lobbied intensively for a new law for the better protection of whistle-blowers. The bill has now been approved by the House of Representatives and has also passed the Senate's first reading.

Indonesia

A month after the launch of Leaks.ng, ten newspapers, radio and TV channels and online news sites, together with 5 social organisations and Free Press Unlimited, launched the platform IndonesiaLeaks. Our partner PPMN coordinates the platform, where renowned media such as Tempo, The Jakarta Post and CNN Indonesia work together with organisations such as Indonesia Corruption Watch and Greenpeace Indonesia. The fact that IndonesiaLeaks meets a strong need, was obvious when the first useful tips came in immediately after the launch. Director Nawawi Baharudin of Coalition Partner Legal Aid Institute for the Press: 'In the past, many whistle-blowers who went straight to the police with proof of corruption, worried for their own safety.' Thanks to IndonesiaLeaks, that is a thing of the past.

Sharing expertise

Free Press Unlimited plays a crucial role in the development of these platforms. We bring media together, give tailored advice and train them in digital security. We learned from Mexicoleaks that the building of local capacity is essential for the sustainable survival of such a platform. We also insist on and share our expertise in conducting a PR campaign, so that potential whistle-blowers can rest assured they can share their information safely. In 2018, we will be expanding the current leak platforms with a mobile version and we will explore the possibilities for platforms in countries such as Pakistan and Tunisia.

Project since: 2013

Donor: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and member contributions Publeaks





7.

Radio Tamazuj: on the path to independence in exile

In recent years, Radio Tamazuj has become a household name in South Sudan, a country that earned its independence in 2011 after years of civil war with Sudan. Since December 2013 another horrific conflict is being fought out, and as a result, the human rights of the South Sudanese have deteriorated enormously. Up to now, 2 million people have fled the country and the role of Radio Tamazuj is more important than ever.

In 2011, Free Press Unlimited launched Radio Tamazuj from its South Sudanese office, Free Voice South Sudan. Radio Tamazuj was the logical follow-up to the successful program, Radio Referendum, which has been broadcast via Radio Dabanga (Sudan's only independent radio station) since 2010.

Exiled from South Sudan

In the early years, the brand-new radio focused on the border areas between Sudan and South Sudan, where groups of people were left isolated and marginalised after the country's split. In 2013, when a new (civil) war broke out in South Sudan, the Radio Tamazuj editorial team decided to expand its broadcasting to reach all South Sudanese. It quickly grew into one of the most important players in the media field of this violence-stricken country. But the South Sudan government that had embraced Radio Tamazuj prior to the outbreak of the war, began to appreciate independent reporting less and less.

In South Sudan, the state of freedom of expression quickly deteriorated. The security services intimidated, tortured and murdered journalists; it became impossible to continue to carry out independent and uncensored reporting in South Sudan. Radio Tamazuj and its staff, like many other South Sudanese who fight for the truth, were forced to leave their country. Since 2015, they have been working in exile from a neighbouring country.

The Radio Tamazuj reach

It wasn't easy, but the team, which has grown strongly in the past three years, is proud that they have never skipped a radio broadcast, despite the circumstances.

	July 2014	December 2017
Number of staff members	9	16
Number of editorial staff	9	13
Female/male ratio	2:7	7:9
% Women in leadership positions	0%	42%
Nationality of editor-in-chief	American	South Sudanese
Number of Freelance correspondents in South Sudan	3	17

Every day, 500,000 South Sudanese listen via the short wave to Radio Tamazuj, which also reaches the war zones, where all (FM) radio and telephone networks have been off the air for years. A network of undercover journalists in South Sudan provides daily news for the Radio Tamazuj journalists to make their broadcasts. This news also appears on the website and social media channels in two languages: Arabic and English.

Our joint, ambitious goal: to make Radio Tamazuj independent as quickly as possible.

Working in exile

As well as missing home and loved ones, working in exile brings various problems. For example, the South Sudanese government has labelled Radio Tamazuj as a hostile medium since its involuntary departure in 2015 - especially since the radio station broadcasts messages that are displeasing to the government. The South Sudanese security service is trying to intimidate Radio Tamazuj and its employees in any way it can - digitally and physically - and make it impossible to broadcast. For example, in July 2017 South Sudan blocked the Radio Tamazuj website. Thanks to the Free Press Unlimited digital expert, who gave the editorial department technical advice, many people were still able to visit the website via a detour.

Due to the security protocols that the editorial staff are forced to uphold, hardly anyone comes to visit them.

This isolation is balanced by the enormous involvement displayed by the South Sudanese through Radio Tamazuj's social media channels. This is a daily reminder to the journalists of the importance of their work.

	January 2016	December 2017
Website	260,000 visitors per month	1.2 million visitors per month
Facebook English + Arabic	25,192 likes	79,000 likes; 1,000 new likes per month
Facebook Diaspora English	did not exist	18,000 likes
Twitter English + Arabic	9,700 followers	18,000 followers
SoundCloud	82 followers	250 followers, 2,000 listeners per month
WhatsApp	did not exist	Over 1,000 incoming messages per day

Professionalisation on the path to independence

Organisationally, it is not easy to run a professional radio station out of the blue in another country. Free Press Unlimited supports Radio Tamazuj both financially and operationally with targeted training, varying from editorial management to investigative journalism, of course without influencing their independent editorial system, they work sovereignly under their own Editorial Charter. In July 2017, Free Press Unlimited and the editorial staff of Radio Tamazuj held extensive discussions about the future of Radio Tamazuj. Free Press Unlimited supports Radio Tamazuj with quality improvement and revenue models, to help the radio station on its path to independence. Our common goal is that Radio Tamazuj will be independent and self-sufficient from 2020 onwards. At the request of the editors, we are taking plenty of time for this.

In 2017, Radio Tamazuj put together a new editorial charter, and revised the complaints procedure and a code of conduct. The team has a South Sudanese editor-in-chief, which means the entire editorial team is made up of local staff. The editors also want to progress quickly in terms of content. To help combat the shockingly high level of illiteracy in South Sudan (27%), the editors want to make more educational programs. This way, with the support of Free Press Unlimited, it is working hard on a professional and independent Radio Tamazuj that can continuously provide reliable information to the people of South Sudan.

Project since: 2011

Donor: anonymous, due to safety risks



Women
conquer
Somali
journalism

8.

Journalism is traditionally a male stronghold in Somalia. Our partner Media INK succeeded in cracking this with targeted training and an unorthodox approach. Much to the satisfaction of female journalists and their male chief editors.



If women are working at a media company in Somalia, they are expected to concentrate only on entertainment. Certainly not politics and economics, never mind the position and rights of Somali women. Often, the employment conditions for female journalists are downright bad. There are no Ladies' toilets, maternity leave does not exist, and women are paid less than their male colleagues.

Positive discrimination

Our partners Media INK and Media Association of Puntland (MAP) want to professionalise Somalian journalism and strive for more equality between men and women. In Somalia, there is less worthwhile training available to

women than to men. For that reason, Media INK introduced a simple but effective rule: if journalists want to follow a training course, at least one female colleague must participate. But how do you actually get women to those trainings?

Media INK's first step was to talk to the editors. However, once they were convinced, a new obstacle presented itself: the families and partners of the women. They did not always see the importance of women in the media and were concerned for the safety of their daughters and wives. The employees of Media INK decided to take an unorthodox approach. They telephoned or made home visits to the family, did their best to convince them and arranged separate accommodation for the women during training. In many cases they got their way: ultimately, the female journalists were allowed to participate.

And it works!

It looks like Media INK's approach works! Chief editors now take the initiative themselves, employee more women and send them to the training sessions. When they began in 2012, only a handful of women attended the trainings, but by September 2017, 35 percent of the participants were women. And in the same year, nine female journalists from 8 radio stations were promoted to a leading position on their editorial team. Also, 13 of the 33 Somali radio stations included maternity leave in their personnel policy.

Fatima Yusuf Said, programme maker and camera woman at WAABERI TV: 'It wasn't long before my boss asked me to train colleagues too. We now make more appealing programmes, which means we are better able to convey important information. I gained more confidence and now supplement my meagre salary with assignments from other organisations.'

Media INK took the first step, but it is the female journalists themselves who convince their environment of their knowledge and expertise. It is their voices on the radio and their faces on TV, which can play an important role in encouraging the public debate on a more equal Somali society.

Partner since: 2011

Donor: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Dutch Embassy in Somalia

Contribution: € 237,700

9.

Independent, ethical journalism in Syria

How can you, as a journalist, continue to report independently if war is raging around you, family members have been murdered and friends have been arrested? If in your country, Syria, critical reporting is not common anyway? Free Press Unlimited, together with Syrian media organisations, took up the challenge: how can we professionalise journalism?

'I thought: how can I train these people? Some were traumatized, others no longer trust anyone. And they were completely unaccustomed to anyone bothering with their articles.' Mona Abdelmaksoud is one of the trainers who taught Syrian journalists for Free Press Unlimited about the benefits of ethical, reliable reporting: regaining the trust of your audience.

Vehicle for propaganda

For a long time, media in Syria were controlled by the regime or regional powers that be. Propaganda was the norm and professional journalism virtually absent. The result: Syrians lost their faith in journalism. The Syrian journalists trained by Mona also saw the world as cruel and dishonest, and journalism as a vehicle for propaganda. It took a lot of patience and empathy, for Mona and the other trainers to convince the journalists. 'Write for your audience. Do not report on the war, make stories about the people in that war instead.' The journalists were able to make the switch: they continuously ask for feedback and write heartfelt stories.

The training is part of an extensive learning programme with which Free Press Unlimited supports the development of a professional and well-organised Syrian

media sector. Together with Syrian initiators, we set up an ethical code of conduct (now signed by 40 media organisations) in recent years and contributed to the establishment of the Syrian Journalists Association (SJA).

Tallying reports

In 2017, 267 journalists and media managers from 8 young media organisations - inside and outside Syria - received training in, among other things, investigative journalism and safety. But also in matters such as fundraising, so they can safeguard their independence. Free Press Unlimited began systematically tallying news coverage in several Syrian media, based on about 25 criteria. Which topics are being written about? Are the messages not too one-sided? Are women sufficiently covered? With these insights, media organisations can improve their own reporting.

"Write for your audience. Do not report on the war, make stories about the people in that war instead."

The SJA publishes monthly reports on the violence against Syrian media and (citizen) journalists. Their shocking figures - nearly 1,000 acts of violence against journalists, of which more than 400 murders since the uprising - are picked up by international media such as Al Jazeera and spread regionally and internationally. In 2017, the SJA became a member of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). This not only improves its reputation enormously, but also means that it can demand more international attention for the position of journalists and independent media in Syria.

Despite the difficult and constantly changing conditions, media organisations continue to take big and small steps towards the joint long-term goal: a reliable and independent press in Syria. Or, as one Syrian journalist says: 'Our real enemy is journalism that is neither professional nor ethical.'

Project since: 2014

Donor: Sida

Contribution: € 2,200,000



Our stakeholders

Local media organisations are our most important stakeholders. We set up countless projects and programmes with them that give millions of people access to independent and reliable information. We are extremely proud of our loyal Friends and the collaboration with donors, both big and small, who have supported us over the years through thick and thin.

To create a broad financial basis for Free Press Unlimited's work, we employ three fundraisers: two for international donors and one for private donors (our Friends). In 2017 it became clear again that raising funds for media projects in developing countries is not easy. Fortunately, many institutional funds and major donors are also convinced of the importance of access to independent, reliable information. In 2017, the success ratio of our international fundraising was around the same percentage as in 2016: about 40% of our applications were approved.

Our partners

In 2017, we had 100 partners in 42 countries all over the world. In November, Free Press Unlimited again investigated how satisfied our partners are with our work. Predominantly satisfied, is the conclusion. They specifically appreciate the respectful, helpful and expert communication with Free Press Unlimited. Many partners would like more support with their plans for financial sustainability. To this end, Free Press Unlimited has now put several initiatives in motion. This year even more partners made the effort to complete the survey: 66 percent as opposed to 40 percent in 2016.

Our donors

What more could we as an organisation wish for than reliable, collaborative partners who understand what the complex work of Free Press Unlimited is all about and are willing to finance it? We have those partners; something we are happy with and proud of. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs is by far our largest donor and our strategic partner in the comprehensive *No News is Bad News* programme. The Ministry is also financing the impactful Russian-language News Platform. The Swedish Development Cooperation Agency Sida joined our important Syria programme for 5 years at the end of 2016. Long-term funding that makes it possible to (re) build an independent, professional news sector in a country where this is more necessary than ever.



One of our most loyal supporters is the Dutch Postcode Lottery - and that is mutual. Free Press Unlimited greatly appreciates the fact that, two years ago, the Dutch Postcode Lottery has decided to fund our organisation for another five years. This gives us the time needed to build an independent, reliable news service in countries without free press or conflict areas. We are also extremely pleased with their substantial increase in the annual contribution for our work. We now use this contribution to finance the Postcode Lottery Fund for journalists, with which we published no less than 62 articles, radio broadcasts and TV documentaries in 2017. This fund has been making special foreign reports for Dutch journalists possible since 2009 – and since 2016, also in-depth, critical investigative journalism abroad.

Friends and other supporters

Free Press Unlimited counts itself lucky with its 2,960 loyal Friends, who not only support us financially, but also critically share their thoughts with us. In 2017 we invited them to our offices for the second edition of Friends Live. Our staff told stories about the role of photography in Iraq, local radio stations in the Central African Republic and the training of female citizen journalists from Zambian slums. Once again, our Friends were very impressed by our partners. Other Dutch people also find our work worthwhile. In 2017, we received a total of € 51,208 in donations from private donors, a drop of 3.7 percent.

Storytelling

It is not always easy to explain our work. That is why we are pleased our communications team is working at full strength. In 2017, they concentrated on increasing the brand recognition of Free Press Unlimited and involving more people in our mission. Successfully too: we gained almost 200 new Friends. One of the success factors is telling inspiring stories about our work; in 2017 we trained our programme staff to recognise, gather and tell these stories.

We gathered a total of 59 stories, 31 of which we have published, in the English newspaper No News is Bad News, among others. In addition, we produced a new introduction brochure, a promotional Friends brochure and a fact sheet explaining our work, purely in numbers. Our monthly e-mail newsletter was sent to almost 3,900 Dutch-language subscribers, the English version has 800 subscribers.

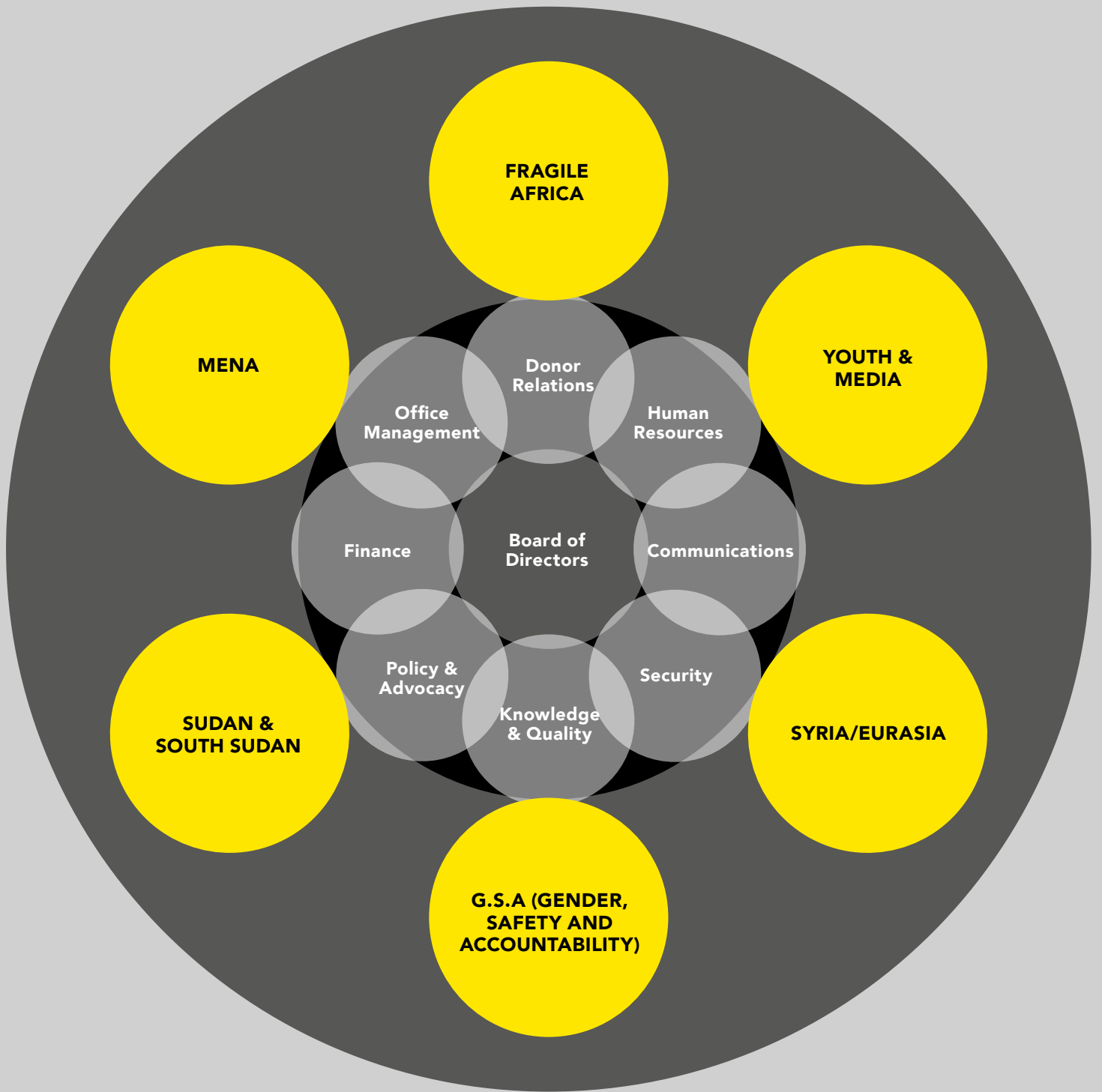
Involving of our audience

The use of our social media contributes enormously to greater involvement with Free Press Unlimited. On Twitter, the number of followers grew by more than 1,140 to 6,900 and we also made over 2,800 new friends on Facebook (totalling more than 18,000). On LinkedIn we expanded our network by nearly 200 people to over 1,000. The YouTube videos from Free Press Unlimited were viewed about as often as in 2016 (9,870 times). Only the number of visitors to our website fell sharply, but thanks to its optimisation, visitors spend an average of 30 percent more time on the website.

One of the success factors is telling inspiring stories about our work

We received extensive media attention during our two annual events. On 3 May, the Day of the Press Freedom, together with other organisations, we organised another Festival of the Free Word. Here, we presented the Freedom of the Press report, looked at the decline in press freedom all over the world, and we honoured Jeroen Oerlemans, the journalist who was shot to death in 2016, with an exhibition of his photos.

As we mentioned previously, our main guest during Free Press Live on 2 November was Diane Foley. No less impressive than her speech was the video in which Rappler CEO, Maria Ressa, explained how difficult and risky the work of journalists in the Philippines has become. To resounding applause from the attending 250 journalists and policy makers, four women received the Free Press Awards 2017: the Zambian Mwape Kumwenda, Marina Ansiforova from the Ukraine, and the Dutch duo, Maartje Wegdam and Ariadne Asimakopoulos.



Our organisation

Free Press Unlimited does not believe in a strong hierarchical structure. Our organisation is structured like a network, in which all six project teams and seven support departments are closely connected.

Team leaders manage the project teams (yellow in the organogram) in the performance of their duties. The size of the teams varies from 1.8 FTE in Youth & Media to 11 FTE in the big Sudan team, which also includes the staff of Radio Dabanga. The 7 support departments (light grey in the organogram) keep the organisation operational and future-proof.

Board

Free Press Unlimited is a foundation with Supervisory Board model as our governance form. The Board of Directors of Free Press Unlimited consists of two directors: Leon Willems (general) and Ruth Kronenburg (operational). They answer to the Supervisory Board and are advised via the management meeting. Free Press Unlimited follows the remuneration scheme for directors of Charity Netherlands and the Wijffels Code. Leon Willems earns € 99,371 gross per annum and Ruth Kronenburg € 89,248 gross per year. This includes holiday payment. Their unpaid ancillary activities are special advisor of the Global Forum for Media Development (Leon Willems) and member of the advisory committee of Pro Bono Connect (Ruth Kronenburg).

Management meeting

As a result of a critical examination carried out together with all the employees of our fast-growing organisation, in 2017, we replaced the MT meeting with a strategic management meeting. This is a quarterly meeting of the directors, the team leaders and the Communications and Knowledge & Quality coordinators. All team leaders and coordinators meet up every month. They discuss and coordinate operational matters that are important for the entire organisation and support each other as managers.

Supervisory Board

The Supervisory Board is ultimately responsible for Free Press Unlimited. It keeps an eye on the performance of the organisation and intervenes if it finds it necessary. The Supervisory Board is responsible for the overall strategy of the organisation and makes decisions based on annual budgets and reports. In 2017, it met four times. It discussed the annual report and the annual financial report, the 2018 budget and the organisation strategy.

The term for members is four years and can in principle be extended for a maximum of three times. In 2017, the Supervisory Board consisted of the following members:

- **Joop Daalmeijer** (chairperson), second term. Ancillary roles: media advisor Culture Council, chairperson Dutch press award De Tegel, member of the Supervisory Board of De Buren in Brussels.
- **Marietje Schaake** (vice-chairperson), second term. No ancillary roles.
- **Teus Eenkhoorn** (member, chairperson Financial Audit Committee), second term. No ancillary roles.
- **Corine de Vries** (member), second term. No ancillary roles.
- **Henk Boer** (member, Financial Audit Committee), first term. No ancillary roles.
- **Ronald Gijsbertsen** (member), second term. No ancillary roles.
- **Mark Fuller** (member), first term. No ancillary roles.

Independent offices

We are proud that our production office in South Sudan, Free Voice, became fully independent in 2017. Free Media is, after Media INK in Somalia, the second of our original three production offices (local offices that carry out very large productions) that successfully became independent. Number three will hopefully follow next year. In 2017 we worked hard together on a plan to also strengthen this production office so that it can continue to exist without our support.

Supervisory Board Report

The programmatic results of Free Press Unlimited are described in detail in the Annual Report and Management Report. The Supervisory Board has little more to add, since in the Board's opinion, it is a full, precise and fair representation of the facts. Of course, throughout the year the Supervisory Board has been kept informed by the Free Press Unlimited Board about the programmatic progress, developments and results on the basis of the progress reports. Based on that, the Supervisory Board establishes that Free Press Unlimited has achieved its strategic goal regarding the freedom and protection of journalists in an extremely effective manner. In the results described in this report, what stands out in particular is that Free Press Unlimited fulfils a pioneering role, in relation to the difficult areas in which work is being done, the innovative way in which journalists are supported and how their protection is being worked on. This also applies to the large reach that Free Press Unlimited has with both the local projects that are financially and organisationally made possible, the instruments that are applied (for example, the roll out of leak platforms like Publeaks or the NetAidKit), but also how effectively journalists are supported worldwide to stand up for the important function of independent journalism as the basic condition for democratic development.

In accordance with the regulations, the Supervisory board held three regular meetings with the Board and one extraordinary meeting. In addition, there were two telephone meetings on a current issue. Two members of the Supervisory Board carried out a performance and appraisal review with the Board, Leon Willems and Ruth Kronenburg. The conclusion of the review was that both function well and that cooperation with the Supervisory Board is excellent.

In 2016, the Supervisory Board found that there were concerns about the working environment at Free Press Unlimited. In that context, the Supervisory Board spoke to the staff representatives and confidential advisors, after which the Board had an employee satisfaction survey carried out by an external party. The conclusions drawn from the report, led to several measures by the Board that should ensure a better working environment. For example, town hall meetings were set up (interactive meetings of all employees and directors) and a Works Council was established. In 2017, the Supervisory Board determined that these measures have had the desired effect. A meeting between the Supervisory Board and the staff representation led to the same conclusion.

Partly at the insistence of the Supervisory Board, the staff representation decided, in close cooperation with the Board, to step down and make room for an official Works Council, chosen by the employees in 2017. Since 2017, the Supervisory Board has held meetings with the Works Council twice a year, without the presence of the Board. These meetings are open-hearted and – to the satisfaction of all participants – have in no way resulted in any concerns with the Supervisory Board and the Works Council.

At the end of 2017, a new employee satisfaction survey was carried out by a third party. At the beginning of February 2018, the Supervisory Board does not know the official results, but after a meeting with the Works Council, it can at least be determined that the problems as they occurred in 2016 are a thing of the past, and that a lot of progress has been made.

The extraordinary meeting was dedicated mainly to a change in the governance structure, at the Board's request. In the Articles of Association, reference is already made to an Advisory Board, and the Board deems it desirable to set up an (international) Advisory Board, as the organisation is becoming more international. This may involve a further tightening of the profiles of the current Supervisory Board. In general terms, the Supervisory Board supports the Board's position. It is expected that in the coming year the new governance structure, with due consideration of the advice of the Works Council, will be approved and subsequently implemented.

The Supervisory Board also took note of the financial problems surrounding the Radio Dabanga project. The Supervisory Board is aware of the fact that since July 2017, no (external) resources were available to allow the project to run and follows the advice of the Board to deploy its own resources for this purpose. This is due to the great importance of the project (2 million listeners daily) and the fact that the prospects of new funding is considered realistic. This decision will, however, significantly affect the result of the organisation.

From its supervisory responsibility, the Supervisory Board was also implicated in publications about the relationship between Free Press Unlimited and Radio Tamazuj. Based on all the information available to the Supervisory Board about the conflicts that played out and their history, the Supervisory Board does not agree with the image portrayed in the articles of De Correspondent. The Supervisory Board was kept informed by the Board and other Free Press Unlimited employees throughout the entire process. The Supervisory Board is critical of the publishing methods of De Correspondent. In the Supervisory Board's view, specifically the limited rebuttal, quotations taken out of context and the omission of information that does not support the storyline, lead to biased reporting – without a balanced picture – which causes damage to Free Press Unlimited.

Last but not least, the Board is working on a new multi-annual strategy, which was discussed in detail with the Supervisory Board on two occasions. The multi-annual strategy is not yet fully completed (it is expected that it can be presented at the beginning of 2018), but the Board gives a good indication of what the worldwide trends are in the area of press freedom, journalism, media, the influence of technology and what the added value can and must be for Free Press Unlimited in that.

**Joop Daalmeijer – Chairman Supervisory Board
Free Press Unlimited.
Amsterdam, 15 March 2018**

Staff

Free Press Unlimited exists by the grace of its experienced, driven and expert employees. They give substance to our mission every day: giving people access to independent, reliable and timely information. We cannot offer them a huge salary, but we do offer a pleasant working environment, dedicated colleagues and the tools and training to do their job well.

Personnel policy

In 2017 we put our brand-new HR policy into practice. It is based on three principles:

- 1. Employees are the most important pillars of the organisation.**
- 2. Free Press Unlimited wants to be an appealing employer.**
- 3. Personnel policy must be further professionalised.**

In the past year 63 people worked for Free Press Unlimited, 2 of them abroad (56.1 FTE). That is 1 FTE less than in 2016, when we employed 66 employees. In 2017, we welcomed 8 new colleagues and said goodbye to 10 colleagues.

In 2017, 36 women and 28 men worked at Free Press Unlimited. The Board of Directors consists of a man and a woman, and in the management team that replaces the former MT there are 5 men and 4 women. In 2017, our numbers were strengthened by 4 interns and 8 volunteers, 7 of whom worked in the Communications department.

Sick leave levelled out in 2017 to 1.83 per cent, far below the national average of 5 per cent. Free Press Unlimited offered everyone a preventive medical examination in 2017; more than half (34 people) took advantage of this.

Proud of Free Press Unlimited

In November, an external advisor, in collaboration with the Works Council, investigated how satisfied our employees are. No less than 80 percent completed the survey. If one thing is clear from the results, it is that Free Press Unlimited has extremely dedicated employees who feel free to express their opinions. Almost without exception, they are proud of Free Press Unlimited and value the cooperation within their teams. They still miss a clear vision of the future, but management is working on this, in consultation with employees; a new long-term plan will be presented in the spring.

Training and education

Twice in 2017, we organised two-day Free Press Unlimited-days, where the whole organisation looked back and ahead, and exchanged valuable lessons. Everyone followed a training in the use of MEAL-methods (monitoring, evaluation, accountability & learning) and in raising awareness for (in)equality within the organisation. Directors and team leaders followed a training in crisis management, and according to plan underwent a coaching project, to support them with all the changes that a fast-growing organisation entails.

Confidential Advisor

In 2017, Free Press Unlimited got a new Confidential Advisor, after the two members of the confidentiality committee had reached their maximum term of four years in 2016. In 2017 she received no official notices or complaints. Of the five reports of undesirable behaviour that reached her, four were solved in consultation with the parties involved. The fifth concerned a one-off external contact; the employee concerned did not wish to take action.

Works Council

For the first time in its existence, Free Press Unlimited got a Works Council, since it now employed more than fifty staff. After thorough preparation in the first half of 2017, we organised our first Works Council elections in June. Both directors and Works Council members received a Works Council training. The Works Council met eight times and shared the minutes of these meetings with all employees. It meets with the directors every quarter (twice in 2017) and each month 2 Council members consult with 1 board member.

Knowledge, quality and continuity

In 2017, Free Press Unlimited began deploying new methods and instruments, with support from the Knowledge & Quality team. Thanks to thorough risk analysis and an adapted safety policy we can continue to do our work safely.

Knowledge & Quality

Knowledge development is of great importance for an organisation like Free Press Unlimited. In 2017, the Knowledge & Quality team introduced monitoring and evaluation methods like Gender Media Monitoring, Outcome Harvesting and Most Significant Change. For partners, we developed a Stakeholder Analysis: a questionnaire and step-by-step plan with which they can determine their policy influencing strategy.

At the end of 2017, the team enriched the organisation with an innovative experiment: a database in which we collect 'evidence' for our Theory of Change. Reports, stories and evaluations that teach us what does and doesn't work. We can quickly see which gaps there are in our knowledge. We can also use the stories to explain what Free Press Unlimited does and to determine the themes of our lobbies.

In 2017, we took a decision with regard to the issue that was giving us a headache in 2016: we decided to build our own project management system. We make use of open source software and our own Wiki. This system will probably be ready to use by early 2018.

Quality Management

To check how well are we performing as an organisation, we use several recognised quality standards.

- ISO 9001. Because our certificate for ISO 9001:2008 expires in April 2018, in 2017, we prepared ourselves well for the new version, ISO 9001:2015.
- Recognised Charity. This quality label replaced the old CBF quality label.
- IATI. We report on the 17 projects in the Strategic Partnership in accordance with these standards.
- Our own code of conduct, to which all employees must adhere, and those of van Partos and Charity Netherlands.

Risk analysis

Every year, Free Press Unlimited analyses the most important risks that the organisation faces. We do this in accordance with ISO 31000 risk management. In the table below, we list the most important risks, how likely they are, what the consequences are and what measures we take to prevent these risks.

	Threat	Measure	Chance	Impact
Digital safety	By hacks, phishing, spying or unsecured digital communication leaks privacy sensitive information that may endanger people's lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital environment is outsourced to specialist IT-host. • Regular training of employees. Information security is part of the general safety policy. 	Probable	Major
Continued existence	Funding of media projects becomes difficult due to changes in the political environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active lobby for developing media and compliance with Sustainable Development Goal 16.10 (access to information). 	Average	Major
Performance	Projects are not or are poorly carried out, resulting in damage to the reputation of Free Press Unlimited, its partner and/or the donor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with and regular monitoring of project procedures. • Crisis management plan is integrated in the organisation and MT is trained. 	Improbable	Major
Reputation	Threats of damage reputation to Free Press Unlimited through negative reporting about our projects or in crisis situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with and regular monitoring of project procedures. • Crisis management plan is integrated in the organisation and MT is trained. 	Probable	Limited
Compliance	Free Press Unlimited or its partners do not or insufficiently meet the agreements with the donor during the performance of a project, resulting in damage to the reputation of Free Press Unlimited.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance department checks all the demands in advance and the reports during performance. • Financial start-up meeting per project, in which donor demands are determined and measures are taken to meet them. 	Average	Limited



A detailed table of risks can be found in our online annual report: <https://reports.freepressunlimited.org/2017>. For our employees, the internal Wiki contains a detailed analysis, complete with sample scenarios.

Safety policy

Safety is also top priority within our organisation. All our employees must follow a safety course and we have our own in-house safety team (including a digital security specialist). In 2017 they combined all agreements and procedures into one security policy. With this strict security policy, we are one step ahead, since as of May 2018 new European rules for the protection of personal data come into force. In 2017, Free Press Unlimited prepared itself well for this.

Sustainability

Free Press Unlimited tries to minimise its CO₂-emissions as much as possible. We encourage travelling by public transport and working from home. We use green energy from renewable sources and fly climate-neutral. Our paper consumption has dropped significantly in the last few years. If we buy products, installations or services, we opt as much as possible for the most sustainable and greenest variant.

Financial information

2017 was mainly dominated by a number of large multi-year programs that ran for the second year; the Strategic Partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Russian Language News Exchange program and the 5-year Syria program with the Swedish development agency Sida. Besides this continuation, 2017 was characterized by the expiry of several grants for our project Radio Dabanga. That is why Free Press Unlimited partly financed this project in 2017 from its own resources.

The latter is partly reflected in the operating deficit of 2017, although this remained limited to an amount of 30,000 euros. The fact that the deficit is not larger is mainly due to the fact that the structural contribution from the Dutch National Postcode Lottery increased from 500,000 to 900,000 euros since last year. We have been able to use this increased amount mainly to support Radio Dabanga.

The operating deficit has been withdrawn from the continuity reserve, which remains virtually the same as the reserve at the end of 2016; nearly 2.3 million euros. That is about 75 percent of the operating costs and as such well within the margin. The policy is to keep the continuity reserve at between 70 and 150 percent of the operating costs.

Compared to the budget, the total income was almost 950,000 euros lower; a total of just over 14 million euros. This was due in part to the fact that, as mentioned above, we were unable to find new funding for Radio Dabanga on time. In addition, the budget assumed that co-financing would be found for our Syria program. However, competition in acquisition processes is high, and particularly for this region, limited. During the year, these ambitions were revised and we discussed this with Sida. Along with the lower incomes from government grants, these are the main causes of the lower total income.

As far as the benefits of lottery organizations are concerned, a positive picture can be seen compared to the budget. On balance, 575,000 euros more income was realized than originally budgeted, with the main reason being the increase in the structural contribution of the Dutch Postcode Lottery, which was not known at the time the budget for 2017 was being prepared. Of course we are very pleased with that, especially since this contribution is not linked to a specific project and can therefore be used optimally and flexibly in places where Free Press Unlimited can make a lasting difference for the objectives for which we were founded.

Unfortunately, 2017 also meant the end of the project 'Our Future is Now' (with which we set up news programs for children all over the world), which was financed by the Dutch Postcode Lottery. A new application aimed at young people and media has been submitted to the Swedish Postcode Lottery, and of course we now make sure that the youth is included in various other projects. Because it also (or maybe precisely) applies to them: People deserve to know!

Finally, in terms of risk, we can also conclude that obtaining funding for our activities continues to appear high in our risk analysis for the coming year. Followed far behind by much more manageable risks that can be identified for our organization, such as working in conflict areas. We will therefore make an extra investment in our Donor Relations department in the coming year.

Ruth Kronenburg, April 2018

Balance sheet as of 31 December 2017

All amounts in euro

Assets	31-12-2017	31-12-2016
Fixed Assets		
Intangible fixed assets		
· Website	3,614	20,727
Tangible fixed assets		
· Renovation	123,636	69,836
· Office supplies	52,447	26,565
· Hardware and software	28,545	55,088
Total tangible fixed assets	204,628	151,489
Total fixed assets	208,242	172,216
Current assets		
· Accruals	172,928	509,356
· Accounts receivable and advances	66,249	108,141
· Grants to be received	1,883,399	2,588,014
Total current assets	2,122,576	3,205,510
Liquid assets		
· The Netherlands	4,387,495	5,808,664
· Abroad	294,670	99,892
Total liquid assets	4,682,164	5,908,556
Total assets	7,012,982	9,286,282

Balance sheet as of 31 December 2017

All amounts in euro

Liabilities	31-12-2017	31-12-2016
Reserves and funds		
· Continuity reserve	2,233,407	2,264,712
· Security Fund	27,490	27,490
Total reserves and funds	2,260,897	2,292,202
Current liabilities		
· Payable to staff	235,118	304,454
· Payable to suppliers	407,246	263,441
· Other short-term liabilities	131,188	219,708
· Obligations related to current projects	1,459,570	2,145,053
· Grants received in advance	2,518,963	4,061,425
Total current liabilities	4,752,085	6,994,080
Total liabilities	7,012,982	9,286,282



Statement of income and expense

All amounts in euro

Income	2017	budget	2016
Income from government subsidies	11,469,865	13,081,000	13,753,598
Income from Dutch Postcode Lottery	1,655,187	1,080,000	1,870,449
Income from other non profit organisations	698,290	720,000	644,328
Income from companies	207,647	100,000	68,111
Income from individuals	51,208	50,000	51,418
Total income	14,082,197	15,031,000	16,387,904
Expenditure			
Spent on the organisation's objective			
Media support programme	13,303,362	14,183,718	14,993,126
Cost of income generation	316,441	390,653	303,814
Management and accounting costs	448,817	450,754	437,864
Total expenditure	14,068,620	15,025,125	15,734,804
Result excluding financial gains and losses	13,577	5,875	653,100
Financial gains and losses	-44,144	-25,000	110,292
Balance of income and expenses	-30,566	-19,125	763,392
Appropriation of the balance			
Additions to/withdrawals from:			
Continuity reserve	-31,305	-19,125	764,131
Reserves for private donor projects	0	0	0
Withdrawal Security Fund	0	0	0
Total	-31,305	-19,125	764,131
Financial ratios			
Spent on the organisation's objective/Total generated income	94,5%	94,4%	91,5%
Spent on organisation's objective/Total expenses	94,6%	94,4%	95,3%
Costs of income generation/Total generated income	2,2%	2,6%	1,9%
Management and accounting costs/Total expenditure	3,2%	3,0%	2,8%



Free Press Unlimited works to ensure that impartial news and information are and remain available to people across the globe. Particularly in countries where there is little to no press freedom.

Colophon

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