

Free Press Unlimited annual report 2020



**FREE
PRESS
UNLIMITED**

People deserve to know

PEOPLE DESERVE TO KNOW

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Mission and Vision

Our vision

Free Press Unlimited firmly believes that everyone is entitled to have access to unbiased, reliable and relevant information. This enables them to assess and influence their own living conditions, and make the right decisions.

This vision is captured in our slogan: **'People deserve to know'**.

Our mission

Freedom of the Press and Freedom of Information are vital for gathering and spreading reliable, unbiased information. The media play a crucial role in providing people with free and unrestricted access to information that can help them make informed decisions and at the same time hold authorities accountable. Free Press Unlimited wants to make and keep objective news and information available to everyone, especially to people in countries where there is little or no press freedom.

Free Press Unlimited does this by supporting local media organisations and journalists. Our core values are expressed by the following keywords: Independent, Inspiring, Inventive, Dedicated and Tailored Approach.

Key figures 2020

Highlights

Total income

€21,701,034

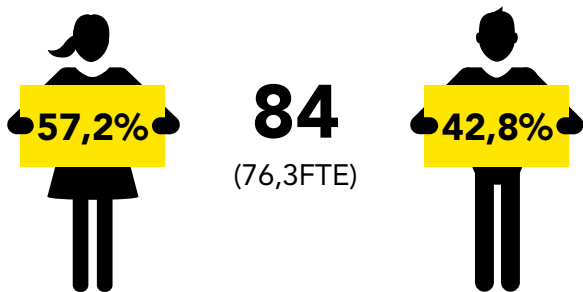
Spent on the organisation's objective

€20,414,311

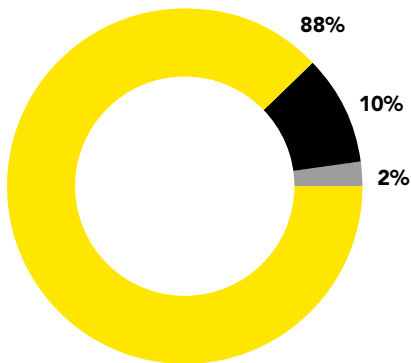
Acquisition, Management & Accounting

€943,873

Employees

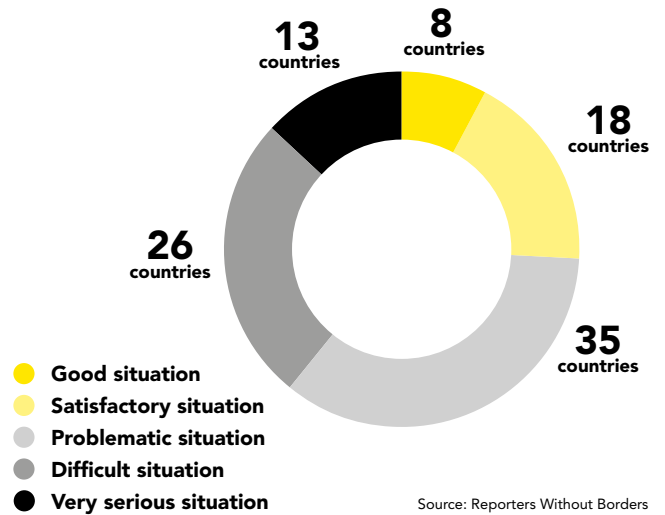


Our income



- Government subsidies €19,233,394
- Lottery organisations €2,097,832
- Other €458,527

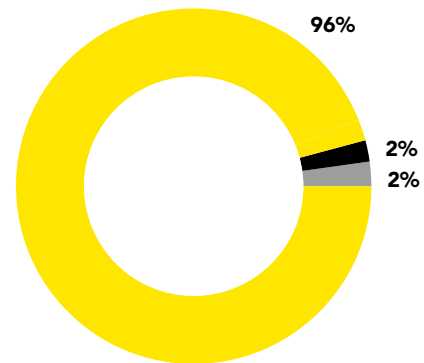
Press freedom monitor



Postcode Lottery Fund for journalists

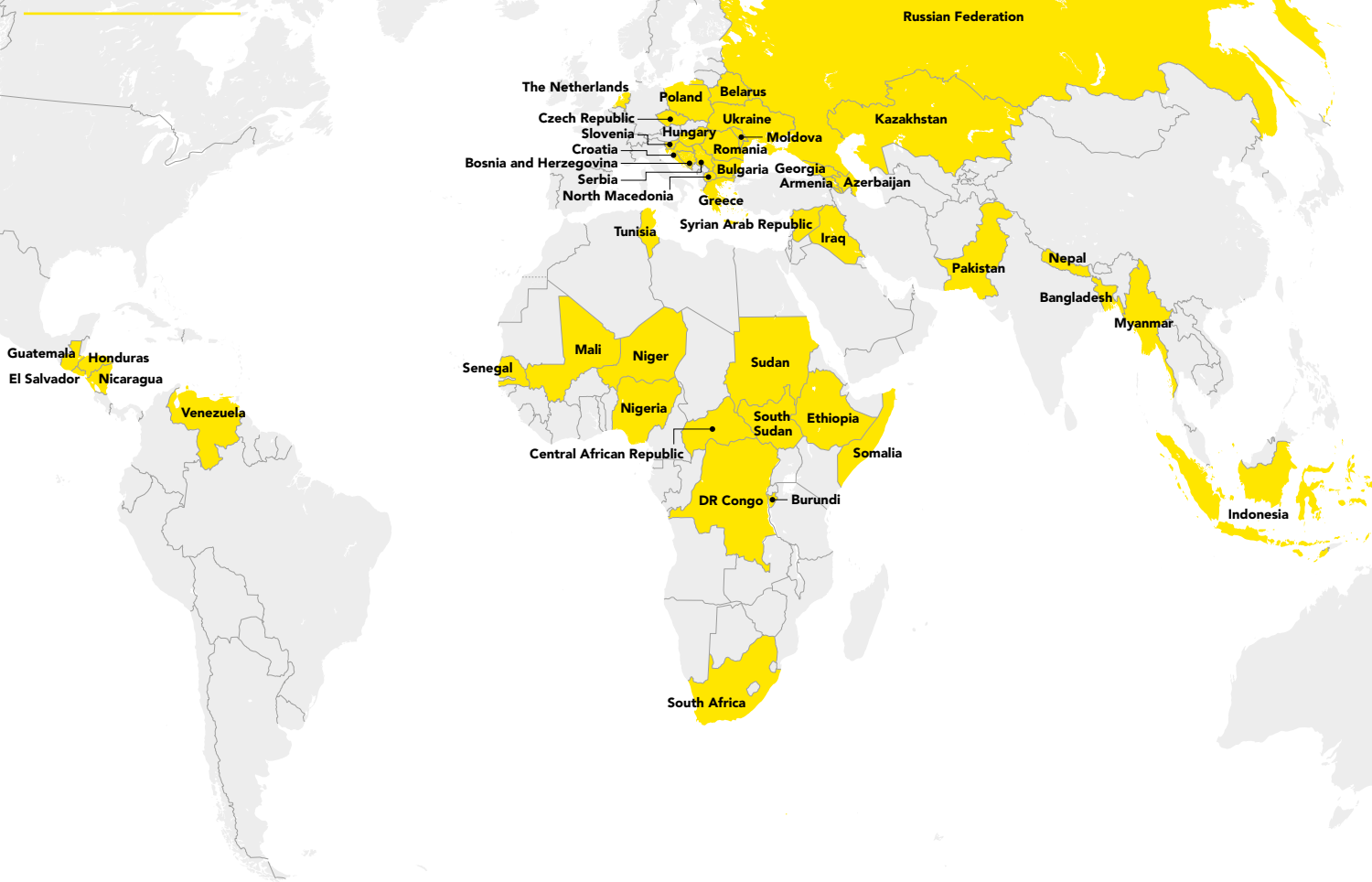
- ✉ 21 applications
- 📄 0 in-depth investigative reports
- 📖 6 publications

Our expenses

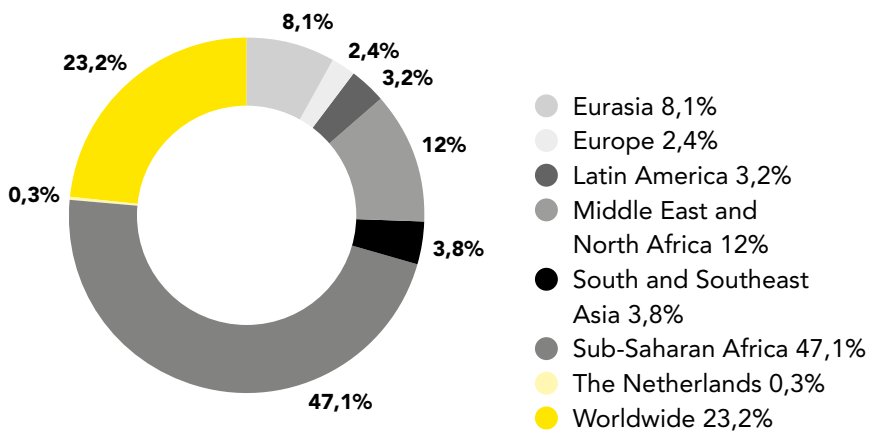


- Organisation's objective €20,414,311
- Acquisition costs funding €442,197
- Management & Accounting €501,67
- Financial gains and losses €36,596
- Reserve €306,255







Countries



Geographic distribution of grants



Online reach

-  **Twitter**
12,820 followers
-  **Facebook**
20,196 likes
-  **LinkedIn**
3,420 followers
-  **Instagram**
1,385 followers
-  **YouTube**
590 subscribers
-  **Newsletter**
2,820 subscribers

Numbers

			
143 Projects	96 Partners	39 Countries	588 Friends

Management Report

Women represent no more than 26% of the Dutch media content, and a staggering 78% of the presented experts are male. These are some of the disturbing results of the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), which Free Press Unlimited conducted in the Netherlands, together with Women Inc. Every five years, organisations worldwide systematically measure the portrayal of men and women in news media on one specific day. In 2020, this was done in 145 countries, including the Netherlands, on 29 September.

Gender in the (Dutch) media

Media must represent the diversity of society fairly. It is precisely this representation that has been the subject of intense public debate in 2020, and an important reason for Free Press Unlimited to investigate how diverse and inclusive media are. Our conclusion in the GMMP, based on the analysis of 207 news items was that despite real efforts, gender equality and diversity are still hard to find in Dutch media. When portraying women, reporters referred to their family role more often (16%) than they did when portraying men (4%). Also, media more often wrote or talked about women: only 21% of persons quoted directly was female. We hope that these disappointing figures will motivate Dutch media leaders and journalists to significantly improve the balance and representation of gender in the news.

Comparatively, results are much better in countries such as Mali, Somalia, Nepal and Bangladesh, where Free Press Unlimited empowers female journalists, invests in skills trainings, builds networks, fights (online) harassment, and organizes fellowships. In Nigeria, the Wole Soyinka Centre for Investigative Journalism found that 59% of the women who followed our female

leadership fellowship were promoted or given greater responsibilities in their media organisations.

Another example is the online gender media monitoring tool, Mediascan, that our Malian partner Tuwindi proudly presented at the Paris Peace Forum in November. Easy to customise and scale up, Mediascan is currently being used in Mali, Nepal and DR Congo. This has already resulted in positive changes such as more female reporters' by-lines and sources, and databases of female experts.

#M4W2020

Our Media4Women initiative was a huge success in 2020, also in the Netherlands. More partners and countries than ever participated, resulting in an unprecedented outreach of more than 4 million people on social media. Activists of 50 (partner) organisations in 35 countries organised discussions, marches, media monitoring, social media campaigns, competitions and special media programming, in order to increase gender equality and fight stereotyping in the media. Gender equality champions like Bahia Tahzib-Lie (Dutch Human Rights Ambassador) and Nuna Khadka (Freedom Forum, Nepal), encouraged participants to share their experiences, monitor media and speak out against the stereotypical portrayal of women.

Impact of Covid-19

The Covid-19 pandemic has further weakened democracy in 80 countries, particularly in struggling democracies and highly repressive states. This is the worrying conclusion of research by Freedom House to which Free Press Unlimited contributed. Governments have accelerated their authoritarian agendas, abused power, silenced critics, shuttered crucial institutions and, by doing so, undermined the very systems of accountability needed to protect public health. In almost half of the researched 192 countries, the role of independent media as society's watchdog was restricted, which also hampered the circulation of vital information on the coronavirus.

In 2020, Free Press Unlimited prioritised the battle against the impact of Covid-19 on press freedom, by providing practical support to journalists, and by putting the issue on the public and political agendas in the Netherlands and the EU. In the Netherlands, we set up a public campaign to demonstrate and ask support for the crucial role of independent media. At the political level,



we organised webinars, supported parliamentarians to ask the right questions, and advocated at all levels. This resulted in several amendments, including €2 million for emergency assistance to journalists worldwide. At EU level, we obtained funding for our support to media outlets in 17 sub-Saharan countries that were disproportionately hit by the pandemic.

Covid-19 also revealed yet another threat to the lives of journalists: a lack of access to adequate protection material. While media professionals all over the world continued to deliver the news, at least 500 of them died of Covid-19 during the first nine months of the pandemic. With the support of our partners, Free Press Unlimited distributed protective gloves, masks and gel to over 3,100 journalists. The loss of income and the harassment of and violence against journalists led to an explosion in the number of requests for support from our Legal Defense and Reporters Respond funds.

Safety of journalists

Safety of journalists continues to be one of our top priority themes, both in our projects and in our (international) advocacy work. In 2020, we contributed to 'The Hague Commitment to increase the Safety of Journalists', a declaration signed by 53 states during the 2020 World Press Freedom Conference. Another advocacy success is the inclusion of press freedom in

the European Democracy Action Plan, which will require member states to report on the state of their democracy, including media freedom and pluralism. These are some examples of how we managed to get violence against journalists and impunity high on the agendas of the EU and the UN. Yet, the question remains: how do we change and counter this, how can we proactively protect media professionals, and ensure that laws are not being used to silence journalists? Free Press Unlimited's *raison d'être* is to help find solutions to this problem; we defend and support journalists both on the ground and through our international advocacy work. According to the independent evaluation of our No News Is Bad News programme (see below), we definitely make a difference in this respect.

Illustrative of the increasing violence against journalists, is that in 2020 we initiated or signed a record number of declarations calling for the protection of journalists. Brave press freedom defenders like Maria Ressa in the Philippines, Maati Monjib in Morocco, and journalists in Belarus, who were severely attacked and detained by the authorities. As the recent release of Maati Monjib demonstrates, coordinated international pressure does help. We are also seeing an alarming increase of violence against journalists in the Netherlands, as the growing number of reports to PersVeilig ('Safe Press') demonstrates.

Truth-finding to save democracy

Fighting the widespread impunity for killing journalists is an important prerequisite to ending violence against journalists. Together with Reporters without Borders (RSF) and the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), we officially launched the website of our project 'A Safer World for the Truth' on 10 December, including a digital monument for the journalists who were murdered for doing their job. With this project, funded by the Dutch Postcode Lottery, we can investigate the murder of journalists and set up a People's Tribunal to expose widespread crime against journalists. In 2020, we started investigating the first 5 cold cases involving murdered journalists, like the case of Mexican investigative journalist Regina Martínez who was strangled in 2012. We found that the investigation into her murder was compromised at the state level.

You repeat a lie a million times, it becomes a fact. Without facts, you can't have truth. Without truth, you can't have trust. Without these, democracy as we know it is dead.

Maria Ressa, CEO Rappler, Philippines

Maria Ressa, who won the Most Resilient Journalist Award at our online Free Press Live event, confronted social media companies with the results of her research into how hate speech is being used against her in the Philippines. Maria Ressa is CEO of the investigation website Rappler and was Time magazine's Person of the Year in 2018, but in her own country she is continuously being harassed by president Duterte. In June she was convicted on libel charges, prompting a broad call for justice by press freedom organisations, including Free Press Unlimited. We also support her through our Legal Defense Fund. On 2 November, Maria Ressa was invited to address the Dutch parliament (online), where she spoke about the need for democracies of the world to help defend independent journalism and freedom of expression.

Lawsuits, big tech and fake news

Europe is no longer the safe haven for press freedom and journalists it once was. As is the case in the Philippines, authoritarian leaders in countries such as Hungary and Poland use the law to silence critical voices and deprive citizens of their right to know. All over Europe, we see a rapid increase in the number of so-called 'strategic lawsuits against public participation'

(SLAPP). Big companies and public officials use these SLAPPs to burden their critics with the costs of lawsuits, including the journalists who dare to investigate their illicit affairs and malpractices. Maria Ressa currently faces numerous controversial charges, and even the family of the murdered journalist Daphne Caruna Galizia is still defending her in 23 libel cases. This persistent legal harassment makes our Safety & Justice programme all the more important. In 2020, Free Press Unlimited provided legal support to more than 100 journalists and 16 media organisations in distress. In addition, we supported 8 strategic litigation cases that we hope will benefit independent media around the world.

After several years of raising the alarm on the decline of press freedom in the European Union, we finally see that the European Commission is taking action. Yet, what is still lacking, is an effective action plan to counter the increasing power and impact of tech giants such as Facebook and Google, that dominate the news market. Although their algorithms determine what information people can access or consume, 'big tech' companies shirk any responsibility for the hate speech, rapid spread of disinformation and polarisation their platforms incite. Free Press Unlimited advocates for the EU and governments to support a free media landscape, and ensure that media generate income for the content they create. In this light, the Australian government's initiative to force Google and Facebook to pay publishers for the content displayed on their platforms, can serve as an example.

Free Press Unlimited is also a member of the Forum on Information & Democracy, which investigated ways to find structural solutions to the problems instigated by social media platforms. The report, produced by a working group chaired by Maria Ressa and Marietje Schaake, is considered a valuable contribution to UN and EU member states that do want to contain the power and impact of social media platforms, but do not know how.

Covid-19 confronted us once again with the importance of debunking fake news, and the devastating spread of misinformation resulting from algorithms that primarily serve to line the pockets of tech giants. In Mali, our partner Tuwindi launched the Wuya app that enables people to check what news is fake and what is not, and submit news items and have them checked by Tuwindi's fact-checking team of 25 journalists. However, debunking fake news starts with media literacy. In May 2020, we published the results of our research into the media literacy of teenagers in Mexico, South Africa and the Netherlands: Keeping it Real. We found that the 13 and 14-year-olds already fact-check some information, providing a basis for teachers and journalists to help young people engage critically with online content.

Praise for our work

We are extremely proud of the main conclusions in the external end evaluation of No News Is Bad News (NNIBN). After five years of this strategic partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Free Press Unlimited (as lead partner) and European Journalism Centre left their partners in 21 countries stronger, more sustainable, and with increased capacities to deliver quality content. Moreover, according to the evaluators, "Thanks to the NNIBN, Free Press Unlimited has become a leading advocacy organisation for media freedom that plays a big role in shaping international networks and initiatives."

Of course the rejection of our application for a 5-year programme under the Power of Voices partnerships of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs was a major disappointment. Not only because of all the hard work of our staff to develop a good proposal, but more importantly, because this decision implies that the Dutch government currently does not support any large, multi-annual programme that defends people's right to know. Given the severe pressure on independent journalism worldwide, we find this incomprehensible.

However, we adapted to the new situation and set up task forces to deal with the consequences for HR, funding, and delayed programme implementation. All three task forces were enthusiastically and adequately taken forward by Free Press Unlimited's staff.

In 2020, we also experimented with the development of our own media. We produced a series of podcasts and two series of livestreamed interviews with media professionals from across the world, about their work

in times of Covid-19. In October, we drew the attention of a wider public to the work of Free Press Unlimited through a number of TV and radio commercials and ads. This successful media campaign resulted in a rise in the number of Friends (supporters), and underpinned our policy and advocacy work regarding safety for journalists.

We are proud to say that we managed to budget a total income of €17 million for 2021, even without an approved Power of Voices proposal. For this, we wholeheartedly thank our donors and Friends who continue to support our work, and we praise our partners and our staff for their resilience, flexibility and dedication in this unusual and extremely demanding year.



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

Our approach

Free Press Unlimited has defined a clear common goal for all its projects and activities: Media and journalists, as independent players in civil society, constitute a diverse and professional information landscape and serve as catalysts for change.

Free Press Unlimited's overall strategy is based on deep connections with our partners and local actors. Their knowledge and insights, combined with our expertise and experience, enable us to come up with the best proposals for activities and projects.

Civil society organisations (CSOs) are only able to advocate for inclusive, sustainable development if they have access to information, independent media, and freedom of expression. Our work therefore also supports a stronger civil society, enabling citizens to participate and achieve more equitable societies. This approach strengthens the connections between journalists and media, and their audiences, and enables media to report on issues that are important to their readers, listeners and viewers.

Making change happen

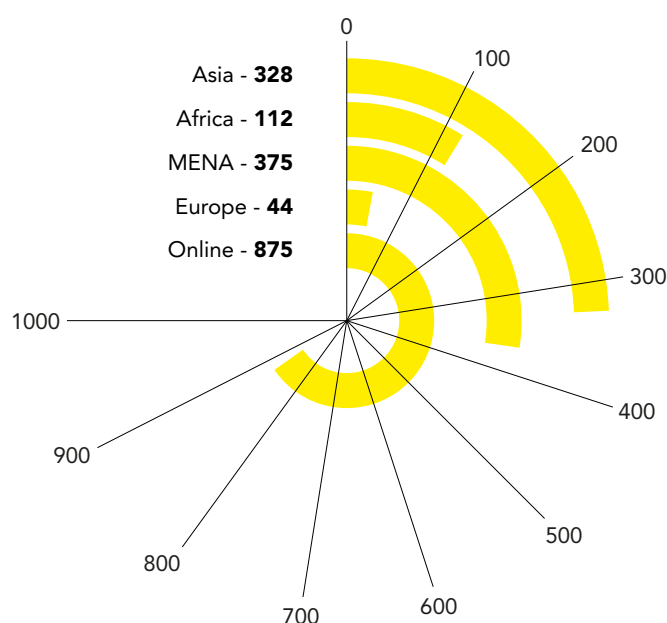
In our Theory of Change, we defined three conditions to enable independent, professional local media to help realise positive social change. All of our projects and activities contribute to one or more of these three intermediate outcomes:

1. Journalists must be able to do their work. This requires proper legislation that guarantees their safety and the freedom of expression. The political will to make information accessible to the public is also crucial, as is a media environment that is beneficial to support independent ethical journalism.
2. Both journalists and the media must be committed to the interests of the population, and act as a watchdog on their behalf. The media must reflect society's diversity and provide fact-based information to serve public discourse and promote media literacy.
3. Media professionals must be properly trained and educated, in order to deliver the quality to which their audience is entitled. Media houses must remain financially independent and maintain standards of ethical journalism in stable working places.

How we measure the effect of our work

Of course we want to know whether our work is making a difference, that is why we systematically monitor and evaluate all our projects. This helps us to learn valuable lessons about what does and doesn't work, and enables us to be accountable to our supporters and donors. We use media-specific methods such as content monitoring and audience research, as well as qualitative research methods like Outcome Harvesting and in-depth interviews to measure both planned and unplanned results. Our evidence and story databases are publicly available, and offer a sound base for our plans, programmes and donor reports.

Number of journalists trained





Evaluating Reporters Respond and Legal Defense Fund

In 2020 we evaluated our two main support mechanisms to journalists in distress: [Reporters Respond](#) and [Legal Defense Fund](#). What can we learn from beneficiaries, our partners and Free Press Unlimited's staff? How can we improve the two funds?

Generally, beneficiaries are tremendously satisfied with the support, praising the speed, the easy application and the lack of bureaucratic obstacles. As this also implies that monitoring options are limited, the evaluation recommends that Free Press Unlimited create a simple reporting format for local partners, among others. Local partners, who channel part of the funding, equally praise the collaboration with Free Press Unlimited, its flexibility, punctuality and speediness, as well as staff's knowledge of local contexts. In turn, the cooperation with local partners enables Free Press Unlimited to support media professionals in countries it would otherwise not be able to reach.

The evaluation recommends several actions to reduce the rejection rate of applications. Recommendations range from creating a specific FAQ section on the Free Press Unlimited website to regularly informing (new) Free Press Unlimited staff about the application procedures, eligibility criteria, etc., so that they can provide adequate information to local partners. Bridging the significant gender gap is not as easy, also because this reflects the male dominance in most media landscapes. Free Press Unlimited already made the application webpage more gender-sensitive, and will ensure a broader dissemination of information concerning the funds to female journalists. Also, another reason why male beneficiaries outnumber their female colleagues, is that the nature of threats that women face is often different – online harassment, harassment in the workplace – and thus requires different interventions, besides emergency support. This is where Free Press Unlimited's fast-increasing gender and media programme comes in.

Our work

We highlight the three main programmes through which Free Press Unlimited and its partners worked relentlessly in 2020, to enable media and journalists to provide their audiences with unbiased, reliable and relevant information. Given this extraordinary year, we also reflect on our support to journalists in distress due to the impact of Covid-19 and the associated increased repression by authoritarian regimes. Last but not least, we provide an extensive overview of all the projects we implemented in 2020, and their contribution to Free Press Unlimited's intermediate outcomes.

Impact of three main programmes

No News Is Bad News

In December 2020, our global 'No News is Bad News' (NNIBN) programme came to an end. For 5 years (2016-2020) we intensely supported and collaborated with 90 partners¹ in 21 countries, while simultaneously advocating at international level for press freedom, gender equality, and learning. NNIBN was funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Strategic Partnership instrument 'Dialogue and Dissent', and implemented by Free Press Unlimited (lead organisation) and the European Journalism Centre (EJC).

NNIBN enabled Free Press Unlimited and EJC to support courageous, committed, energetic and initiative-taking partners, who have promoted rights to access to

information, investigative journalism, gender equality, media literacy, content and reach in and for media dark areas, and more. Our approach was deliberately bottom-up: partners largely led the way in shaping their own strategies and (advocacy) activities, according to their contexts.

Extremely positive evaluation

In their final external evaluation, submitted in December 2020, the independent evaluators concluded: "Most of the partners report increased capacity, stronger organisations and progress on key quality, advocacy and gender goals. Many are more sustainable than before the programme started. Free Press Unlimited has become a learning organisation with strong skills in research, advocacy and M&E. Thanks to the NNIBN, Free Press Unlimited has also become a leading advocacy organisation for media freedom that plays a big role in shaping international networks and initiatives."

The evaluation also acknowledges that our international advocacy programme has achieved some significant milestones around safety of journalists. "EJC and Free Press Unlimited have worked hard on safety issues, across the entire programme, combining international advocacy and training on the ground (i.e. prevention) with actual response in the shape of Reporters Respond, which is unique because of its flexibility and because of its impressive achievements. In terms of impact, the global picture is still bleak – most countries are still hostile environments for journalists – but we can only conclude that it could be much worse without EJC/FPU and their partners' efforts."

Exemplary gender inclusion

Our capacity building of partners was effective, according to the evaluators: journalists' capacity to deliver quality content was especially improved by the programme. In addition, there has been much positive progress in terms of organisational capacity, from the partners' point of view.

The NNIBN was found by the evaluators to be "Exemplary" when it comes to integrating gender equality considerations across the programme: "There was almost no area of the programme where gender and the role of women in the media has not been included. From supporting partner organisations to develop and

1. During the lifetime of the programme.

implement gender policies, to acknowledging and to some extent addressing the specific threats to safety that women face, to the gender disaggregation of data and gender focused reports and research outputs, to the balanced representation of women in photos featured in the annual reports, the NNIBN has been exemplary. This is to be commended.”

Lessons learned

We have also learned some valuable lessons from 5 years of implementing NNIBN:

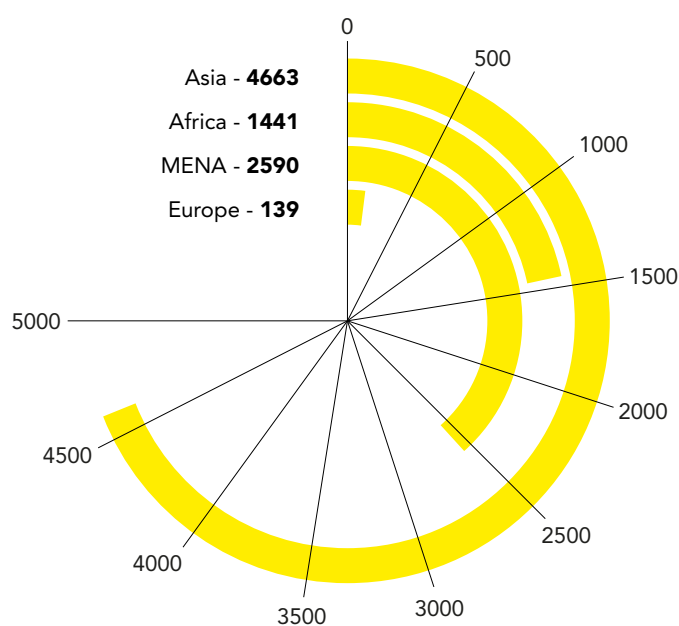
- Relatively little attention was paid to economic factors at the outset, but this was remedied to some extent later in the programme.
- The decision not to have country offices was the right strategy, because it devolved power and decision-making to partners and signalled a different model of partnership, with Free Press Unlimited as a facilitator of capacity-building and learning, rather than an implementer.
- National stakeholders, especially media outlets, still have problems understanding that the implementation of international standards basically depends on their own work and initiatives, not those coming from international organizations.
- South to South exchange needs to improve, as well as monitoring and evaluation support to partners. More attention needs to be paid to systematically collecting data about gender equality from partners. Self-reports are of limited use, so harder indicators of capacity should be developed. Gender media monitoring reports and gender sensitive content should be assessed and tracked by partners and FPU, to understand changes over time.
- The overall Theory of Change (ToC) was too ambitious: NNIBN intended to influence *the whole media landscape* in each target country, not just the partners. It would be better to have individual ToCs per country, also to be able to track progress and contribution to the ultimate objective (i.e. ‘a diverse and professional media landscape’). Social media and online journalistic activity, such as blogging, must be made more explicit in the ToC.
- The one-year project cycle imposed by the annual funding commitment of the ministry, creates inefficiencies for Free Press Unlimited, EJC and partners, due to the recurrent burden of proposal writing, reporting and approvals.

Russian-Language News Exchange

2020 was a volatile year for Russian-Language News Exchange (RLNE) in all regards: primarily due to the Covid-19 crisis, but also because of political upheaval in Belarus. Still, the network and its participating media outlets from more than ten Eastern European countries, managed to increase their audience and fulfil a vital role in the provision of reliable and independent information. People obviously needed and were looking for such information, as we can see from the huge surge in interest in our partners’ content. During the first wave of the - then still very new – pandemic, the combined number of unique visitors to their websites increased from 9,998,136 in December 2019 to 16,940,995 in April 2020.

After web traffic dropped again, RLNE and its partners managed to retain part of their new audiences, and draw their attention to the wider set of content. In December 2020, over 11,229,390 people visited their websites. New, attractive formats helped the media outlets achieve this; supported by RLNE, they experiment with different ways of packaging and distributing their content. Furthermore, the media partners share their best practices through the network. We see the same picture in the social media reach of RLNE media outlets: in December 2019, their combined reach was 74,402,151. Shortly after the first Covid-19 wave, this number peaked to 129,464,682 and stabilised at an impressive 119,857,941 in December 2020.

Number of media productions supported



Since we wanted to know whether these new audiences had really become stable followers of our media partners' news, we also looked at how many web visitors discovered our content via social media posts. We found that this number decreased from 38.19% in April 2020 to 32.92% in December 2020. Combined with the overall increased number of web visitors, this means that many people now visit our partners' websites directly, instead of clicking a link in a Tweet or Facebook post. In other words: visiting RLNE partners' media outlets directly means that it has become a habit for hundreds of thousands of people in Eastern Europe.

The impact of the network was demonstrated again when a war broke out in the South Caucasus, in late September 2020. Armenia and Azerbaijan violently clashed over a territory that they have been disputing for decades. Because media outlets from both countries cooperate within RLNE, journalists had access to the perspectives of 'the opposite side' and could take this into consideration in their own reporting.

We aim to further professionalise media outlets and media support organisations, and improve their understanding of audiences through research.

Syrian media make progress

Free Press Unlimited has been working with (exiled) Syrian media organisations and journalists for many years. We aim to further professionalise media outlets and media support organisations, and improve their understanding of audiences through research. Furthermore, we want to contribute to an increase in peaceful dialogue and peacebuilding.

Professionalising media

Not being able to physically meet in 2020, seriously hampered the activities of the three media institutions we support: the Syrian Journalists Association (SJA), the Ethical Charter for Syrian Media (ESCM) and our new partner the Kurdish Syrian Journalists Network (KSJN). After all, their main role is to stimulate member engagement and collective reflection, and give trainings. Free Press Unlimited shifted to online activities and successfully piloted and extended a series of webinars about topics that partners had chosen, such as

collaborative journalism and data journalism in times of Covid-19. Together, we transformed round tables and group discussions between members on topics such as draft media laws or innovation plans, into online formats.

All media institutions in the programme held board elections in 2020. Free Press Unlimited supported them both in the preparation phase and in the handovers to the new boards. KSJN held its first (online) general assembly meeting, after a long period of progressing into a more professional organisation. The freshly elected KSJN board managed to boost membership engagement, and strengthened its communication channels with journalists in north-east Syria.

By the end of 2020, ESCM and SJA had also gained better knowledge of their constituencies' needs and the measures necessary to maintain stability and relevance at their base. In 2020, ESCM launched its first workshop inside Syria to explain the charter and train local journalists, who play a major role in news-making, on ethical journalism. SJA went through a difficult time, suffering from internal struggles as a result of a range of causes, including the rapid growth of the organisation. Free Press Unlimited supported SJA to find solutions, through mediation, dialogue and eventually by commissioning an external review. At a general assembly, SJA members discussed the outcomes and identified ways forward.

Syrian online news service [Enab Baladi](#) turned the Covid-19 challenges into opportunities, by immediately building its organizational capacity to manage the news team virtually, and revamp internal systems to enable working from home. Just like most Syrian partners, they managed to continue their media productions and focus on constructive, data-based journalism. Nevertheless, without having all editors in one newsroom, quality and efficiency sometimes dropped. Enab Baladi, for instance, alleviated this by increasing its editorial checks prior to publication.

Understanding audiences

In 2020, all Syrian media partners provided audiences in underserved areas with helpful information to protect themselves against Covid-19. In July, partner Arta FM provided balanced, up-to-date coverage of the military and humanitarian developments during the Turkish attack on Idlib, Syria. By remaining on the ground, Arta FM became the main source of reliable information for the local population, local authorities and civil society organisations (CSOs). Arta FM's popularity increased massively, both on FM radio and online, also thanks to the new innovative formats they had developed on different platforms.



Media outlets even increased their audiences after the Free Press Unlimited trainings, by investing in new formats, such as podcasts and infographics. In March 2020, online media outlet “[I Am a Human Story](#)” launched a Facebook page exclusively targeting the Druze community of Sweida, the Syrian city that hosts a large part of this minority group. In just a short period of time, they reached thousands of previously underserved followers, with human-oriented stories from their own community, which they now like to share and discuss.

Dialogue and peacebuilding

Dialogue with people from different backgrounds can improve the effectiveness and accountability of media. In 2020, Free Press Unlimited’s [Syria Co-Production](#) fund again delivered impactful stories, created by partnerships of media and CSOs. Winners of the first prize were media outlet Hibr Press and CSO Bonyan, with a storytelling project about Syrian refugees.

In May 2020, I am a Human Story published a report on child abuse in a social care house. The media outlet demonstrated that it is capable of holding powerholders – in this case the house owner – to account. The children’s testimonies led to public outrage.

Similarly, in the second half of 2020, media partner [Radio Rozana](#) managed to increase awareness about gender stereotypes among its broad Syrian audience. Unique to

the Syrian online environment, Radio Rozana established a steering committee of staff and management, who discussed the topics and monitored the quality of the podcast series, to encourage a balanced public debate. The podcast stories, including animations and videos, allowed the public to make sense of gender issues in their own society and sparked a more open public debate.

Supporting journalism in times of Covid-19

In times of crises, access to reliable information is crucial. However, the Covid-19 pandemic came with a dramatic increase in pressure on media and journalists worldwide. Our partners struggle to survive financially, and to continue doing their important work safely. Free Press Unlimited works hard to support journalists and press freedom as much as possible, despite multiple challenges and restrictions.

Impact on partners worldwide

In 2020, there were 378 violations of media freedom across Europe, affecting independent media in particular. Our partner BH Novinari in Bosnia and Herzegovina, for instance, reported that authorities avoided critical questions from journalists, by organising online ‘press

conferences' on Covid-19: "Questions could only be sent in via email, making it easy for authorities to just select the questions they wanted to answer." Similarly, our Nepalese partner Freedom Forum, found that their government allowed only state-owned media to access the ministry of health, and did not mark journalism as a vital profession.

Authoritarian regimes did not, and still do not, hesitate to use the pandemic to increase their repression of media freedom and attacks on journalists, both legal and physical. Reyes Ayuda, our partner in Venezuela, witnessed a further crackdown on media: "The government [...] is using this pandemic to reinforce social control." Other partners reported a similar suppression of critical voices. MISA Zimbabwe, for example, described how journalist Panashe Makufa was assaulted by members of the Zimbabwe Republic Police when he tried to document how they dispersed people during anti-lockdown protests: "He was instructed to get into a police car, where he was beaten up and forced to delete all his footage."

Many independent media houses are on the verge of bankruptcy due to the loss of advertising income, while local journalists and freelancers struggle to find work. Based on Free Press Unlimited's research among its partners, losses in media revenues amount to an average of 40-60%, and an equal percentage of journalists have already lost their jobs. This inevitably leads to a further reduction of pluralistic and critical media landscapes in these countries.

Free Press Unlimited support

In 2020, through our Legal Defense Fund and Reporters Respond, among others, we supported media and journalists worldwide with:

- Personal protective equipment (PPE) so that they can report safely on Covid-19. To date, we have helped over 3,100 journalists.
- Legal support to journalists who are charged or arrested for reporting on Covid-19.
- Psychosocial support to journalists.
- Digital protection such as VPNs and webcam protection to prevent monitoring by repressive regimes.
- Relocation against violent threats from oppressive regimes.

Campaigns 'Together for Reliable Information' and 'Unmask the Truth'

After the first wave of Covid-19 hit the world, Free Press Unlimited decided to stress the importance of reliable information in a time of crisis. On World Press Freedom Day (3 May), we launched our 'Together for Reliable Information' campaign, together with partners all over the world. The campaign highlighted positive and inspiring stories on how our partners continue providing their public with reliable information on Covid-19, despite the many challenges they face. With frontline videos, podcasts, and our weekly livestream Emerging Stories, we showed what the journalistic profession is like in times of a pandemic.

As the year progressed, we witnessed how governments increasingly exploited the fight against the pandemic to silence journalists. On 4 August, we launched a campaign to show our solidarity with all journalists put under pressure and obstructed through violence, censorship or prosecution. We designed and distributed more than a thousand special face masks calling 'Stop Silencing Journalists' and 'Unmask the Truth'. Journalists, media workers, and citizens from all over the world joined the campaign by requesting one of our masks, taking a picture while wearing it, and sharing why they believe it is important to stand up for journalists worldwide. Luka Khachidze, for example, a journalist from Tbilisi, Georgia, said: "Journalists have the right to work freely, without a shadowy presence looking over their shoulder and tearing up their words." All pictures were shared on our social media, and added to our online Solidarity Wall.

Project overview

In the table below we present the results of Free Press Unlimited (FPU) projects in 2020, and how they contributed to achieving our three intermediate outcomes (see Our approach).

Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling Environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability • Gender & Inclusion (re: media content) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media viability • Safety skills of journalists • Gender equality in the workplace • Media and conflict
A Safer World- For The Truth Global	Dutch Postcode Lottery	FPU, together with Reporters sans Frontières and the Committee to Protect Journalists, investigates and documents murders of journalists, in the pursuit of justice for these crimes. By investigating crimes against journalists and publishing our findings, which include the lack of political will and effective judicial action, our aim is to end impunity. In 2020, we started 5 investigations into unsolved murders of journalists. At the World Press Freedom Conference (9-10 December) we launched an international online campaign, including an innovative “digital monument” for journalists murdered worldwide.		
(Western) Balkans	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MATRA)	At the end of 2020, FPU and the Netherlands Helsinki Committee embarked on a new 3-year regional project: “Strengthening Media Freedom in Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Serbia”. The project aims to enhance the competencies of law enforcement, judicial authorities and journalists, and create a meaningful exchange between these actors. The first results are expected in 2021.	Through the “Media Incubator” project, FPU improved the capacity of media outlets in Kosovo and Serbia to increase their audience. Through a combination of audience surveys and focus group meetings, partner Kosovo 2.0 was able to improve its productions for young people and to increase its viability by contacting youth centres. Through partner Local Press, based on audience surveys, 4 media outlets in Serbia, refocused their content and 2 of them more than doubled their online audiences, and fully transitioned to digital production, which proved essential during the Covid-19 pandemic.	

Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
Bangladesh	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	FPU supported partner BNNRC to organise a seminar for parliamentarians in which they advocated for the role of community radio.	<p>FPU and partner SACMID strengthened the capacity of youth to identify fake news through media literacy programmes in secondary schools. As a result, the National Curriculum Textbook Board (NCTB) agreed to incorporate media literacy in text books. Videos on the topic of fake news were shared with the wider public. Workshops on information during the Covid-19 pandemic attracted 46 community leaders who learned how to assess news on Covid-19 critically.</p> <p>In relation to gender-sensitive media content, SACMID produced a directory of women experts and specialists in different sectors of Bangladesh.</p> <p>Our partner BNNRC and 18 community radio stations brought Covid-19 awareness to remote areas. The radio stations reached 6.8 million people with daily awareness programmes about the pandemic.</p> <p>Partner Dataful assessed and visualised data on Covid-19 deaths (incl. data on gender and age) per district. At least 5 media outlets published an article on the data visual.</p>	<p>On 8 March, an audience of 459,225 viewers interacted with FPU's Media4Women campaign, led by partner BNNRC and the radio stations in its network.</p> <p>With the help of its new strategic plan, developed with support of FPU in 2019, and because of its continued efforts to inform the population on the Covid-19 pandemic, BNNRC was able to attract new funds for their network of 18 community radio stations.</p> <p>Through a 3-month fellowship at a community radio station, BNNRC strengthened the skills of 24 young women and men from the marginalised Dalit community.</p>
Central African Republic	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs European Union in Bekou	Together with the Network of Community Radios (RMCC), FPU prepared the installation and restoration of 6 community radio stations in the south-east Central African Republic.	<p>To promote gender equality, FPU supported the female journalist association AFPC with organisational development and the production of a radio programme in the local language Sangho, called Wali Ti Be Afrika (Woman of Africa). This programme is broadcast nationwide by many community radio stations and by the state broadcaster. AFPC's productions on Covid-19 were also broadcast by many radio stations.</p> <p>The Ministry for the Promotion of Women, the Family and the Protection of the Child, awarded the Secretary General of AFPC the Trophée Nationale de la Journaliste Actrice de la Paix (National trophy for journalist in service of peace) for 2020.</p>	<p>AFPC provided training in ethical/investigative journalism to 8 female mass communication students. They used these new skills in the production of 8 articles for Ouali Ti Beafrika, a magazine promoting women and their achievements in all industries.</p> <p>26 of the 32 journalism students trained by AFPC under a programme to install and restore 6 community radio stations, successfully completed their studies. One was appointed Advisor on Women's NGOs and Director of National Radio Programs, while 5 others obtained positions as editor-in-chief in different organisations.</p>


Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
DR Congo	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	<p>Safety of journalists remained the focus in 2020. FPU continued to work with partner Journaliste en Danger (JED) to advocate for journalists' safety and against impunity. On World Press Freedom Day (3 May), JED published a report "La RDC toujours dans la zone rouge des pays difficiles pour la liberté de la presse" (DRC still in the red zone of difficult countries for journalists).</p> <p>JED also advocated for the revision of the outdated legal framework, in which press offences still fall under the criminal law. A workshop on mechanisms for the legal protection of journalists against press offences was held in September, during which 11 recommendations were shared to develop a new legal framework.</p> <p>In addition, a total of 22 journalists/media outlets were supported by FPU and JED. In 8 cases, they received emergency funding, ranging from living costs to medical support and equipment; 2 others received legal support, to file complaints for torture, threats, and abuse.</p>	In 2020 FPU continued to support JED in monitoring crimes against journalists in DR Congo.	<p>With FPU funding, partner JED distributed Covid-19 protection materials to journalists in Kinshasa.</p> <p>FPU supported partner UCOFEM with the development of a profitable business model for their magazine "Femme d'Afrique". Visibility of the activities was increased on social media and YouTube. UCOFEM also carried out some sensitisation activities on Covid-19 in 4 cities (Matadi, Boma, Goma et Lubumbashi).</p> <p>UCOFEM staff received training on women's rights. To stimulate gender equality in the workplace of media outlets, on 8 March UCOFEM organised the Media4Women campaign in 10 cities. Congolese communications students were sensitised on the rights of girls and women. UCOFEM held debates, workshops, and carried out sensitisation activities on gender-related issues.</p>
Jeune S3 DR Congo, Central African Republic	SRHR/ Cordaid		FPU supported the production of radio programmes aimed at adolescents, on issues relating to sexual and reproductive health, in north and south Kivu in DR Congo, and in the Central African Republic.	FPU strengthened the capacity of young people to advocate, express themselves and mobilise for and on their sexual and reproductive health rights. We trained and enabled them to produce participative youth radio programmes on sexual and reproductive health issues.

Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
<p>Central America (Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua)</p>	<p>Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs</p> <p>Dutch Embassy in San José, Costa Rica</p> <p>Dutch Human Rights Fund</p>	<p>Our partner, the Asociación por la Democracia y los Derechos Humanos (ASOPODEHU, Association for democracy and human rights), monitored attacks on journalists in Honduras and provided legal aid to many journalists at risk. They advocated to be included in the national Protection Framework for Human Rights Defenders and Journalists, enabling them to get a protection scheme. In addition, they advocated for the improvement of the Protection Framework.</p> <p>ASOPODEHU, together with media outlets, was able to include recommendations to the Universal Periodic Review 2020, thanks to FPU's contact with the Dutch embassies. The recommendations included a permanent fund for a support system for journalists under threat.</p> <p>ASOPODEHU also published 2 in-depth studies on freedom of expression, covering the mechanism of protection of journalists and the access of information in Honduras, revealing dysfunctions and threats to the freedom of expression.</p> <p>Partner and media outlet Confidencial raised awareness on the closing of civic space for media outlets and journalists in Nicaragua, by continuing to speak out at various international levels and in their news items.</p>	<p>FPU and partner CLIP (Centro Latinoamericano de Investigación Periodística) in Costa Rica, provided support on investigative journalism to digital media outlets Nómada in Guatemala, Confidencial in Nicaragua/ Costa Rica and Contra Corriente in Honduras. CLIP provided editorial support to journalists, answered questions, and helped them to find sources and analyse material. As a result, the quality of their investigative journalism improved.</p> <p>CLIP also encourages independent media in various Latin American countries to cooperate, by sharing studies from other outlets with their audience. As a result, people have access to more quality journalism from the region, at no additional cost.</p> <p>Partner Inversiones Esfera Infinita was supported with the creation of the second season of web series, Niña Furia, on the political exile of Nicaraguan young people to Costa Rica. Other transversal themes include sexuality, gender and digital security. This follow-up activity builds on the success and high impact of the release of a first web series, Managua Furiosa, which reached a large number of young people in the whole region and sparked offline and online discussion on these issues.</p> <p>Partner Radio Progreso was supported with 5 investigative articles on how the government of Honduras deals with public funds meant for the Covid-19 crisis, and how the Covid-19 crisis affects professionals working in hospitals. By writing 20 stories they gave those who are handling the crisis a platform to engage with the public.</p> <p>In May, FPU's partner and digital media outlet El Faro from El Salvador, organised one of the largest journalistic events in Latin America, the Central American Journalism Forum (Foro Centroamericano de Periodismo - ForoCAP) on urgent societal issues in the region. It provided journalists with inspiring examples and new techniques on how to cover these topics, while offering a space for citizens and journalists to discuss together.</p>	<p>FPU supported the professionalisation of 3 partners in 3 countries: Producciones Red Comunica (Honduras), El Faro, (El Salvador) and Nómada (Guatemala). Their capacity was built in audience engagement, security, stability and team building. Support from engaged audiences improved their financial viability and helped protect them against physical attacks and hate speech.</p> <p>In collaboration with Fundación Latitudes, FPU implemented the programme Riesgo Cruzado, to promote the safety of journalists and media professionals in Central America. We established rural safety hubs, and advocated and cooperated with local authorities to promote an enabling environment for journalists. The project also enabled the creation of a peer-to-peer network of journalists in the region to provide assistance and advice in cases of emergency. This programme has been implemented in Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras.</p> <p>So far the programme has trained 120 journalists in safety measures, 5 rural safety hubs have been set up and the production of a large quantity of didactic material for journalists has helped to professionalise the training sessions. The gender component of the programme derives directly from the increased vulnerability of female journalists; the programme aims to provide them with the necessary skills to handle risk situations. Another important part of the programme is the focus on psychosocial health. This is addressed both in the training sessions and through follow-up coaching sessions.</p>

Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
Covid-19 Response in Africa	European Union	Since August, FPU has been leading the 'COVID-19 Response in Africa' consortium of 7 organisations, which includes ARTICLE19, Reporters sans Frontières, Fondation Hirondelle, Deutsche Welle and International Media Support (IMS) and UNESCO. The consortium provided rapid response, related to the impact of the corona crisis on access to reliable information, in 17 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. We carried out advocacy activities for press freedom, including the monitoring of press freedom violations in sub-Saharan Africa.	The consortium's overall objective is to contribute to a better informed public, and raise awareness on how people can protect themselves against Covid-19. So far 33 local African partners in 17 countries have received funding, and 16 organisations and 16 individuals have received capacity building.	Within the consortium, FPU is leading the emergency response to threats to individual journalists and media organisations, resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. 26 emergency grants were provided to individual media professionals and media outlets in distress.
Gender & Media Global	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	<p>FPU raised the awareness of policy and decision makers on the importance of gender equality in the media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FPU was one of the 25 organisations behind the Joint Statement Women in Media: Balance the Imbalance, directed at media leaders and journalists. • FPU hosted an online session at the Paris Peace Forum, a global gathering of governments and policymakers, pitching MediaScan. This tool from Malian partner Tuwindi and FPU facilitates monitoring of gender equality in the media. • Together with International Media Support and Fondation Hirondelle, FPU hosted an online session at the Geneva Peace Week, a leading international forum on peacebuilding, featuring FPU partner PAGED from Nigeria. • FPU submitted input to the Dutch delegation for the negotiations at the UN Commission on the Status of Women, and provided input to the draft policy Gender Action Plan of the European Union. • FPU hosted a session on Diversity and Inclusion in the media during the World Press Freedom Day online conference in December 2020. 	FPU contributed to the global Gender Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) 2020, coordinated by WACC, and enabled GMMP to build a database to help analyse the data from all countries, and to update and refine the methodology and coding instruments. Together with Women Inc., FPU monitored Dutch media as input for the global GMMP report, which is expected in 2021.	50 (partner) organisations and individuals in 35 countries joined FPU's annual Media4Women campaign in highlighting the theme: 'Inclusive and equal portrayal in and through the media'. The Media4Women campaign reached almost 4 million people worldwide, including media outlets, policymakers and politicians. Approximately 1,500 people across the globe participated in the offline activities.

Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
Indonesia	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs		<p>FPU's support to PPMN's citizen journalists programme focused on content that informs citizens on Covid-19 (prevention), with a focus on the impact of the virus on the life of women.</p> <p>Partner Tempo Institute works on creating a culture of investigative journalism in Indonesia. An online learning platform was developed and the investigative journalism fellowships continued with five more fellows. A book was published about this programme; it included an overview of the best stories that were created during the 5-year old fellowship.</p>	<p>To ensure journalists could continue their work safely, with FPU support, PPMN distributed a protection kit containing reusable face masks and hand sanitisers, as well as a safety protocol for journalists on Covid-19 reporting, to 1,500 journalists.</p> <p>FPU supported PPMN with a consultancy to improve its position for the future and to generate more income. PPMN is advancing towards becoming a social enterprise and plans to sell information management training to companies and CSOs, and journalism training to media houses.</p>
Iraq	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs Planetary Security Initiative / Clingendael Institute	<p>FPU and partners expanded collaboration and coordination work with UNESCO, particularly concerning the safety of journalists and Iraq's implementation of SDG 16.10, indicator 1 and 2.</p> <p>In collaboration with the International Federation of Journalists and International Media Support, FPU set up group meetings to coordinate the safety of journalists. Furthermore, we initiated advocacy efforts towards the Iraqi government and the international community, concerning concrete cases of killings or trends of media repression.</p>	<p>Through our partner, the Independent Media Organisation in Kurdistan, 65 journalists were trained in gender-sensitive reporting and covering minority groups in Iraq's disputed territories. Participants came from media dark areas, diverse backgrounds, and included a 50/50 gender balance of journalists.</p> <p>FPU supported Kirkuk Now towards becoming the leading news outlet in the disputed territories, reporting through a network of journalists in Arabic, Kurdish, Turkmen and English. The reporting on local issues resulted in action from relevant local authorities. For example, Kirkuk Now reported on a village with no access to water and the difficulties the inhabitants faced trying to get a water tank or a new pump in coronavirus times. The publicity and attention on social media resulted in the local authorities sending materials and equipment to repair their water facilities. Since the beginning of the Covid-19 outbreak, Kirkuk Now has produced at least 60 in-depth reports on the impact of the pandemic on local communities, minorities and other underprivileged groups, e.g. domestic violence.</p> <p>FPU supported journalists and academics from the south of Iraq to produce and publish meaningful stories about water, climate change and conflict. Stories were published in Iraq, in the MENA region, via Daraj Media; translated versions were published internationally on the Planetary Security Platform.</p>	<p>Kirkuk Now received support in developing a business plan, and seeking diversified sources of funding. Given the economic and security constraints of the Iraqi context they have not yet acquired a significant portion of their income from non-donor sources. Nonetheless, the organisation has been able to successfully develop a business plan and strategies for generating revenue and successfully applying for further donor funds.</p> <p>FPU trained/mentored journalists to increase their skills in innovative storytelling approaches and solution-based journalism techniques, as well as their ability to make complex information related to climate change appeal to local audiences.</p>

Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
Justice & Safety Worldwide	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	<p>FPU continued to provide legal support to media workers. In 2020, 104 journalists/ media activists in distress received legal support via partners, and 58 directly from FPU. In addition, 16 media organisations in distress received legal/financial support. FPU set up a pilot insurance project that insures 90 local journalists for a period of 1 year in Central America, which gave us useful insights into the challenges of securing insurance for local media professionals.</p> <p>FPU also supported 2 strategic litigation cases that had been initiated in 2019, and supported 6 new strategic litigation projects. The proceedings address issues such as the responsibility of states to protect the safety of journalists, and change legal frameworks around media cases.</p> <p>Legal research into how existing laws are used to safeguard and erode media freedom in 4 countries (Iraq, Serbia, Tunisia and Egypt) was completed.</p>		<p>FPU developed a comprehensive safety training with physical, digital and psychosocial components to alleviate the threats against female journalists. This training will be piloted in 2021.</p> <p>FPU developed a psychosocial safety training for female journalists in the MENA region, including a peer-to-peer support group. Due to Covid-19, this training had to be cancelled, but individual psychosocial support was offered to the participants via one-on-one sessions with a therapist.</p>
Keeping it Real	Swedish Postcode Lottery Foundation Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs		Based on research carried out in 2019, FPU implemented a pilot project on media literacy in South Africa. We used a new approach in the pilot workshop with a group of teenagers. The results were successful; the workshop improved their understanding and appreciation of reliable news, compared to a control group that did not follow this methodology.	
Lost in Europe; renamed Mind the Children Europe	Dutch Postcode Lottery	By supporting the collective of journalists Lost in Europe to produce stories on the issue of missing refugee children in Europe, and in partnership with Defence for Children-ECPAT Netherlands, awareness was raised among European citizens and policy makers. As a result, questions were asked in the European Parliament on the disappearance of child migrants.	<p>In partnership with Lost in Europe and Defence for Children, FPU investigated the disappearances of migrant children. The network expanded into 3 new European countries, and added 8 new journalists to their team. Together they produced over 50 articles and 9 broadcasts, reaching millions of Europeans.</p> <p>The journalists' capacity was built through online trainings, and a new website was launched, including a whistleblowing platform.</p>	FPU compared five tools for the development of a platform where journalists of Lost in Europe can safely save, search and share documents and information. Development of the tool is planned for 2021.

Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
Mali	<p>Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs</p> <p>Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs</p> <p>European Union</p>	<p>FPU supported APPEL Mali, an informal movement of online media organisations advocating for an extended and inclusive media law for online journalism. FPU supported its members to create synergies and to organise advocacy campaigns towards the authorities.</p> <p>In the framework of the civic observatory project OCCIPRE, the digital platform SIRA was developed to monitor human rights violations in Mali (including violations against freedom of speech and freedom of the press). In the 4th quarter of 2020, 120 human rights violations were registered and verified by Tuwindi and Amnesty Mali. One SIRA report was presented to the Malian public.</p> <p>103 human rights observers (of whom 39 journalists and bloggers) received capacity building in monitoring human rights.</p>	<p>FPU supported partner Kunafoni.com to produce online content for young and urban people who want to be informed of, and involved in, current affairs. In total 48 web TV shows were produced.</p> <p>FPU supported partner Cultur'elles to produce the second season of the interactive reality TV programme "l'instant Thé", giving Malian youth a platform to engage as full members of their society. Young people were invited to produce awareness videos on Covid-19, and 30 videos were sent in. The 5 videos that received the most likes on l'instant Thé's Facebook page won a prize.</p> <p>FPU supported partner Sahelien.com, an online news outlet operating in the Sahel region in collaboration with citizen journalists, to engage with local authorities and hold them accountable for the lack of inclusion of the local population in decision-making. The authorities have centralised information, and in most health facilities doctors are not authorised to speak to journalists without the approval of a hierarchical authority.</p> <p>With FPU support, partner Tuwindi developed a free fact-checking app to fight against the spread of fake news during the Covid-19 pandemic. Within 5 months of its release, the app had been downloaded 1,270 times and 50 media outlets in Mali use it to verify any suspicious information, before sharing it with the public. A dedicated team of professional journalists was made available to fact check the incoming requests registered in the app. Among the 420 requests registered so far, more than 390 were fact checked and 63% of these were classified as fake news.</p> <p>67 Malian bloggers (20 women) participated in the development of a digital platform for the monitoring of governmental actions, XENSA.</p> <p>76 journalists (37 women) were trained by APPEL Mali, Amnesty Mali, Tuwindi and FPU on inclusive reporting on human rights and corruption.</p> 	<p>FPU supported partner Tuwindi to implement training and awareness-raising activities for journalists and media outlets on gender-sensitive reporting. Media outlets were coached and prepared to apply for a gender media label (GIP). The GIP label is a quality standard for Malian media companies with a proven commitment to gender equality. 6 media audited in 2020 already received their certification in the 1st edition of GIP (2018), and were due for renewal. In total, 10 media outlets were granted the GIP certification this year.</p> <p>67 bloggers (20 women) received social media and online security training from Tuwindi in the framework of OCCIPRE. A group of 94 journalists inform on, alert and exchange political and (lack of) security issues on a daily basis.</p>

Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
			<p>FPU partner URTEL trained 28 journalists in the north of Mali on participative youth radio and video editing for social media. URTEL also trained 8 radio producers to design and produce a participatory youth programme, contributing to the fight against violent extremism and to the inclusion and resilience of young people. The programme was broadcast by 24 radio stations in the central and northern regions.</p> <p>25 weekly youth radio shows were produced locally and aired by 24 radio stations in northern Mali under the name M-Stars. In the framework of 24 youth radio clubs, more than 200 young people directly engaged in discussions about values, challenges and solutions for young people.</p> <p>URTEL also had 15 investigative articles on human rights violations in Mali produced and published by local media.</p>	
Media4-Democracy Global	European Union			FPU developed a handbook for EU delegations on safety of journalists and freedom of expression. The handbook was distributed among all EU delegations worldwide and provides practical tips and tools on how to follow up on cases of repression.
Media Freedom Rapid Response Europe	European Commission - DG Connect	Together with a consortium of media development organisations working on the safety of journalists in the MFFR project, FPU advocated for the Europe-wide protection of press freedom through sharing open letters and statements to the public and policy makers. The project is also involved in a range of fact-finding, fast response and advocacy missions on safety journalists across European countries.		Through the MFRR, FPU provided emergency support to 24 European journalists and assisted 254 journalists with protection materials during the Covid-19 crisis.
Money Trail Global	Dutch Postcode Lottery through Oxfam Novib			The Money Trail project supports investigative journalists from Africa, Asia and Europe with training and story grants. In line with its role in this consortium project, FPU advised journalists on digital security through a website with resources and a technical support desk. Due to Covid-19, the 2 training rounds for Asian and African journalists were cancelled. The curriculum will be converted to online workshops to be organised in 2021.

Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
Myanmar	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs		Activities focussed on investigative journalism and support for the investigative unit of partner Myanmar Now. This allowed Myanmar Now to increase the number of long stories as well as its readership. FPU also supported a digital security training for Myanmar Now staff.	<p>FPU supported the Myanmar Press Freedom Centre to improve the connection with its membership, by raising awareness among media professionals.</p> <p>FPU supported partner Burma News International (BNI) and 15 members (news outlets) to make stories on Covid-19 in local languages to people living in remote areas in Myanmar, India, Bangladesh, and Thailand. BNI also distributed protective gear to each outlet in the form of masks, gloves, sanitisers, face shields and body suits.</p>
Nepal	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	<p>FPU supported partner Freedom Forum to run a legal help desk and to advocate for an improved legal environment for the media. As a result, 2 suspects in the murders of journalists have been brought to trial. Also, several journalists were released after pressure from Freedom Forum.</p> <p>Freedom Forum reviewed the draft bill concerning public service broadcasting (PSB) and provided suggestions for change.</p>	<p>FPU and Freedom Forum continued the quarterly media monitoring studies on gender representation in Nepal's media content, combined with meetings with editors to present the findings. The results showed that the percentage of women used as sources in national media and news with female by-lines has increased.</p> <p>Through an investigative journalism fellowship, partner NEFEJ strengthened the capacities of journalists to produce environmental stories and hold powers to account.</p> <p>NayaPusta continued to produce a news bulletin for children three times per week. In relation to Covid-19, NayaPusta reported on children's quarantined life, their health, long way home by foot and many more issues. Sarokar Television has begun broadcasting the programme, thereby increasing its audience. Linked to this, media literacy programmes were held in secondary schools (total 91 participants).</p>	<p>Together with Working Women Journalists (WWJ), FPU empowered 10 talented young female journalists within newsrooms through a fellowship programme, which includes a mentorship. They produced a feature story for the media outlets where they worked.</p> <p>WWJ and FPU carried out research among 520 media professionals, on the status of women and the obstacles they face in Nepali media, which will serve as a stepping stone towards improving that situation. The results of this study were communicated to important stakeholders during a meeting.</p> <p>With FPU's support, Freedom Forum studied the impact of Covid-19 on Nepali media. The conclusion: the media's weakened watchdog role will adversely affect the democratic ecosystem in Nepal. 38 percent of journalists had lost their jobs due to the pandemic. To alleviate the impact, FPU provided 165 journalists with protective equipment.</p>

Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
Niger	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	FPU organised an award ceremony for the promotion of gender equality through and in the media on 30 November, national Press Freedom Day in Niger.	<p>With support from FPU, partner APAC organised an investigative journalism training which resulted in 18 investigations.</p> <p>FPU also supported APAC to launch the Mariam Keita award to promote gender-sensitive reporting, and honour the best productions.</p> <p>Our partner CENOZO collaborated with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) and with journalists from 18 African countries, to investigate more than 200,000 suspicious financial transactions in 180 different countries between 1999 and 2017. These so-called FinCEN files sparked debate over the role of banks in the fight against money laundering. The African journalists were part of a global team of < 400 journalists from 88 countries. The documents were leaked from the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network and published globally on 20 September 2020, highlighting that banks (including HSBC, Barclays, Standard Chartered, Deutsche Bank and JP Morgan) and the US government were aware of illicit activities but did not stop it. FPU contributed financially to CENOZO's investigations. In January 2021, the director of FPU partner L'Événement was tried in Niger for his contribution to the FinCEN files.</p>	<p>Together with print press journal L'Événement, FPU created a news website with daily news flashes. FPU supported the editorial team to make the shift to online and set up a marketing campaign in order to increase their audience. L'Événement was also supported with a series of investigative articles. The team produced 757 articles on their website, including 150 articles on Covid-19 (preventive measures, symptoms etc.). More than 100,000 people visited the new website in 2020.</p> <p>FPU continued support to partner Aïr Info that runs an online news site in Agadez, a remote region where people have limited access to independent and reliable news. We trained 12 journalists in multimedia techniques and video editing. After Aïr Info started to upload videos to its articles, the website's views increased to 1 million. Due to the quality of the articles, the number of followers on Facebook increased to 244,000. Aïr Info is the only media outlet in Agadez that covers topics such as gender-based violence, human rights, the safety context etc..</p>

Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
Nigeria	<p>Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs</p> <p>Dutch Embassy in Abuja</p>	<p>FPU supported the online publication of the State of Press Freedom in Nigeria report, which was launched on 2 November. The State of Press Freedom is an advocacy tool to highlight the poor status of press freedom in Nigeria's nascent democracy and the complicity of state actors. The report challenges the legality of the laws that constrain press freedom, and puts the spotlight on issues such as media sustainability, media and tech, and its implications for press freedom.</p>	<p>FPU supported the creation of gender-sensitive human interest content by partner PAGED about conflict-ridden areas in the north of Nigeria. They produced a documentary called "DISPLACED", that examines the needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in 3 states during the Covid-19 pandemic, focusing mainly on gender needs. The film was screened 20 times to about 400 IDPs, followed by a discussion to enable them to express their frustration, anger and despair at the complete neglect by the government. PAGED successfully reached out to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and the Federal Ministry of Health, in order to start a dialogue. PAGED visited both institutions accompanied by journalists and representatives from the IDP camps. The NHRC was grateful for the meeting, since they usually lack direct information while trying to investigate human rights violations. At the Federal Ministry of Health, the director for special duties and his team were shocked and sympathetic after watching the documentary. He promised to mobilise the primary healthcare board to ensure that every IDP camp has access to basic primary health care.</p>	<p>FPU and PAGED trained 10 male and 15 female journalists/editors in gender-sensitive reporting, who then produced 57 impactful stories that were published online and 4 stories that were broadcast on radio.</p> <p>In partnership with FPU, the WSCIJ conducted a survey to ascertain the impact of the Female Reporters Leadership Programme (FRLP) initiated in 2017. According to the 67 respondents, numerous outcomes can be attributed to the implementation of the FRLP. Some of these include: increased skills in gender sensitivity and mainstreaming, leading in the newsroom, public skills and presentation, and reporting for impact. Fellows have also acquired increased access and exposure to international training, achieved career progress and workplace promotion, and gained scholarship support and grants for the development of soft skills.</p> <p>In February, FPU and its partner Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism continued to provide capacity building on conflict-sensitive reporting and safety, to 46 students (26 women) at Nasarawa State University, Keffi. This training was held under the project "Media narratives on conflict and humanitarian crises in Nigeria". The project (kick-started in September 2018) aims to contribute to more professional, unbiased media that function as a change catalyst in Nigerian society.</p>

Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
Pakistan	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	<p>Through the advocacy efforts of our partner Digital Rights Foundation (DRF), specific attention was paid to the safety and psychosocial wellbeing of female journalists, by addressing the issue of harassment - both online and in the workplace. DRF raised awareness for the harassment faced by female journalists and the need for (digital) safety training. It called for action against the murderers of female journalists - such as the brutal killing of Shaheena Shaheen.</p> <p>DRF and Pakistan Press Foundation PPF took part in national advocacy efforts and discussions concerning the new Journalist Safety, Welfare and Protection Bill. The two FPU partners promoted the inclusion of more safeguards, greater responsibilities from media houses for the protection of journalists and digital security, and for dealing with harassment, particularly of female journalists.</p> <p>As a result of an increased number of Right to Information (RTI) requests filed by the fellows of PPF, authorities, public services and organisations are now more aware of RTI mechanisms. Requests that had not been responded to received more attention, and in some instances this even resulted in fines for those ignoring a request.</p>	<p>FPU continued to support a fellowship for <u>investigative journalism</u>, established in 2013 by PPF. In 2020, 34 journalists completed the fellowship, resulting in the publication of 100 investigative reports. The fellowship focused on the use of RTI mechanisms and the effective use of data in reporting. The participants were coached in their investigations and publications by a senior journalist.</p> <p>FPU supported the continued growth and capacity development of our partner Tribal News Network (TNN) in online and radio content, to increase the information flow in media dark areas. TNN's journalists were trained in the production of in-depth and long-form reports, as well as in multimedia content for online publication. As a result, the legitimacy of TNN as a source of quality journalism increased. On 15 April, TNN produced a story on the sufferings of Afghan refugees living in camps in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the lockdown. The story revealed that most of the Afghan refugees living in these camps are labourers and workers who have lost their source of income during the coronavirus lockdown and now find it difficult to make ends meet. After the story was published, a UNHCR spokesman approached TNN and sought contact with the refugees who had talked to TNN, in order for UNHCR to provide support. The BBC followed up with a video report on the sufferings of these Afghan refugees.</p> <p>FPU supported the launch of a new online platform aimed at covering digital rights from an intersectional lens: the Digital 50:50 Magazine. Launched by DRF, with many contributions from their Network of Women Journalists for Digital Rights, the magazine offers a platform for critical reporting on issues such as online harassment, mental health, freedom of expression and the right to privacy.</p>	<p>As a result of coaching and the development of a business plan, TNN has been successful in diversifying their revenue streams between donor funding and commercial income. The main development for a more stable income is the establishment of TNN's own radio station in the Mardan district, which was a key aspect of the business plan developed with FPU. With this radio station TNN is able to sell air-time to advertisers and produce more quality and quantity programmes that could be shared with other stations for social impact and shared revenue. FPU has supported TNN over the years in experimenting with various formats and platforms for content sharing and revenue generation, including social media, YouTube, their website, mobile bulletins and traditional radio channels. Several of these have generated new and growing income streams.</p> <p>FPU brought DRF, TNN and PPF, our partners in Pakistan, together for online training and long-term coaching, to strengthen their capacities in online multimedia content production. Following a needs assessment, each partner received a tailored training and participants were coached in the production of online content.</p> <p>DRF conducted an online training on gender-sensitive reporting for 14 journalists across Pakistan and developed a guidebook on the subject, which was made publicly available online.</p>

Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
Press Freedom Venezuela	Dutch Embassy in Caracas	FPU advocated for an enabling environment for the media and for safety for media workers.	FPU supported Armando.info in investigative journalism and portrayal, and to involve audiences in its content production. An opinion piece summarising investigations carried out in recent years by Armando.info into the money laundering activities of Alex Saab, a Colombian businessman close to President Maduro, was accepted by the New York Times. It shares how these publications contributed to Saab's recent arrest in Cape Verde, where his extradition to the United States is being negotiated. This was a victory for investigative journalism in Venezuela.	FPU supported the further professionalisation of media houses and their economic viability. In collaboration with the Venezuelan trade union of journalists SNTP, FPU carried out an audience research on the media landscape. The study focused on the media consumption behaviour in rural and urban areas in Venezuela.
PRIMED Global	British Government (FCDO)			In the PRIMED consortium (Protecting Independent Media for Effective Development), FPU worked with consortium members and media partners in Bangladesh, Sierra Leone and Ethiopia on building resilience to political and economic pressures, as well as gender equality in the media. Based on desk research, we wrote a gender brief to inform the consortium of evidence and knowledge gaps. FPU also helped to develop a clear implementation plan and division of tasks in Bangladesh for the coming years.
Publeaks The Netherlands	Contributions from media members		FPU supports whistleblowing platforms that allow sources to anonymously share information with journalists, in order to hold powerholders accountable. Due to increased publicity efforts of Publeaks, and the pandemic, the number of tips received by the media increased sixfold. Some anonymous tips led to critical reporting and revelations about wrongdoings, crimes and privacy breaches that otherwise would not have surfaced.	Together with the Publeaks Foundation, media participating in Publeaks increased from 16 to 21.
Reporters Respond Worldwide	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs			Reporters Respond continued to provide emergency support to media workers in distress. Globally, 139 individuals received support (28 women), and 3,113 journalists received Covid-19 protection materials. FPU also supported a workshop on psychosocial safety for over 160 journalists in Venezuela.

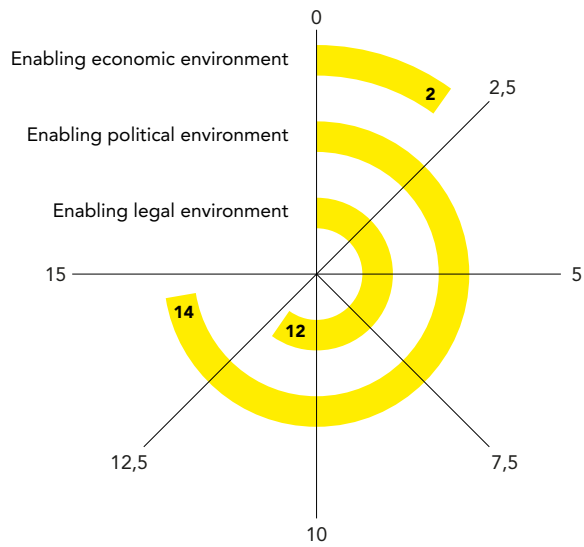
Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
Strengthening Eurasia News (SEN) Programme Eurasia region	Several funders		FPU supported co-productions and formats for the dissemination of “hard” topics such as human rights abuse and journalism investigations.	FPU increased the capacity of media professionals to engage with new types of audiences. Special attention was given to financial viability and sustainability through business model experimentation, new formats, and audience engagement strategies. Dialogue and knowledge exchange was facilitated between Central American and Eastern European media outlets, which provided insights about how media can help to overcome conflict and reduce tensions in society, particularly in highly polarised societies.
Radio Tamazuj South Sudan	Several funders		FPU supported Radio Tamazuj in the provision of independent news, information, education and women’s programmes for the audience in South Sudan, where access to reliable information is restricted. FPU coached the team of Radio Tamazuj further in their pursuit of becoming independent (to be finalised in 2021).	FPU supported Radio Tamazuj with implementing Covid-19-proof operations, enabling the radio station to continue its broadcast activities throughout the first year of the pandemic. FPU trained Radio Tamazuj’s staff in professional journalism, covering topics such as gender sensitivity and gender equality, safety, (digital) security, innovative reporting, audio techniques, presentation of programmes/hosting, and audience interaction. Radio Tamazuj’s content was monitored by independent media experts on journalistic principles, code of conduct and gender sensitivity.
Radio Dabanga Sudan	Several funders	Radio Dabanga successfully adapted to the changes in Sudan, following the country’s revolution and transition to democracy, as well as the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.	In its broadcast and online content, Radio Dabanga changed its programming to reflect the political and social changes within the country. It developed new programmes on transitional justice and how democracy works, and an interactive current affairs programme based on questions and issues connected with Sudan’s transition to democracy. Women played an influential role in the 2019 revolution, and this was reflected in Dabanga’s audio content, with four programmes being produced and presented by women journalists. Across online, social media and radio, the editorial team covered all aspects of the corona crisis, not only its impact on health but also its social and economic impact. A special weekly radio programme focused on up-to-date factual information, expert interviews, and discussion.	Throughout the pandemic, Radio Dabanga managed to remain on-air and online, by adapting its working practices to the lockdowns in the Netherlands and Sudan. Organisationally, Radio Dabanga completed the process required to become an independent foundation, with full registration in February 2021.

Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
Somalia	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs European Union	<p>FPU and its media support partner SOLJA improved awareness among Somali security forces on the rights and existing laws that protect journalists in Somalia. This was organised through the successful “peace councils”, in line with UNESCO’s National Mechanism for Safety of Journalists in Somalia. The aim is to draft a common action plan to increase the safety of journalists.</p> <p>In Puntland, FPU partner Media Association of Puntland (MAP), and other civil society stakeholders, collaborated successfully for the release of journalists on bail.</p>	<p>Media productions on youth and gender issues that challenge (inter)cultural issues were produced by media outlet partners Radio Hirad, Somali Faces, net-citizens and CSOs. In August, FPU partner Media Ink conducted 2 weeks of training in Hargeisa for 15 participants from CSOs, citizen journalists from different media outlets, self-employed journalists and bloggers. Topics covered were in-depth investigative stories, improving the quality of storytelling, and fact-checking. Media Ink developed a dedicated website (www.radiohirad.com) and social media engagement for the stories produced by Hirad.</p> <p>With FPU’s support, partners SOLJA, MAP and FESOJ successfully collaborated to deliver a media content monitoring report covering Somaliland, Puntland and south-central Somalia. They presented the findings of the 35-day media monitoring to the media executives and owners through a conference; the aim was to inform them on the areas for improvement. The findings will also be used to inform on capacity building for journalists from Somalia/Somaliland.</p>	<p>In relation to Covid-19, MAP and FPU developed a health and safety protocol for media houses, while Media Ink and FPU organised an online training for media professionals on Covid-19 reporting. 70 journalists (15 female and 55 male) from various media outlets in Somali regions and neighbouring countries participated.</p>
South Africa	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	<p>Wits University was supported to improve an online course on advocacy for better policies and practices in media freedom and freedom of expression in Africa. The course is dedicated to and seeks to expand on the work of the late Southern African activist, Jeanette Minnie, who was devoted to robust civil society engagement with African media policy.</p> <p>As a result, the number of participants increased in Ghana, Zambia, Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho, Eswatini, Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda and Kenya. Participation by women also increased as compared to previous years: the course achieved a 50/50 gender parity in participants.</p>		

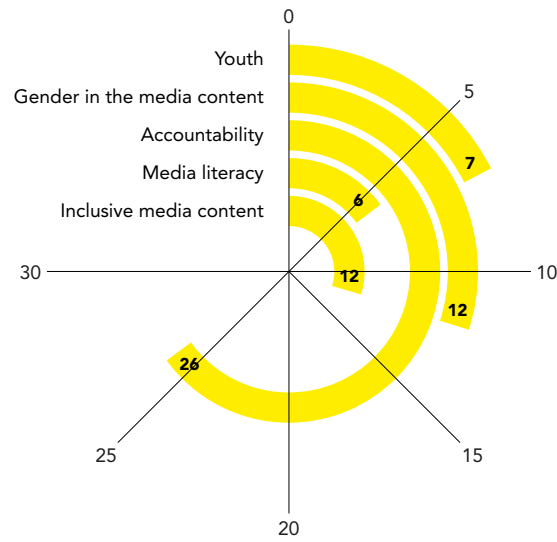
Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
<p>Ethical Journalism</p> <p>Syria</p>	Sida		<p>FPU supported 6 media outlets with capacity building on audience engagement and (ethical) journalism, and produced 3 event-based content monitoring reports: on the Afrin attack, on Operation Peace Spring and on the Syrian assembly elections. The reports were discussed at events and in talks with partners, and shared on the FPU website. We also conducted research into audience behaviour, which will be concluded in 2021.</p>	<p>Syrian media partners, consisting of 8 media outlets and 3 media support organisations, were helped with capacity building on institutionalisation and received financial management on a needs basis. 6 partners also received consultancy concerning institutional gender mainstreaming and gender audits of their organisations.</p> <p>2 media partners took the first steps in diversifying their media projects. As a result, 1 partner signed a contract to produce and distribute Arabic children's magazines in Germany. Partnership diversification is key to the sustainability of its operations.</p> <p>With the outbreak of Covid-19, one partner managed to create a live update on its website with details on cases, protection guidelines and preventive measures. This outlet shifted from face-to-face to online interviews, and recordings were made for podcasts.</p> <p>One media partner has setup a membership system and has started collecting membership fees from at least 20 new members.</p> <p>Security and safety of journalists remained an important point of attention. The aim was to find a more holistic approach, integrating physical, digital and psychosocial health and making sure this is an integral part of every training and coaching session. 9 media organisations received 14 consultancy and training sessions.</p>
<p>Totem</p> <p>Worldwide</p>	<p>US State Department (DRL)</p> <p>Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs</p>			<p>Totem, developed with partner Greenhost, is a platform for online courses to help journalists and activists with digital security and privacy tools.</p> <p>In 2020, existing courses were promoted and translated into French, Spanish and Arabic. Two new courses on online harassment of female journalists were developed together with the International Women's Media Foundation. This resulted in nearly 3,500 enrolments on the Totem platform in 2020.</p>

Country / Project name	Donor(s)	IO1	IO2	IO3
Tunisia	Dutch Embassy in Tunis OpenMediaHub		<p>FPU and partner Al Khatt supported youth (13-18 years old) from the Jaridaty network from 5 provinces, linked to 5 youth clubs: Bekalta Today, Radio Palma, Radio Web Metline, Radio Cirta, and Maktaris News. The young people were trained in the production of youth-centred audio-visual cross-media content and podcasts, increasing their ability to reach and engage with younger audiences through youth-centred regional storytelling.</p> <p>FPU and Al Khatt created an online 60-second video challenge for Tunisian youth on the theme “Freedom”, which resulted in more than 500 60-second videos. We partnered with a famous Tunisian YouTuber to reach out to the youth and provide them with online tools to increase their online video storytelling skills.</p> <p>FPU and Al Khatt signed a collaboration agreement with the Tunisian National TV channel Wataniya 2, to broadcast youth-centred content from the Jaridaty network format 3 times a week.</p>	<p>FPU and Al Khatt helped Tunisian youth to improve their story production skills (including their fact checking), media literacy and ethical online behaviour (including privacy and online risk awareness).</p> <p>FPU and Open Media Hub contracted the Assises du Journalisme to organise the second edition of the Assises du Journalisme in Tunis, linking journalists and media practitioners from the MENA region, Europe and Africa. The event was postponed due to Covid-19 pandemic.</p>
UNESCO/SDGs Worldwide	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs	FPU continued to enhance the capacity of UNESCO’s Directorate General (DG) report and to promote the UN development Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development Goal 16.10.		
WADADA	Own contribution FPU EU		<p>In order to continue giving young people a platform for their news, opinions and stories, My #QuarantineLife, a spin-off of the WADADA project, was created when the world went into lockdown from March onwards.</p> <p>Children and youth worldwide were invited to make a 60-90 second videos while in quarantine and share them via an exclusive YouTube channel.</p> <p>Some 120 videos from 27 countries were collected and many of them were broadcast by WADADA partners in Mexico, Bolivia and Zambia, among others, as a new and alternative source of news reporting.</p>	The Covid-19 pandemic had a major and unfortunately negative impact on the development and continuity of WADADA News for Kids. Some partners lost their funding, some were unable to continue their programme because of lockdowns, and new initiatives were postponed or even cancelled. By the end of the year, WADADA became part of the EU-funded Covid-19 Response in Africa (see above) and took the first steps to relaunch news for kids in South Africa early 2021.
Zimbabwe	Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs		Core activities included the continuation of content production focusing on Zimbabwean youth, women and marginalised communities through partner The Feed. The Ghetto Cinemas reached 380 young Zimbabweans.	FPU supported The Feed to organise three “She Reports” mentorship programmes on mobile reporting for 135 young women and 15 young men. The Feed also trained students who want to become journalists. Two Maker Camps and 2 Masterclasses led to an increase in The Feed’s contributor base to 20 contributors.

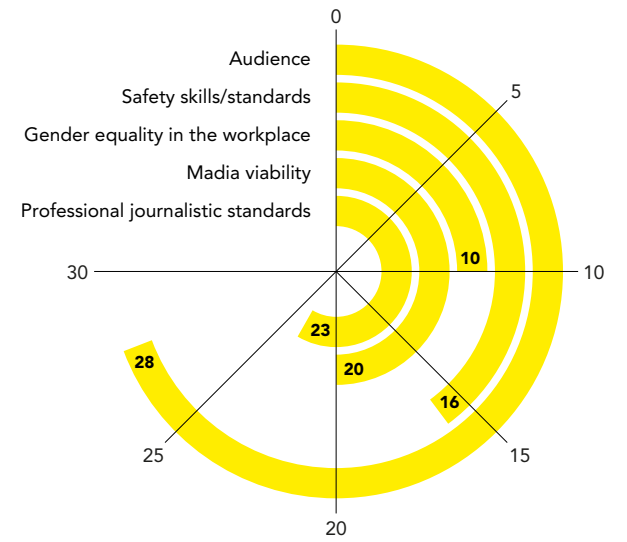
Number of short-term outcomes under I01



Number of short-term outcomes under I02



Number of short-term outcomes under I03



Number of outcomes of FPU's programmes in 2020

Our stakeholders

Our partners

Cooperation with local media organisations is extremely valuable to Free Press Unlimited; they are our most important stakeholders. Together, we have developed and implemented multiple projects that provide millions of people with access to independent and reliable information. In 2020, Free Press Unlimited worked with 96 partners (2019: 92) in 39 countries (2019: 44). During this corona-dominated year, cooperating was more complicated than ever before, as we were unable to have face to face meetings, which are the best way to support our partners' work. We are proud to say that, despite these extraordinary circumstances, our partners managed to continue their important work – which we highlighted as much as possible in campaigns such as 'Together for Reliable Information' (see page 16).

According to these local media organisations, what makes our partnerships unique, is that Free Press Unlimited provides genuine support, is committed to true partnership, and does not impose any decisions on its partners.

Equally, partners value the support of Free Press Unlimited, as our 7th annual Partner Satisfaction Survey demonstrates. The survey was organised in November 2020 by our K&Q team, and had a response rate of 67%. Overall, we scored even better than in 2019: a positive 4.09 on a scale of -5 to 5 (2019: 3.63). According to these local media organisations, what makes our partnerships unique, is that Free Press Unlimited provides genuine support, is committed to true partnership, and does not impose any decisions on its partners. This appreciation echoes some of the conclusions in the NNIBN end evaluation: partners feel that their relationship with us is qualitatively different and closer than with other INGOs and donors.

Other interesting outcomes of the survey are:

- The partners score the allocation of financial resources, and the support to mobilise more financial resources comparatively lower than other aspects (3.45 and 3.48 respectively).
- There is a large and significant increase in the score for monitoring and evaluation support, which scored 2.95 in 2019 and 4.24 in 2020.
- As in previous years, partners gave the relationship and communication between FPU and partners the highest score.

Our donors

A friend in need is a friend indeed. Our donors turned out to be true friends of independent journalism during the highly challenging year of 2020, for which Free Press Unlimited is particularly grateful. The European Commission, for instance, created a lifeline for small and medium-sized newsrooms, by funding our programme "COVID-19 response in Africa: Together for Reliable Information", which supports media outlets in 17 sub-Saharan African countries.

In 2020, we also continued to cooperate with Dutch embassies across the world, to work on safety and an enabling environment for journalists, addressing gender inequality, quality journalism production, and income generation for independent journalists and media houses. Sadly, our strategic partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs came to an end in 2020, and our proposal under the new strategic partnership Power of Voices was rejected. However, thanks to the Dutch Human Rights Fund, Free Press Unlimited was able to continue its Justice & Safety programme, which provides legal assistance, insurance, and safety training to journalists worldwide. We also appreciate the much-needed continuation of EU-funding for our emergency support fund Reporters Respond.

Free Press Unlimited moved forward in building relationships with other large donors in 2020. Pre-positioning ourselves resulted in direct requests to develop proposals, such as "Improving Access to



Diverse, Independent and Trusted Sources of Information in Venezuela”, which is funded by the European Union delegation in Caracas. Other large donors include Sida, which continues to support our Syria Ethical Journalism project. Several projects, including our Totem project, which provides digital security courses for journalists, received welcome support from US government funding.

Our Prague-based Eurasian News Exchange programme has grown into a brand name for independent content production in Eastern Europe and Central Asia; it continues to be funded by several European foreign affairs ministries, among others. In 2020, we also received generous support from FCDO for the 4-year PRIMED project, which supports public interest media in poor and under-resourced media markets.

One of our most generous and consistent supporters is the Dutch Postcode Lottery, through its millions of participants. With an annual contribution of €900,000 it is our main core funder. The Postcode Lottery plays a crucial role in supporting civil society in the Netherlands. In a world where civil society and democracy are increasingly under attack, the Postcode Lottery continues to fund daring projects such as A Safer World for the Truth, which in 2020 started its investigations into the murder of journalists.

In 2020, Free Press Unlimited submitted 41 proposals, 9 of which were still pending by the end of this year. Of the remaining 32 submissions, 23 were approved: a success rate of 72%. In total, we succeeded in raising about €13.5 million for our projects in 2020, an amount similar to 2019. We thank all our donors for this continued support and their solidarity to our mission.

Our Friends

We appreciate the loyal Friends who support Free Press Unlimited’s cause with their time, commitment and continuous financial assistance. We would have loved to be in closer live contact with our Friends throughout this year, but unfortunately we were limited to communicating with them through mail and email. So, we have sent them multiple personal cards, updates on how their donation contributed to our mission, and regular newsletters.

We warmly welcome the almost 60 new Friends who joined us in 2020 after Free Press Unlimited’s nationwide campaign focusing on Safety for Journalists, which started in October 2020. Our new Friends are part of the 180 new private donors who showed their care for and engagement with journalists around the world. They financially supported the brave media workers who stood strong amidst threats and Covid-19 restrictions, to

provide their audiences with reliable news. On top of these encouraging numbers, our End of Year campaign about the devastating impact of algorithms on reliable information, resulted in another 120 donations. We hope and will do our utmost to keep these new donors and our current Friends engaged with Free Press Unlimited. A total of €76,611 was received through our private and major donors, for which we would like to say a big thank you!

Our audience

Telling the many impressive stories about the media professionals we support, is the way for Free Press Unlimited to engage a general public with our work. Although the year 2020 was very unpredictable, we succeeded in bringing special stories in various ways. Unfortunately, Our Live Tour, the planned follow-up of a 2019 pilot, was cancelled due to the Covid-19 restrictions. However, we came up with interesting alternatives, such as a series of podcasts and two series of livestreams. In April, we launched our campaign "Together for Reliable Information".

As part of this campaign, we produced podcasts which were broadcast via Soundcloud and our website, on Journalism during Covid-19. In each broadcast, an expert of Free Press Unlimited highlighted the inspiring initiatives of our partners, from Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe to Africa and the MENA region. Our Emerging Stories (see above) were produced in cooperation with Pakhuis De Zwijger and Noor; the livecasts were followed by more than 600 viewers every week.

In September we launched the fourth printed edition of our newspaper "No News is Bad News", full of personal stories about the impact of our work. Since our ambition is to reach a larger audience, we decided to bring a commercial on Dutch public television. For two weeks we exposed our impactful video, reaching more than 5.5 million people of 25 years and older, with an average contact frequency of 4.2. The TV exposure was reinforced by a radio commercial which we broadcast in the same period.

Social media

Every year we try to engage more people in our work. We send newsletters, improve our website with interesting news articles and use our social media channels to increase our visibility. Each month we send a Dutch-language email newsletter to more than 1,550 subscribers and an English version to almost 1,270 subscribers. Our website had about 112,000 visitors in 2020.

Our audience increasingly engages with Free Press Unlimited through social media. The number of Twitter followers grew to 12,820 in 2020 (2019: 10,900), and our LinkedIn network expanded considerably from 2,100 (2019) to 3,420 people. The engagement figures of our Facebook friends counted 20,196. We have 590 subscribers to our YouTube channel and we saw the number of Instagram followers increase to 1,385.

Free Press Live 2020

Free Press Live is our annual event to highlight the need to stand up for the safety of journalists worldwide. In 2020, a year dominated by corona, our 7th edition of Free Press Live took place as a live webinar on 5 November, brought by Nadia Moussaid directly from Desmet Studios in Amsterdam. A positive effect of this online format was that we welcomed people from all over the world: Burundi, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Korea, Somalia, Germany, USA, Brazil, Bangladesh and Moldavia. Our keynote speaker, EC Vice-President for Values and Transparency Věra Jourová, underlined the importance of reliable information and called on everyone to fight impunity.

We were especially proud to present our special awards to Maria Ressa, a renowned Philippine advocate for press freedom, who was chosen as the Most Resilient Journalist of 2020, and to Bianca Albu, a brave Romanian investigative journalist, who received our Newcomer of the Year – Hans Verploeg Award. In a live connection, Maria Ressa responded and spoke about her drive to continue her battle to defend press freedom:

"I get an average of 90 hate messages per hour, and have been detained by my government. But when they detain me, they unshackle me, because I am fighting for my rights. What we do as journalists is important, we can't stop holding power to account. So we move forward one step at a time."

Influencing decision-makers

Press freedom internationally

One of Free Press Unlimited's many policy and advocacy initiatives to promote press freedom, was our contribution to The Hague Commitment to increase the Safety of Journalists during the 2020 World Press Freedom Conference (WPFC). We also coordinated inputs from the international CSO coalition on the safety of journalists to this ministerial declaration, signed by 53 states. Because of these efforts, the text includes references to the legal pressure journalists endure, the threats that female journalists face, the need for effective investigations into cases of violence and the obligation to bring perpetrators to justice at national level.

At the conference, Free Press Unlimited, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNESCO and the Asser Institute also launched the Forum of Legal Actors. We brought together some 40 judges, prosecutors, lawyers, legal experts and representatives from institutions, who aim to defend the freedom of expression, effectively protect journalists from legal repression and harassment, and end impunity for violence against journalists. We also organised a session on gender, diversity and inclusion, exploring how this influences media content and vice versa, and linking this to the importance of equal representation in newsrooms.

Gender equality in the media

In line with the increasing recognition of Free Press Unlimited as a specialist on gender and media, we were meant to co-host a side event at the 2020 session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). It was, however, cancelled due to Covid-19. We coordinated a joint statement of 10 women in the media organisations, calling on the member states to recognise the crucial role of media in achieving gender equality. In 2020, Free Press Unlimited also joined the IWMF Coalition Against Online Violence, to help end the online attacks against female journalists.

The international CSO Safety Coalition, established by Free Press Unlimited three years ago, met with the new UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression

Irene Khan, and pleaded for a joint investigation with Special Rapporteurs into murder cases on journalists. Khan expressed the need to work with press freedom organisations like Free Press Unlimited, in order to counter the current challenges. Furthermore, she has a clear ambition to focus on gender and media issues.

Advocacy in the EU and the Netherlands

At the European level, we successfully advocated for the inclusion of press freedom in the European Democracy Action Plan. The Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) is an important growing asset in this fight. In May 2020, Free Press Unlimited joined the coalition that leads the MFRR, which tracks, monitors and responds to violations of press and media freedom in EU member states and candidate countries. We also continued to exert pressure on the European Commission to act against the deteriorating state of press freedom in Hungary, Poland and Slovenia, among others.

A globally published [op-ed](#) by Free Press Unlimited on how the Covid-19 crisis has compounded the challenges facing journalists, illustrates the potential death of independent journalism because of the resource crisis. This links to another battle evolving in 2020, namely the power of Big Tech companies over our space for public debate. The negative role of algorithms in the increase of hate speech and disinformation began to lead to policy changes. This will be a battleground for press freedom organisations like FPU for years to come.

In the Netherlands, we organised a virtual round table, held meetings with Members of Parliament, and developed a frequently quoted research report to convince them of the importance of reliable information for development - notably in times of Covid-19. Also, we advocated for the amendment of two Dutch laws that curb the freedom of journalists (requiring government permission to travel to "terrorist held areas") and threaten journalistic source protection by collecting bulk data from citizens (Wiv 2017). Requested to submit input to the evaluation of the Wiv Act, Free Press Unlimited focused on the multiple breaches that have already occurred.

Organisation

Our organisational structure, a closely linked network of five project teams and seven support departments, fits the knowledge organisation that Free Press Unlimited has become. This structure evidently stimulates the sharing of knowledge and expertise within the organisation, and helps us to continuously improve our programmes.

The programme staff meet once a month in Communities of Practice, to exchange knowledge/ thematic knowledge and research results. Each project team has a team leader, four of the support departments (Communications, Knowledge & Quality, Donor Relations, and Finance) have a department head, and the other three are steered directly by the Board of Directors. The teams range in size from 2.8 FTE (Eurasia) to 12.4 FTE in the large Sudan team.

Governance

Free Press Unlimited's governance structure is similar to that of 2019, with an equal Board of Directors and a Board of Supervisors with a revised profile.

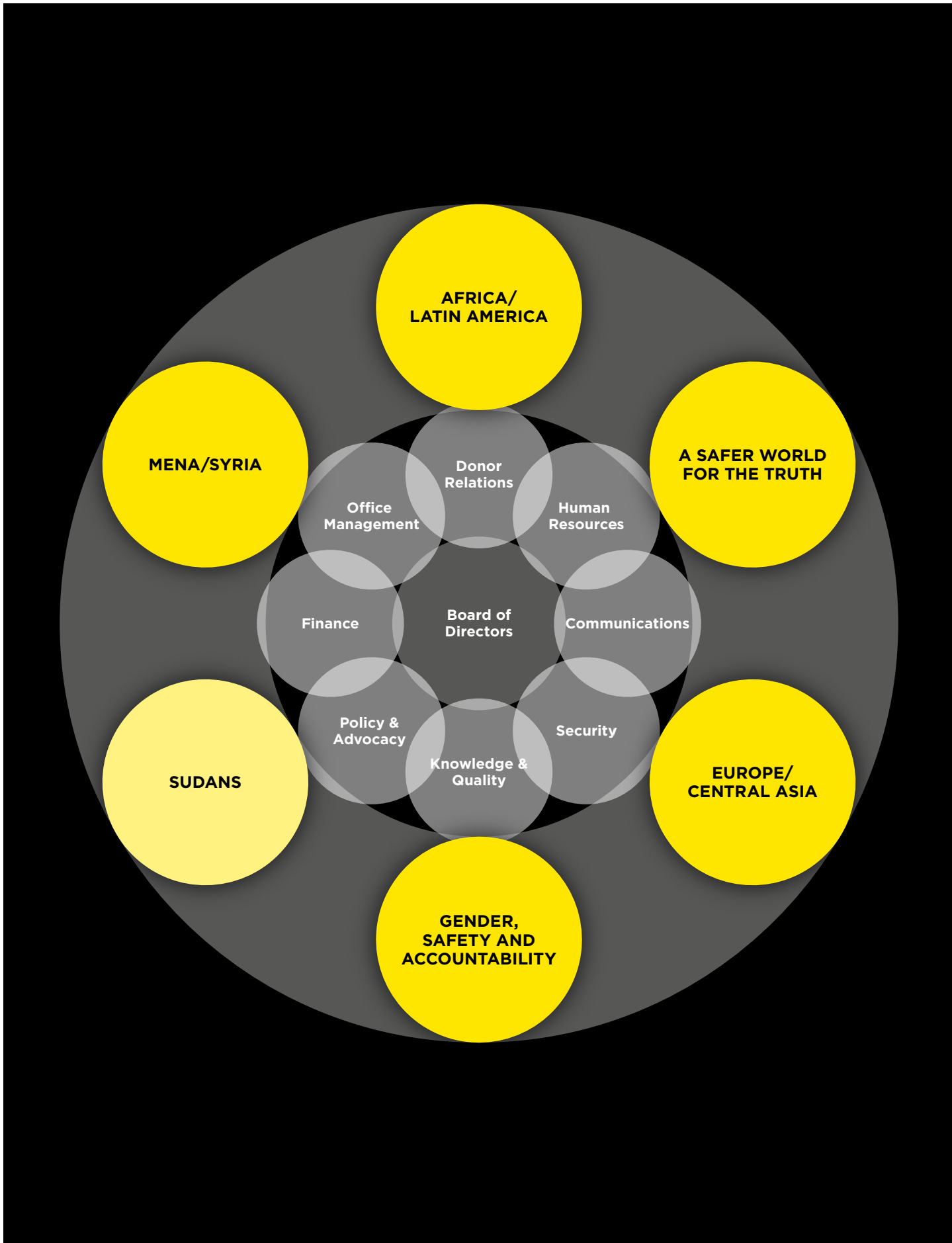
The board consists of Leon Willems (Director Policy & Programmes) and Ruth Kronenburg (Director of Operations), and is responsible for daily management including strategy, policy, finance, human resources, etc. This Executive Team is responsible for daily policy management and is accountable to the Supervisory Board. The annual gross remuneration of the Directors

(Leon Willems € 130,685 and Ruth Kronenburg €126,494) is in line with the remuneration scheme for directors set out by SBF Code for Good Governance (replaces the Wijffels Code). Their unpaid additional activities are as special adviser to the Global Forum for Media Development (Leon Willems) and member of the advisory committee of Pro Bono Connect (until June 2020) and of the TNI Supervisory Board (Ruth Kronenburg).

In 2020, Free Press Unlimited also joined the IWMF Coalition Against Online Violence, to help end the online attacks against female journalists.

Rather than having a limited management team, Free Press Unlimited holds a strategic management meeting. This is a monthly meeting of the directors, team leaders and department heads. In addition, all team leaders and heads meet every month to discuss and co-ordinate operational matters that are important for the entire organisation, and to support each other as managers.

The Supervisory Board supervises (the management of) the Foundation. The Board acts as the employer of the Managing Directors. The budget, policy and strategy as developed by the Board require prior approval of the Supervisory Board, as well as the annual accounts and certain strategic decisions. See also the report of the Supervisory Board on page 49.



Radio Tamazuj (South Sudan) as well as Radio Dabanga are independent legal entities. We expect them to be fully independent in the course of 2021.

Staff

HR policy

The three pillars of our HR policy demonstrate our appreciation of our employees:

- 1. Employees are the most important asset of the organisation;**
- 2. Free Press Unlimited aims to be an appealing employer;**
- 3. We are constantly working to further professionalise the human resources (HR) department.**

Key to the success of any organisation is to use the talents of its employees in achieving their goals. Performance management plays an important role in supporting our employees to reach their full potential. That is why, in April 2020, we started with "Dialog", an online platform to support our performance management, stimulate conversations, reflection and feedback.

In 2020, we managed to fill several vacancies in the project teams and support teams. We welcomed a total of 15 new staff members, and 13 people left the organisation. During the year, we welcomed 8 interns to our project teams; 2 of them carried out a research internship. By the end of 2020 (2019: 83 in total), our staff consisted of 50 women and 34 men, filling 76.3 FTE of which 1 FTE is located in Poland. The average age is 42 years. Four women and four men hold management positions, alongside a board consisting of one woman and one man.

Wellbeing

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on our work and our personal life. HR offered support and counselling to all employees who needed a sympathetic ear during this crisis time; 3 people made use of this option. Towards the end of 2020, we conducted a "Working from Home" survey, to find out how our staff experienced the new, Covid-related ways of working. Most people were positive about

their increased autonomy and being able to work more effectively. However, a point to be considered was the work-life balance. Overall, people valued their work happiness as satisfactory.

In 2020, the sick leave percentage was 2.8% (2019: 3.81%), including the partial reintegration of 3 employees; the average sick leave percentage in the Netherlands is 5%.

Education and training

In 2020, Free Press Unlimited offered its employees courses in Arabic at various levels, and in French, as well as a training in planning, monitoring & evaluation. All managers followed a talent builders training, so they are better prepared for career and development interviews with their staff. Throughout the year, employees can follow a training in how to use our internal wiki, social media and digital security.

Joining forces to move forward

Taking stock of and dealing with the financial consequences of the Ministry's rejection of our Power of Voices application, was a truly collaborative process. To ensure support for and to make use of creative ideas within the organisation, Free Press Unlimited set up a task force in which several employees participated, including a representative of the Works Council. Together, we decided that preserving our valuable expertise, particularly in the field of advocacy and knowledge and quality, was crucial for the organisation's future. Consequently, no contracts were terminated. However, vacancies will be filled internally and our staff – including the Works Council – agreed on a limited salary increase of 2.5%. During the whole process, all employees were regularly informed of the task force's findings.

Integrity and safeguarding

Integrity policy

Our integrity policy, launched in 2019, is based on two previous Free Press Unlimited policies: a code of conduct and a fraud & corruption policy. Anyone representing FPU – staff, partners, trainers – is required sign the codes and uphold the principles of our integrity policy. In addition, our new employees are informed of this policy during their introduction programme.

Also, our integrity policy is part of all contracts signed with Free Press Unlimited, from external consultants to local partners. In 2020, we spent less time raising internal awareness for this policy than in previous years, due to the corona crisis. Still, in the short period before the outbreak of the pandemic, staff followed trainings on topics such as moral judgement and effective misconduct investigations.

Complaints procedure

An improved complaints and reporting mechanism also forms part of our integrity policy. Our Integrity Officer ensures that the policy is being implemented, and investigates possible cases of misconduct. In 2020, FPU received two official complaints, followed up by our Integrity Committee and registered according to the ISO 9001:2015 procedures. One notification, filed by a private donor referred to the registration procedures of the website. Our Communication team contacted the donor and was able to solve the issue immediately. The other complaint was filed anonymously. As a principle (from health & safety perspective to protect our staff) anonymous complaints are considered inadmissible. In this particular case it was also not possible to verify the complaint by the Integrity Committee..

Still, in the short period before the outbreak of the pandemic, staff followed trainings on topics such as moral judgement and effective misconduct investigations.

Confidential Counsellor

In 2020, the external Confidential Counsellor (CC) received three 3 notifications. For all notifications the CC offered her advice and coached the staff members on how to handle the situation. There were no notifications concerning a misconduct, no official complaint was lodged. The Confidential Counsellor also contacted the Board of Directors in relation to the rejection of our PoV application by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and discussed possible effects for staff members. In addition, she discussed the 2020 Annual Report with the Board of Directors, the Works Council and the HR manager.

Works Council

The Works Council aims to create a fair, healthy and safe working environment at Free Press Unlimited, operating in a positive, constructive and inclusive way. The Works

Council kicked off the year with 5 members, who met on average twice a month, including bilateral meetings. After elections, the Works Council introduced monthly council meetings as well as meetings with the Board of Directors. Works Council meetings are open for colleagues to join as observers, who are encouraged to voice their concerns and opinions. In 2020, the Works Council met twice with the Board of Supervisors, and organised an all-staff meeting to enable discussions with the Board of Supervisors.

Just like all employees, we had to adapt to new ways of working, while at the same time challenges within Free Press Unlimited required our presence and regular contribution. In 2020 the Works Council:

- endorsed a Covid-19 protocol for the Free Press Unlimited and Radio Dabanga office;
- provided feedback to HR and the Board of Directors on a proposed new performance management system;
- monitored the independence process of Radio Dabanga;
- advised on a potential change to our IT infrastructure;
- endorsed the request to maximise the 2021 salary increase for everyone working for Free Press Unlimited to 2.5%;
- had a representative participating in the Task Force set up after the power of voices rejection (see above).



Knowledge, quality and continuity

Free Press Unlimited has invested heavily in knowledge and quality in recent years. We want to know if and how we should adapt our strategies, how we can be more efficient and accountable, and what innovations might increase our impact. As a learning organisation, knowledge management – creating, sharing, organising and using knowledge – helps us to perform better. To decrease the security risks that come with our work, we employ a dedicated in-house security team and carefully manage other risks to protect ourselves and our partners.

Knowledge and Quality

In 2020, the Knowledge and Quality (K&Q) team's main focus was the final external evaluation of the No News Is Bad News programme. We consolidated databases of indicators, outcomes and stories, organised them by theme and sub-theme, and assisted the final evaluators with the evaluation. In addition, the team carried out an internal evaluation of Reporters Respond and the Legal Defense Fund (see Our Approach), and conducted qualitative research into new or increased challenges that the media face, such as Covid-19, shrinking civic space, reduced income from advertisements, gender in the workplace, and restrictive government regulations.

We also commissioned research, to the Centre for Freedom of the Media of the University of Sheffield, that developed a prototype monitoring toolkit on indicator 16.10.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2021 and 2022, we will experiment with the practical implementation of this toolkit for local organisations in 10 countries, in order to mitigate challenges with

existing data collection and with the monitoring of violations against journalists.

In 2020, the K&Q team consolidated and shared all new knowledge on a dedicated [website](#), where our staff, partners, donors and external parties can find comprehensive thematic resource guides, an evidence database, blogs and a track record. We also facilitated knowledge sharing between Free Press Unlimited colleagues, through internal Communities of Practice and during the Free Press Unlimited Days, which consisted of 4 days of online knowledge sharing between colleagues.

As an ongoing activity, K&Q supported the rest of the organisation to work according to the ISO 9001:2015 standard. In 2020, we performed an internal ISO audit on financial procedures within our project cycle and system (PROMIS), to test whether (documented) procedures correspond with practices. We concluded that the organisation does generally follow the documented procedures, but also that these procedures leave room for individual interpretation. Consequently, every team has its own way of working. It was encouraging to see that all colleagues have sufficient monitoring and mitigation measures in place. Moreover, they have a constructive view of how they perform their work or could improve, as well as specific ideas or suggestions for improvement of the documented procedures.

Research agenda

In August 2020 the K&Q team published the report [Good for business or the right thing to do?](#), exploring what motivates managers of news outlets around the world to promote gender equality in the workplace. We found a wide range of motivations, but the main argument used by the managers interviewed is that they believe in gender equality and want to set an example in their society. However, business motives and personal reasons also play a role.

Asked about the media managers' strategies to implement their gender equality commitments, they appear to focus mostly on the content, but also on recruiting more women and, to a lesser extent, on a favourable working environment. As a result of their efforts, managers observed a change in their outlets'

content, including an increase of women's voices and in diversity of topics. Furthermore, the working environment of some media outlets improved. However, only two of the managers interviewed said that promoting gender equality had made their organisations more competitive.

The report offers recommendations on how to further promote gender equality in the workplace of media outlets. Both media outlets and media development organisations like Free Press Unlimited can use these to adapt their strategies.

Our findings show that, across the board, media will be in need for both grant funding and support for business model development.

In their struggle to survive, media mainly rely on business models developed in Europe or North America. To fill the gap in shared lessons learned and case studies for media in more challenging economic or political environments, Free Press Unlimited interviewed more than 80 media managers from approximately 40 countries around the world. In October 2020, we published the results in *Income Models of Independent Media in Difficult Contexts*. The report explores different income models of media, and the external factors and characteristics of media outlets that influence these models.

Our findings show that, across the board, media will be in need for both grant funding and support for business model development. Even media in comparatively less challenging environments will have to continuously update their business models. It takes a lot of flexibility and resilience to survive while developing a diversified income model over the course of many years, a long period that often requires continued grant funding. Even the media who believe they are doing relatively well financially, or better than before, indicate that generating sufficient revenue remains complex and difficult. Well-off media can be easily disrupted when

one larger partnership ends or the country's economy or press freedom status declines. Providing core funding would allow media to continue their operations as well as appropriating resources to business management.

PROMIS

In 2020, we expanded our in-house developed project management system PROMIS, to include all workflows and types of contracts. Based on our own wiki, PROMIS was crucial during the Covid-19-induced lockdown since it allows for digital approvals and signatures.

Quality management

As a regular check of how we are performing as an organisation, we use a number of recognised quality standards:

- ISO 9001. Free Press Unlimited has the most recent 'Partos ISO 9001:2015 version 2018' certificate, which includes additions on integrity. In 2020 we conducted an internal ISO audit (see above).
- CBF-Recognised Charity. This quality label dates from 2016, and is an initiative of cooperating quality label organisations such as CBF and Goede Doelen Nederland.
- IATI. In 2020, we reported on projects in the Strategic Partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in accordance with IATI standards.
- Our own Integrity Policy, to which all employees must adhere, and those of Goede Doelen Nederland.

Continuity

Risk management

Free Press Unlimited enjoys a vibrant and inclusive security culture, which we maintain and update regularly. Our in-house security team organises regular awareness-raising events and provides ongoing digital security training. In addition, Free Press Unlimited's staff can receive tailor-made (technical) support. In 2020, how we handled both the Covid-19 pandemic and the rejection of our application to the Power of Voices funding, demonstrated the resilience of the organisation and its ability to deal with significant risks.

Our risk management is based on the international ISO 31000 standards.

The table below lists the most important risks, how likely they are, their consequences, and the measures we take to reduce these risks. This table is in line with the RJ650 guideline, amongst others.

Risk Description	Threat	Mitigation Measures	Risk Level	Risk Response
Continuity of the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding of media projects more difficult due to the decreased attention (including from donors) for press freedom, human rights, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active policy influencing via GFMD for Sustainable Development Goal 'access to information'. Active policy influencing for media development in EU and Dutch politics. Actively searching for alternative funding. 	High	Accept
Reputation is compromised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor project execution by Free Press Unlimited and/or partners Negative communication/attention around the organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with and regular monitoring of project procedures. The integrity policy (including code of conduct) forms part of all contracts. Crisis management plan is integrated and management is trained in crisis communication. 	High	Reduce
Fraud & corruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fraud or other false information is discovered during the execution of a project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with project procedures, including financial controls, spot checks and limiting sub-grants (one year) Fraud & corruption policy in place and part of contracting procedures 	Medium	Accept
Information security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confidentiality of Free Press Unlimited data is breached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information security policy in place Regular digital security training of employees High security awareness culture within the organisation 	High	Reduce
Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the performance of a project, Free Press Unlimited or its partner(s) fail to keep to the agreements made with the donor and/or the requirements applicable within the sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular checks and balances from the finance department and project staff Compliance with demands forms part of the project start-up procedure Policies and procedures are clear and up-to-date 	Medium	Accept

Sustainability

Free Press Unlimited aims to keep its carbon footprint to a minimum. We use green energy from renewable sources and fly climate-neutral. In 2020, we made no flights after the announcement of the Covid-19 restrictions in March. We already encouraged travelling by public transport and working from home; due to

the corona crisis, our staff spent most of their time working from home in 2020. Our paper consumption remained stable, despite the increase in the number of employees. Wherever possible we choose the greenest, most sustainable variant when purchasing products, installations and services.

Looking ahead

In 2021, we will intensify our policy and advocacy work for the safety of journalists. We will monitor the follow-up of commitments that we successfully advocated for in 2020, such as the uptake of press freedom as a pillar in the European Democracy Action Plan, and in The Hague Commitment to increase the Safety of Journalists. In the project A Safer World for the Truth, our investigative teams will dig deep into another 5 cold cases of murdered journalists, in order to fight the impunity that now leaves 90% of these murders unpunished. At the end of 2021, we will organise a people's tribunal and present our findings to a corps of international judicial experts and judges.

The regulation of the power of Big Tech companies over our space for public debate, will continue to be a battleground for Free Press Unlimited in the coming years. In 2020, the negative role of algorithms in the increase of hate speech and disinformation began to lead to policy action initiatives in the EU. We will continue feeding and influencing the discussions about structural solutions to the problems caused by social media platforms. In the fight against fake news, we will keep investing in media literacy among youth. In 2021, we aim to set up a programme based on the findings of the pilot project Keeping it Real, which we implemented in South Africa, the Netherlands and Mexico.

Meanwhile, we will also support independent media outlets to strengthen their position in society and become more financially sustainable. Our exchange project VIMES, in which media from Central America

and Eastern Europe share their experiences, knowledge and content, is a good example of how we stimulate innovation to find out what business models work for independent media. On a broader scale, our knowledge and quality team will advance media development through knowledge management with and between partner organisations and coalitions, via our [collaboration website](#). Furthermore, we will continue to advocate for more gender equality in and through the media, for example, through our cooperation with the Global Media Monitoring Project.

We very much hope that the Postcode Lottery renews its longstanding relationship with Free Press Unlimited, so that together we can continue to fight for press freedom and the safety of journalists in the coming 5 years.

Following the end of our No News Is Bad News program in 2020, we will finalise another large program in 2021: Ethical Journalism for Syria. This means Free Press Unlimited will invest a lot of time and energy in raising funds for the many plans we have for fulfilling our mission. Another important event in this respect is the evaluation of our role and achievements by our loyal donor the Dutch Postcode Lottery. We very much hope that the Postcode Lottery renews its longstanding relationship with Free Press Unlimited, so that together we can continue to fight for press freedom and the safety of journalists in the coming 5 years.

The Covid-19 pandemic has negatively impacted the already deplorable state of press freedom in many countries. Unfortunately, the new or increased (legal) restrictions imposed on media since the outbreak, will not be so easily reversed. According to Freedom



House's survey, 64% of experts thinks that the impact of Covid-19 on democracy and human rights will be mostly negative over the next 3-5 years. Still, the need for reliable information and accountability is greater than ever. Consequently, Free Press Unlimited will continue to support journalists in distress across the world, and assist media and media development organisations to defend independent journalism as a crucial pillar of democracy.

Covid-19 will also continue to affect our own organisation in 2021 and beyond. We expect to travel less and expand our online work. A survey that we conducted among our staff in 2020, indicated that many employees prefer to continue working from home for at least a couple of days per week. In 2020, we already adapted the office of Free Press Unlimited to this new way of working.

Board of Supervisors' Report

2020 was certainly a challenging year for Free Press Unlimited. Both the sudden freeze caused by Covid-19 and the rejection of Free Press Unlimited's application to the Power of Voices Partnerships of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), had a significant impact on the organisation. However, the resilience shown by Free Press Unlimited, its staff and the Board of Directors in particular, has left a deep impression on us. We are extremely proud that the organisation managed to adapt, stay in good spirits, and continue to deliver sound results. Nonetheless, we are well aware that the coming years will be demanding. Recent developments demonstrate that the situation of press freedom and the safety of journalists is becoming increasingly problematic, not only abroad but also in Europe and in the Netherlands.

The Board of Supervisors has three different roles; it is a supervisor, an advisor and employer of Board of Directors. It supervises the foundation's strategy for achieving Free Press Unlimited's goals within the given financial framework and limitations. It strives to keep a good balance between operating at a sufficient distance from the Board of Directors, and cooperating closely when needed. The Board of Supervisors is regularly

informed of and consulted on major changes and important strategic choices relating to organisational development, operations, finance, and the strategic direction of Free Press Unlimited.

In 2020, the Board of Supervisors had several meetings with the Board of Directors, and provided advice and support where needed. Because of the hectic developments, the Board of Supervisors had more than the four scheduled meetings. The members discussed the consequences of Covid-19 for the organisation, the annual report, the financial and organisational impact of the MFA's rejection, the 2021 budget, the strategy and composition of the Board of Supervisors, and the recruitment procedures.

The Board of Supervisors has a good working relationship with the Works Council; in 2020, representatives of the board met twice with the Works Council. The Board of Supervisors considers the Works Council to be a professional body, and congratulates the new members who started in 2020; together they constitute a clear reflection of the organisation as a whole.

The Board of Supervisors is positive about how Free Press Unlimited is developing in terms of organisation and programmes. As we already stated last year, the Board of Supervisors is closely monitoring the road to independence of Radio Dabanga and Radio Tamazuj, which are likely to be completed in 2021. Our previous chair, Joop Daalmeijer, accepted a position on the board of the independent entity Stichting Radio Dabanga.

Financial Audit Committee

On 24 April, the Financial Audit Committee met with the external auditor as well as the Director of Operations and the financial manager. The committee members discussed the 2019 annual accounts, the risk management and the issue of information security. At the request of the Board of Supervisors, the committee's chair produced a draft proposal regarding the remuneration of the directors, which was approved by the Board of Supervisors on 17 April 2020.

Composition of the Board of Supervisors

In 2020, the Board of Supervisors consisted of the following members:

- Joop Daalmeijer (chair); Joop stepped down at the end of his second term, on 9 December 2020.
- Corine de Vries (member); Corine stepped down at the end of her second term on 9 June 2020.
- Monica Bremer (vice-chair as of 6 December 2019, Chair as per 9 December 2020), 1st term, end of current term: 6 December 2024.
Occupation & other positions: lawyer and partner at Bremer & De Zwaan, consultant at the Ministry of Justice and Safety, Supervisory Board member of Dutch broadcasting corporation VPRO, Supervisory Board member of Bosch Transmission Technology BV.
- Paul Hofstra (chair of FAC as of 6 December 2019), 1st term, end of current term: 6 December 2024.
Occupation & other positions: external member of the audit committee of IND, committee member at BADO (Operations and auditing of decentralised government), member of the expert group at the Zijlstra Center of VU University for administration and governance, treasurer of the Groene Beheer foundation, treasurer of the Fonds 1877 foundation, member of the chamber for internal investigations at the Institute for Financial Crime (IFFC).
- Ronald Gijsbertsen (proposed by the Works Council), 2nd term, end of current term: 14 December 2023. Occupation & other positions: managing director SOMO until November 2020, independent consultant and mediator.

The vacancies in the board resulting from the retirement schedule, have, after a careful process of recruitment and selection, led to the appointment of three new members who have started on 1 January, 2021:

- Nani Jansen Reventlow, Director Digital Freedom Fund. Her other positions are: Board member of the Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development, Bureau Clara Wichmann, Global Voices and Supervisory Board member of Lighthouse Reports.
- Ellen Soerjatin, lawyer, co-founder Evers Soerjatin. Her other position is Supervisory Board member of Petrobras Compensation Foundation.
- Henna Draaibaar, journalist, Director The Back Lot, trainer RNTC Media Training Centre.

We sincerely welcome our new members, whose appointments complete the Board of Supervisors for the coming years.

Monica Bremer **Chair of the Board of Supervisors**

Free Press Unlimited financial report 2020



**FREE
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People deserve to know

Financial report

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Photo cover: Younes Mohammad

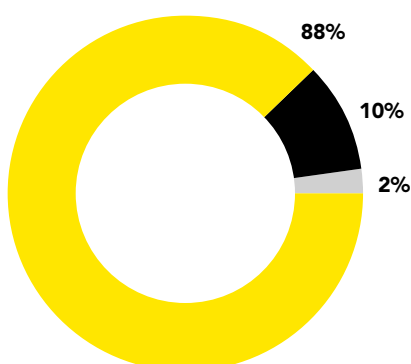
Summary

All amounts in euro

Summary Annual Report Free Press Unlimited 2020

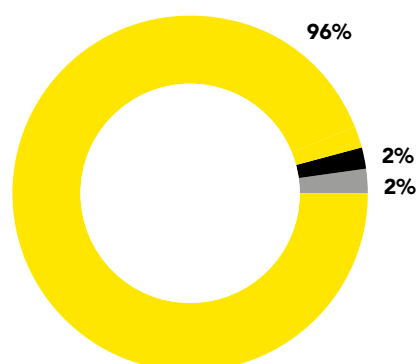
Total income	21,701,034	
Spent on organisation's objective	20,414,311	
Acquisition, Management & Accounting	943,873	
Number of fte's ultimo 2020	76.3	
Woman	57.2%	
Men	42.8%	
Our income		
Income from Government subsidies	19,144,675	88.2%
Income from Lotteries	2,097,832	9.7%
Income from Other non profit organizations	366,632	1.7%
Other income	91,895	0.4%
	21,701,034	100.0%
Our expenses		
Organisation's objective	20,414,311	95.4%
Acquisition costs funding	442,197	2.1%
Management & Accounting	501,676	2.3%
Financial gains and losses	36,596	0.2%
Total expenses	21,394,779	100.0%
Reserve	306,255	
Total	21,701,034	

Our income



- Government subsidies
- Lotteries
- Other non-profit organisations
- Other income

Our expenses



- Organisation's objective
- Acquisition costs funding
- Management & Accounting
- Financial gains and losses
- Reserve

Introduction

Sadly, at the time of drawing up these annual accounts, the world is still in the grip of the coronavirus pandemic. Despite the effects, measures, restrictions etc. required to fight the virus, Free Press Unlimited and her partners were able to implement projects and continue doing what matters most: making sure that people have access to reliable information, something that was more important than ever during the pandemic. It is precisely because of the perseverance shown by our brave partners and journalists, that Free Press Unlimited managed to achieve an all-time high in our income. As a result of that, for the second year in a row, we were able to add a welcome operating surplus of more than €300,000 to our continuity reserve.

Considering the fact that we successfully closed No News Is Bad News, one of our largest programmes, and that unfortunately we did not acquire funding for Power of Voices, the follow up programme, this addition is necessary to help us get through 2021. The 2021 budget was drawn up with a deficit of roughly the same amount because we decided not to lose the investment we made into knowledge and advocacy. However, in 2020 we were successful in raising funds of almost €16 million of our budgeted income for 2021 and have between €1.5 and 2 million funds left to raise for the current year.

In 2020, for the second year in a row, Free Press Unlimited only carried out fully funded projects. Since these projects also contributed sufficiently to our organisation costs, while at the same time our organisational costs (such as commuting costs and travel for fundraising purposes) turned out lower than budgeted, we managed to strengthen our continuity reserve again. However, this reserve is still only a modest 5% above our minimum; that is explained on page 14 of this report. This was partly achieved by the unearmarked contribution from the Dutch Postcode Lottery for which we are very grateful.

When we zoom in on our total income and project expenditures of 2020 on a more detailed level, of course there were challenges and deviations in comparison with the budget. Almost all our projects turned out

to be lower than expected, and there is just one main reason for that: COVID-19. Travel and trainings in real life became impossible to execute and were postponed or downsized to fit a digital solution. However, this same crisis is also the reason why we were able to set up a completely new project: COVID-19 Response Africa, funded by the European Union. In cooperation with Reporters sans Frontières, UNESCO, IMS and Deutsche Welle Akademie, among others, we were granted a €4.5 million project for rapid response in 17 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, related to the impact of the corona crisis on access to reliable information. This explains the difference between budget and actuals, given that the budget for 2020 was drawn up before the outbreak of the pandemic.

Finally, we must mention that, in terms of risks, obtaining funding for our projects beyond the current year continues to be a high priority. This is why we see 2021 as a year to invest in our resources to enable us to find replacement funding for the 2020 programmes. We plan to invest more on unearmarked funds although we are aware that this means extra deployment of time and capacity. However, the major challenge is and will be prolonging or finding new long-term grants. All fundraising activities are therefore aimed at achieving this.

Meanwhile we will do everything in our power to continue defending the importance of press freedom and freedom of speech in a seemingly less free environment, to help our partners survive this pandemic and cope with the (anticipated) re-opening of the world, where we can.

Ruth Kronenburg,
April 2021

Balance sheet as of 31 December 2020

All amounts in euro

Assets	31/12/2020	31/12/2019
Fixed Assets		
Intangible fixed assets		
Website	19,693	2,601
Tangible fixed assets		
Renovation	64,808	78,149
Office furniture and equipment	44,994	40,840
Hardware and software	78,151	27,731
Total tangible fixed assets	187,954	146,720
Total fixed assets	207,647	149,321
Current assets		
Accruals	201,065	305,902
Accounts receivable and advances	12,795	38,144
Grants to be received	1,954,369	1,927,189
Total current assets	2,168,229	2,271,235
Liquid assets		
The Netherlands	12,405,060	11,278,974
Abroad	516,565	360,262
Total liquid assets	12,921,625	11,639,236
Total assets	15,297,501	14,059,792

Balance sheet as of 31 December 2020

All amounts in euro

Liabilities	31/12/2020	31/12/2019
Reserves and funds		
Continuity reserve	2,622,054	2,315,799
Security Fund	27,490	27,490
Total reserves and funds	2,649,544	2,343,289
Provisions	65,000	0
Current liabilities		
Payables related to staff	211,106	291,157
Payable to suppliers	243,393	242,523
Other short-term liabilities	459,010	330,554
Obligations related to current projects	2,074,965	1,288,940
Grants received in advance	9,594,484	9,563,329
Total current liabilities	12,582,957	11,716,503
Total liabilities	15,297,501	14,059,792

Statement of income and expense

All amounts in euro

Income	2020	budget 2020	2019
Income from government subsidies	19,144,675	18,025,000	15,661,855
Income from lottery organisations	2,097,832	3,106,000	1,438,014
Income from other non-profit organizations	366,632	394,000	464,394
Income from companies	15,283	20,000	60,293
Income from individuals	76,612	150,000	80,110
Total income	21,701,034	21,695,000	17,704,666
Expenditure			
Media support programme	20,414,311	19,859,080	16,578,556
Cost of income generation	442,197	868,789	477,206
Management and accounting costs	501,676	671,556	419,959
Total expenditure	21,358,184	21,399,425	17,475,721
Result excluding financial gains and losses	342,851	295,575	228,945
Financial gains and losses	-36,596	-25,000	49,555
Balance of income and expenses	306,255	270,575	278,500
Appropriation of the balance			
Additions to / withdrawals from:			
Continuity reserve	306,255	270,575	278,500
Security Fund	0	0	0
Total	306,255	270,575	278,500
Financial ratios			
Spent on the organisation's objective/Total generated income	94.1%	91.5%	93.6%
Spent on organisation's objective/Total expenses	95.6%	92.8%	94.9%
Costs of income generation/Total generated income	2.0%	4.0%	2.7%
Management and accounting costs/Total expenditure	2.3%	3.1%	2.4%

Cash flow statement

All amounts in euro

	2020	2019
<i>Operational activities</i>		
Balance of income and expenses during the financial year	306,255	278,500
Depreciations	74,260	73,301
Changes in provisions	65,000	0
Gross cash flow on the basis of operational activities	445,515	351,801
<i>Investment activities</i>		
Changes to fixed assets	-132,587	-16,368
Changes in liquid assets	1,282,389	5,927,817
Liquid assets at the start of the financial year	11,639,236	5,711,419
Liquid assets at the end of the financial year	12,921,625	11,639,236
Changes in liquid assets	1,282,389	5,927,817

Accounting principles

The Annual Accounts have been prepared in accordance with Guideline 650 for Fundraising Organisations (Richtlijn 650, revised 2016).

These guidelines are in line with international standards, general guidelines and the guidelines of the CBF.

Accounting principles for the balance sheet

Consolidation

The financial report for 2020 has been drawn up on the basis of a consolidation of the financial accounts of Stichting Free Press Unlimited, our office in eastern Africa and our office in eastern Europe. We are obliged to include the figures from the latter two organisations in our accounts, to comply with the stipulations of the guideline for annual reporting and our formal consultation and participation structure. Nevertheless, Free Press Unlimited intends for this to be a purely temporary arrangement – one that we aim to abolish as soon as possible in the case of both FVSS and our office in eastern Europe. Free Press Unlimited wishes to emphasise that in actuality, both foundations operate independently.

Intangible fixed assets

The intangible fixed assets are valued at their purchase cost minus the depreciations determined on the basis of the asset's estimated lifespan. The depreciation term for the website is 3 years (33.3%).

Tangible fixed assets

The tangible fixed assets are valued at the purchase price minus the depreciations based on the estimated life span. The depreciation period for hardware and software is 3 years (33.3%). Office inventory is written off over 5 years (20%) and renovations over 7 years (14.3%).

All (in)tangible fixed assets are held for business operations.

Receivables and accrued receivables

Receivables and accrued receivables are valued at nominal value minus certain impairments.

Provisions A provision is recognised when the foundation has a legal or constructive obligation, arising from past events, the amount can be estimated reliably and it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation. Provisions are stated at the nominal value of the expenses that are expected to be required to settle the liabilities.

Obligations in connection with current projects

The item 'Obligations in connection with current projects' is the balance of contracts actually entered into with partner organisations (obligations) minus advance payments to these partner organisations.

Grants received in advance/Grants to be received

Many grants have a term that extends beyond a single calendar year. The difference between the advance awarded by the donor (the organisation issuing the grant) in a specific financial year and the project funds that are spent in that same year (realised grant income) is accounted for on the balance sheet as a 'Grants received in advance'. If the realised grant income amounts exceed the donor's advance, the difference is entered on the balance sheet as a receivable.

Accrued liabilities

Accrued liabilities are valued at nominal value.

Accounting principles for the statement of income and expenses

Grant income

Grant income amounts are allocated on the basis of the realised direct and indirect spending on the organisation's objective within the guidelines established in the grant decision.

Income from lottery organisations

Processing of earmarked income from lottery organisations takes place in the year in which the amount is allocated. If on the balance sheet date this is a firm commitment and relates to the current financial year without explicit repayment obligations, it is stated as a receivable and as income.

Contributions and donations

Contributions and donations are accounted for in their year of receipt. Consequently, contributions and donations received in advance are not taken into account.

Allocation of costs

Management and administration costs, the costs of the organisation's fundraising activities and costs of various objectives have been calculated based on an apportionment formula in accordance with the revised Dutch Accounting Standards for Fundraising Institutions (Richtlijn 650, revised in 2016), as explained on page 23 and 24.

Balance of income and expenses

The balance of income and expenses is calculated as the income that can be allocated to the relevant financial year minus the expenses required to realise this income.

Notes to the balance sheet

All amounts in euro

Assets				
Intangible fixed assets	total			
<i>Balance at the start of the financial year</i>				
Purchase costs	58,727			
Cumulative depreciations	-56,126			
Book value at the start of the financial year	2,601			
<i>Changes over the course of the year</i>				
Additions to fixed assets	19,360			
Depreciations	-2,268			
Balance of changes over the course of the year	17,092			
<i>Balance at the end of the financial year</i>				
Purchase costs	78,087			
Cumulative depreciations	-58,394			
Book value at the end of the financial year	19,693			
Tangible fixed assets required for regular operations	total	office	hardware/ software	renovation
<i>Balance at the start of the financial year</i>				
Purchase costs	574,563	133,098	159,897	281,568
Cumulative depreciations	-427,844	-92,258	-132,166	-203,419
Book value at the start of the financial year	146,720	40,840	27,731	78,149
<i>Changes over the course of the year</i>				
Additions to fixed assets	113,227	22,936	85,665	4,625
Depreciations	-71,992	-18,782	-35,245	-17,965
Balance of changes over the course of the year	41,234	4,154	50,421	-13,340
<i>Balance at the end of the financial year</i>				
Purchase costs	687,790	156,035	245,563	286,193
Cumulative depreciations	-499,836	-111,040	-167,411	-221,385
Book value at the end of the financial year	187,954	44,994	78,151	64,808

The investments in 2020 consist of improvements to the office premises, computers and furniture.

Notes to the balance sheet *continued*

All amounts in euro

Current assets	31/12/2020	31/12/2019
<i>Accruals</i>		
Other prepayments	169,952	291,242
Various securities	31,113	14,660
Total	201,065	305,902
<i>Accounts receivable and advances</i>		
Other accounts receivable	0	3,100
Advances to own staff	294	6,454
Advances to external contractors	12,501	28,109
Accrued interest	0	481
Total	12,795	38,144
<i>Grants to be received</i>		
Dutch Postcode Lottery	900,000	900,000
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Various projects	373,487	16,950
US Government	239,094	863,714
European Union	114,185	43,767
Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Int. Zusammenarbeit	109,486	87,725
UK Government	82,421	0
NUFFIC	81,625	0
Various	54,071	15,033
Total	1,954,369	1,927,189

Notes to the balance sheet *continued*

All amounts in euro

Liquid assets	31/12/2020	31/12/2019
<i>The Netherlands</i>		
ASN Bank	6,428,099	2,139,055
ABN AMRO Bank	2,774,546	5,597,933
ING Bank	3,199,407	3,539,720
Cash	3,008	2,266
Total	12,405,060	11,278,974
<i>Abroad</i>		
Eastern Europe office	407,569	339,031
Eastern Africa office	108,996	21,232
Total	516,565	360,262

The liquid assets are at the free disposal of the organisation. A total amount of €188,123 (2019: €39,097) in balances on USD accounts have been included and €33,455 (2019: €0) in balances on GBP accounts. The total position of the bank accounts at year-end 2020 is higher mainly due to the prepayments for the projects 'A Safer World for the Truth' and 'Mind the Children; see also the notes on the Grants received in advance.

The organisation does not have any significant liquidity or currency risks. In most cases, projects are pre-financed by a donor. In addition, most grant and donor contracts are drawn up in euros. For those subsidy programmes

where the receipt of the funds is in a different currency, the euro equivalent is adjusted in the budget to the actual amount to be spent, immediately on receipt.

Free Press Unlimited is a supporter of banking according to the Fair Bank Guide. The Fair Bank Guide compares providers of bank accounts on the Dutch market on several sustainability themes, such as environment, human rights and animal welfare. Due to the nature and location of our activities we are however forced to also maintain accounts with banks that do not perform as good on these themes.

Notes to the balance sheet *continued*

All amounts in euro

Liabilities		
Reserves and funds	31/12/2020	31/12/2019
<i>Continuity reserve</i>		
Balance as of January 1	2,315,799	2,037,299
Appropriation of reserve	306,255	278,500
Balance as of December 31	2,622,054	2,315,799
<i>Security Fund</i>		
Balance as of January 1	27,490	27,490
Contributions	0	0
Spent on objective	0	0
Balance as of December 31	27,490	27,490

The balance of the operating income for 2020 will be added to the continuity reserve, bringing it to 75% of one year's operating expense (2019: 72%). This is 5% above the organisation's self-imposed minimum as described below.

Policy in relation to the continuity reserve

The Supervisory Board and the board have agreed to a reservation policy to ensure the continuity of the Foundation. The reserve required for this is set equal to one year of operating costs and therefore more

than meets the CBF regulations (max. 1.5 years). This reserve is accounted for as a continuity reserve but relates to freely disposable capital. With the reserve, a financial loss can be absorbed without an immediate danger to the continuity or the fulfilment of obligations already entered into. The operating costs of Free Press Unlimited in one year are set at €3.2 million for the financial year 2019. It has been agreed that, depending on the size of the organisation, the reserve is at least 70 percent and at most 150 percent of €3.5 million.

Provisions	31/12/2020	31/12/2019
Balance as of January 1	0	0
Allocated	65,000	0
Balance as of December 31	65,000	0

This provision is recognized as it's probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle obligations that are a result of financial audits initiated by governmental donors.

Notes to the balance sheet *continued*

All amounts in euro

Current Liabilities	31/12/2020	31/12/2019
Obligations in connection with current projects	2,074,965	1,288,940
Payable to suppliers	243,393	242,523
Reserves for holiday allowances	208,240	170,782
Provisions for statutory leave entitlements	174,836	141,643
Other short-term liabilities	278,167	168,907
Taxes and social premiums	2,866	120,375
Pension premiums	6,006	20,004
Total	2,988,474	2,153,174

The item 'Other short-term liabilities' includes an amount of €44,028 (2019: €77,715) charged against the balance of our office in Eastern Europe.

Grants received in advance or to be returned	31/12/2020	31/12/2019
Dutch Postcode Lottery - Various projects	3,302,285	4,454,927
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Various proj.	3,053,747	2,644,415
European Union	1,828,866	913,091
SIDA - Syria	932,783	1,033,419
Oxfam Novib	152,962	100,839
Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	123,231	25,103
US Government	72,484	20,449
Open Society Foundation	35,082	0
Foreign and Commonwealth Office UK	0	282,125
Swedish Postcode Lottery	0	27,542
Various	93,044	61,420
Total	9,594,484	9,563,329

The grant received in advance from the Dutch Postcode Lottery consists of the projects 'A Safer World for the Truth' (€2.2 million) and 'Mind the Children' (€1.1 million). The full amounts for the entire project duration were received at the end of 2019.

The grant received in advance from the European Union contains an amount of €190,416 related to a project for the benefit of press freedom of Syria which ended in the beginning of 2017 already. Approximately €50,000 of this amount is disputed by FPU, in 2021 the EC is expected to make a final decision about this.

Notes to the balance sheet *continued*

All amounts in euro

Financial obligations that are not included on the balance sheet

Free Press Unlimited entered into a rental agreement for an office space and 5 parking spaces at Weesperstraat 3-5 in Amsterdam. The agreement was extended for another five years on October 1, 2018. The rent for 2021 is €164,944 per year. A bank guarantee of €44,383 has been issued for this agreement.

In June 2019 an operational lease contract for a multifunctional copier was entered for six years. The annual costs amount to €6,891 with additional charges for additional consumption.

For the Radio Dabanga project, Free Press Unlimited has signed a lease for office space in Amsterdam. The lease was formed on 1 March 2020 and has a duration of 5 years. The rent for 2021 is €66,354 per year. A deposit of €16,453 has been provided for this lease.

Notes to the statement of income and expenses

All amounts in euro

Income	2020	budget 2020	2019
<i>Income from government grants</i>			
Dutch Min. of Foreign Affairs – No News is Bad News	6,261,736	6,100,000	7,044,667
European Union - COVID-19 Response Africa	3,586,343	0	0
Various governments - Syria	1,690,019	2,000,000	1,742,499
Various governments – Radio Dabanga	1,629,349	2,000,000	1,138,681
Various governments – RLNE / Eurasia	1,484,635	1,685,000	2,255,521
Various governments – Radio Tamazuj	958,338	1,350,000	1,011,255
Various governments – Great Lakes	760,766	706,000	687,728
Dutch Min. of Foreign Affairs – Legal Defense Fund	569,964	680,000	748,615
Dutch Min. of Foreign Affairs – VIMES	492,028	1,100,000	119,909
Various governments – Mali	293,527	420,000	0
European Union - C.A.R.	374,992	350,000	0
Embassy of the Netherlands - Congo-Kinshasa	191,761	220,000	0
Embassy of the Netherlands - Tunisia	143,100	165,000	46,504
DFID/ BBC Media Action - PRIMED	106,558	50,000	9,766
Embassy of the Netherlands – Nigeria	104,023	190,000	0
Anonymous donor - Nicaragua	91,514	450,000	0
European Union - ECPMF	84,909	0	0
Various governments - Somalia	50,584	170,000	135,171
Embassy of the Netherlands – Costa Rica	60,769	239,000	323,135
Embassy of the Netherlands – Venezuela	47,499	100,000	71,236
Embassy of the Netherlands - Western Balkan	15,349	0	84,651
Various projects	146,912	50,000	177,089
	19,144,675	18,025,000	15,596,428
<i>Income from lottery organisations</i>			
Dutch Postcode Lottery – Structural funding	900,000	900,000	900,000
Dutch Postcode Lottery (additional project contribution)			
Dutch Postcode Lottery – A Safer World for the Truth	734,426	1,200,000	126,945
Dutch Postcode Lottery – Mind the Children	389,244	600,000	0
Swedish Postcode Lottery – Keeping It Real	27,288	16,000	154,063
Dutch Postcode Lottery – Oxfam – Money Trail	17,902	105,000	197,922
Dutch Postcode Lottery – various projects	28,972	285,000	59,085
	2,097,832	3,106,000	1,438,014

Notes to the statement of income and expenses *continued*

All amounts in euro

Income	2020	budget 2020	2019
<i>Income from other non-profit organizations</i>			
Cordaid - C.A.R. / D.R.C.	216,135	394,000	370,884
NUFFIC - Ethiopia	81,625	0	0
Various projects	68,872	0	93,510
	366,632	394,000	464,394
<i>Income from companies</i>			
Google DNI	0	0	37,030
Various	15,283	20,000	88,690
	15,283	20,000	125,720
<i>Contributions from private donors</i>			
	76,612	150,000	80,110
Total generated income	21,701,034	21,695,000	17,704,666

Explanation regarding the differences

Free Press Unlimited has been active in fundraising throughout the year. As a result, subsidies may be awarded throughout the year. However, the budget is drawn up and approved in September of the preceding year, meaning that the organisation includes an assumption regarding the expected income.

The total income was slightly higher than budgeted. This is mainly due to the fact that the large European Union – COVID-19 for Africa compensated almost all other projects with a lower income than budgeted. Main reason for these projects with lower income was the inability to travel or to give physical training on location due to the same crisis where the aforementioned project in Africa was created for. For our projects in Syria,

Nicaragua and A Safer world for the truth also other reasons have led to lower income. Those are mainly caused by significant changes in the execution of the project, sometimes due to a worsened situation in the target country.

Almost all income raised is programme-related and is incidental. The structural contribution from the Dutch Postcode Lottery and incomes from private individuals are the only gifts which are not earmarked, jointly 4.5% (2019: 5.5%) of the total income raised. Last year, those funds were used in part to restore the continuity reserve to its required level. The funds were also used to cover part of the unfunded youth programme WADADA and general office costs of the office in Eastern Europe.

Notes to the statement of income and expenses *continued*

All amounts in euro

Expenses	2020	budget 2020	2019
<i>Spent on the organisation's objective (not including the allocated costs of Free Press Unlimited's own organisation)</i>			
Strategic Partnership: No News is Bad News	3,883,160	3,900,000	4,826,725
COVID-19 Response Africa	3,567,236	0	0
Sudan / Radio Dabanga	1,628,597	1,800,000	988,694
RLNE / Eurasia	1,424,014	1,800,000	2,019,516
Syria	1,174,759	1,600,000	1,320,684
South Sudan / Radio Tamazuj	848,110	1,100,000	1,003,862
Great Lakes	691,888	600,000	624,808
A Safer World for the Truth	549,035	1,150,000	75,361
Legal Defense Fund	430,775	530,000	600,931
VIMES	399,640	980,000	92,031
Mind the Children	348,394	520,000	0
C.A.R.	349,850	280,000	0
Various projects - Mali	232,777	400,000	0
Cordaid - C.A.R. / D.R.C.	170,059	350,000	293,902
Securité DRC Kivu	170,016	160,000	0
Various projects - Central America	87,841	190,000	279,339
TOTEM	75,602	75,000	12,080
Ethiopia	47,291	50,000	0
Somalia	13,996	150,000	99,315
Keeping It Real	19,012	6,000	104,443
Media4Democracy	0	0	64,173
Money Trail	-23,128	60,000	143,487
Various projects	364,848	421,239	286,333
	16,453,770	16,122,239	12,835,685
Allocated costs of own organisation	4,904,413	5,277,186	4,640,036
Total expenses	21,358,184	21,399,425	17,475,721

Remuneration of the members of the Board of Directors

All amounts in euro

Stichting Free Press Unlimited falls within the scope of the Dutch Standardisation of Top Incomes Act (Wet normering topinkomens), which came into force on 1 January 2013. In 2020, the applicable remuneration maximum for Free Press Unlimited was €189,000. This is the maximum for the sector of Development organisations (Ontwikkelingssamenwerking).

The remuneration policy is explained below and in the Report of the Board of Directors in the 2020 Annual Report. These notes also show that the members of Free Press Unlimited's Board of Supervisors are not reimbursed for their activities.

Table 1a. Senior Executives

Details for 2020	Willems, L.A.M. (Leon)	Kronenburg, R.C.E. (Ruth)
Details of position	<i>Director of Policy and Programmes</i>	<i>Director of Operations</i>
Start and end of position in 2020	01/01-31/12	01/01-31/12
Part-time factor in FTE	1.0	1.0
Employment contract	Yes	Yes
Remuneration		
Remuneration plus taxable expense allowances	116,422	112,231
Remuneration payable in the future	14,263	14,263
Subtotal	130,685	126,494
Individual remuneration cap	189,000	189,000
Less: unduly paid	Not applicable	Not applicable
Total remuneration	130,685	126,494
Reason why maximum may or may not be exceeded	Not applicable	Not applicable
Notes to unduly paid amounts	Not applicable	Not applicable
Basic Score for Director roles (BSD-points)*	422	422

**The Supervisory Board has decided to equal remunerate both Directors as per 1/10/2019. Since this was processed in 2020 both appear to have a higher remuneration than the maximum according to these BSD-points, €125.011. Besides that Leon Willems was awarded an anniversary bonus thanking him for 12,5 years service. Without the 3 months remuneration for 2019 paid out in 2020, the remuneration is within the maximum for these BSD-points. We want to emphasize that this deviation is a one-off event due to unfortunate coincidences, we took measures to prevent this to happen again in the future.

Remuneration of the members of the Board of Directors *continued*

All amounts in euro

Table 1a. Senior Executives

Details for 2019		
Start and end of position in 2019	01/01-31/12	01/01-31/12
Part-time factor in FTE	1.0	1.0
Employment contract	Yes	Yes
Remuneration plus taxable expense allowances	105,155	98,784
Remuneration payable in the future	12,863	11,732
Subtotal	118,018	110,516
Individual remuneration cap	181,000	181,000
Total remuneration	118,018	110,516
Basic Score for Director roles (BSD-points)*	413	380

* The Basic Score for Director roles needs to be determined as a result of the "Regulation for remuneration of directors of charitable organisations". This arrangement regulates remuneration for directors with a points system, the Basic Score for Director roles (BSD-points). The BSD-points are awarded on the basis of several quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the charitable organisation, classified in three main criteria: the size, complexity and organisational context. The score is approved annually by the Supervisory Board and assessed by the Central Fundraising Office (CBF). In 2020 the Supervisory Board approved the score mentioned above for 2019.

Remuneration of the members of the Board of Directors *continued*

All amounts in euro

Table 1d*. Senior supervisory roles with remuneration of €1,700 or less (end 2020)

Position	Name	Resigned in 2020**
Chairperson Supervisory Board	Joop Daalmeijer	yes
Member Supervisory Board	Corine de Vries	yes
Member Supervisory Board	Ronald Gijsbertsen	
Member Supervisory Board	Monica Bremer ***	
Member Supervisory Board	Paul Hofstra	

* Tables 1b and 1c are not applicable to our financial report.

** The vacancies for the successors were found in January 2021. Nani Jansen (digital freedom expert), Ellen Soerjatin (legal expert) and Henna Draaibaar (journalist and former southern partner) have agreed to become the new Members of the Supervisory Board.

*** In January 2021 the Supervisory Board appointed Monica Bremer as new Chairperson.

Staffing ratios

At the end of 2020, Free Press Unlimited employed the equivalent of 76,3 FTE (2019: 71.5 FTE). This includes both permanent and temporary employment contracts. The workforce can be subdivided into 63.8 FTE (2019: 62.7 FTE) in organisation positions at Free Press Unlimited and 12.5 FTE (2019: 8.8 FTE) working on the Radio Dabanga project. For further details, see the Report of the Board of Directors in the 2020 Annual Report.

Specification and allocation of costs according to category

All amounts in euro

	Spend on objective Media support	Acquisition of grants	costs of management and accounting	Total 2020	Budget 2020	Total 2019
Grants for partner organisations/ own activities	16,419,131	25,630	9,009	16,453,770	16,089,800	12,835,685
Communication costs	172,894	18,027	21,320	212,241	214,811	164,500
Employee costs	3,311,754	345,309	408,390	4,065,452	4,295,719	3,924,664
Housing costs	161,874	16,878	19,962	198,714	231,995	176,744
Office and general costs	295,413	30,802	36,429	362,644	481,176	307,173
Depreciations	53,244	5,552	6,566	65,361	85,924	66,955
Total	20,414,311	442,197	501,676	21,358,184	21,399,425	17,475,721

Spent on objective

Expenditure on the Media support objective in accordance with the statutes:

- the promotion of free and pluriform opinion forming, democratic relationships and sustainable peace, for example, by improving the freedom of expression and press freedom, all over the world.
- the provision of help to developing countries, repressive states and conflict countries, through the implementation of development projects in the area of media and their audience;
- the training and dispatch of experts and other assistants to developing countries, conflict countries and repressive states and the training of persons from those states;
- the promotion of the interests of the media, media organisations and their audience.

Specification and allocation of costs according to category *continued*

All amounts in euro

As prescribed in the Guideline 650 costs are allocated to the objective, income fundraising and management & administration. Allocation is done on the basis of the following principles:

- directly attributable expenses are directly allocated
- non-directly attributable expenses are allocated on the basis of an allocation key, based on the number of FTE per category:

	% of the total number of FTEs		
Media support			81.5%
Acquisition of government grants			8.5%
Management & accounting			10.0%
			100.0%
<i>Employee costs as shown above can be subdivided into:</i>			
	Total 2020	Budget 2020	Total 2019
Salary costs	2,806,259	2,943,095	2,688,877
Social security contributions	607,806	563,812	515,111
Pension premiums	387,546	343,908	314,202
Other staff costs	263,841	444,905	406,475
	4,065,452	4,295,719	3,924,664

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To: the Supervisory Board and the Management Board of
Free Press Unlimited, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

A. Report on the audit of the financial statements 2020 included in the annual report

Our opinion

We have audited the financial statements 2020 of Free Press Unlimited based in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

In our opinion the accompanying financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of Free Press Unlimited as at 31 December 2020 and of its result for 2020 in accordance with the Guidelines for annual reporting 650 "Fundraising Organisations" of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board and the Policy rules implementation of the Standards for Remuneration Act (WNT).

The financial statements comprise:

1. the balance sheet as at 31 December 2020;
2. the statement of income and expense for 2020; and
3. the notes comprising a summary of the accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Basis for our opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Dutch law, including the Dutch Standards on Auditing as well as the Policy rules implementation WNT, including the Audit Protocol WNT. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the 'Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements' section of our report.

We are independent of Free Press Unlimited in accordance with the Verordening inzake de onafhankelijkheid van accountants bij assurance-opdrachten (ViO, Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants, a regulation with respect to independence) and other relevant independence regulations in the Netherlands. Furthermore, we have complied with the Verordening gedrags- en beroepsregels accountants (VGBA, Dutch Code of Ethics).

We believe the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

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Compliance with rule against overlapping pursuant to the WNT not audited

In accordance with the Audit Protocol under the Standards for Remuneration Act (“WNT”), we have not audited the rule against overlapping as referred to in Section 1.6a of the WNT and Section 5(1)(j) of the WNT Implementing Regulations.

This means that we have not audited whether an executive senior official exceeds the norm as a result of any positions as executive senior official at other institutions subject to the WNT, and whether the explanation required in this context is correct and complete.

B. Report on the other information included in the annual report

In addition to the financial statements and our auditor’s report thereon, the annual report contains other information that consists of:

- the Management Board’s report;
- report from the Supervisory Board.

Based on the following procedures performed, we conclude that the other information is consistent with the financial statements and does not contain material misstatements.

We have read the other information. Based on our knowledge and understanding obtained through our audit of the financial statements or otherwise, we have considered whether the other information contains material misstatements.

By performing these procedures, we comply with the requirements of the Dutch Standard 720. The scope of the procedures performed is substantially less than the scope of those performed in our audit of the financial statements. Management is responsible for the preparation of the other information, including the Management Board’s report, in accordance with the Guidelines for annual reporting 650 “Fundraising Organisations” of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board.

C. Description of responsibilities regarding the financial statements

Responsibilities of the Management Board and the Supervisory Board for the financial statements

The Management Board is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements, in accordance with the Guidelines for annual reporting 650 “Fundraising Organisations” of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board and the Policy rules implementation of the Standards for Remuneration Act (WNT). Furthermore, the Management Board is responsible for such internal control as the Management Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

As part of the preparation of the financial statements, the Management Board is responsible for assessing the organisation’s ability to continue as a going concern. Based on the financial reporting framework mentioned, the Management Board should prepare the financial statements using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to dissolve the foundation or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.



The Management Board should disclose events and circumstances that may cast significant doubt on the organisation's ability to continue as a going concern in the financial statements.

The Supervisory Board is responsible for monitoring the financial reporting process of the organisation.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objective is to plan and perform the audit assignment in a manner that allows us to obtain sufficient and appropriate audit evidence for our opinion.

Our audit has been performed with a high, but not absolute, level of assurance, which means we may not detect all material errors and fraud during our audit.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. The materiality affects the nature, timing and extent of our audit procedures and the evaluation of the effect of identified misstatements on our opinion.

We have exercised professional judgement and have maintained professional scepticism throughout the audit, in accordance with Dutch Standards on Auditing, as well as the Policy rules implementation WNT, including the Audit Protocol WNT, ethical requirements and independence requirements.

Our audit included e.g.:

- identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, designing and performing audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtaining an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the organisation's internal control;
- evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board;
- concluding on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting, and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the organisation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause an organisation to cease to continue as a going concern;
- evaluating the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures; and
- evaluating whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant findings in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Amsterdam, 20 May 2021

Dubois & Co. Registeraccountants

A.P. Buteijn RA

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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