

Free Press Unlimited annual report 2018



**FREE
PRESS
UNLIMITED**

People deserve to know

PEOPLE DESERVE TO KNOW

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Mission and Vision

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

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

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

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

These are our **core values**:

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

Key figures 2018

Highlights

Total income

€ 14,347,720

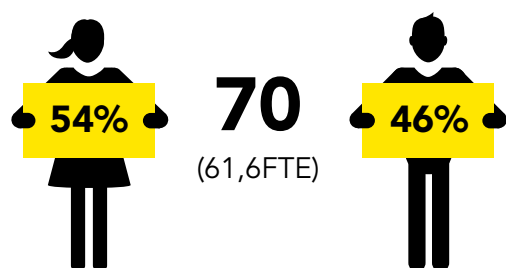
Spent on the organisation's objective

€ 13,678,857

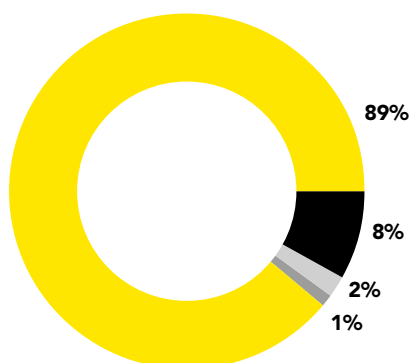
Operating expenses

€ 863,576

Employees

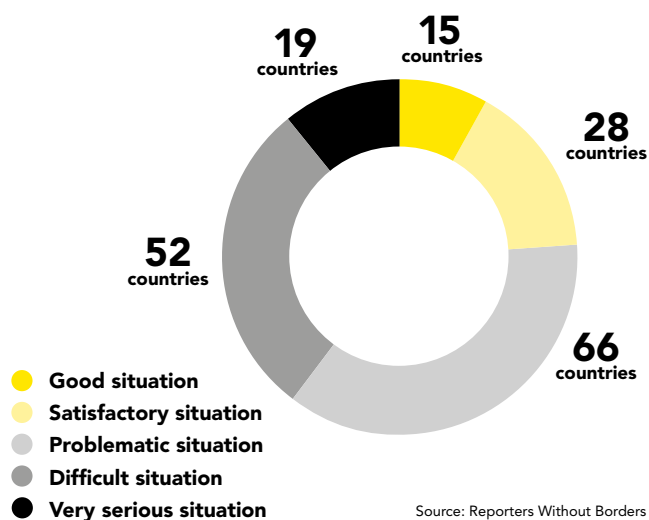


Our income



- Government subsidies € 12,752,158
- Dutch Postcode lottery € 1,131,815
- Other non-profit organisations € 356,057
- Other € 107,689

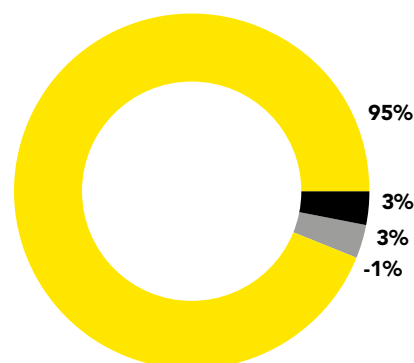
Press freedom monitor



Postcode Lottery Fund for journalists

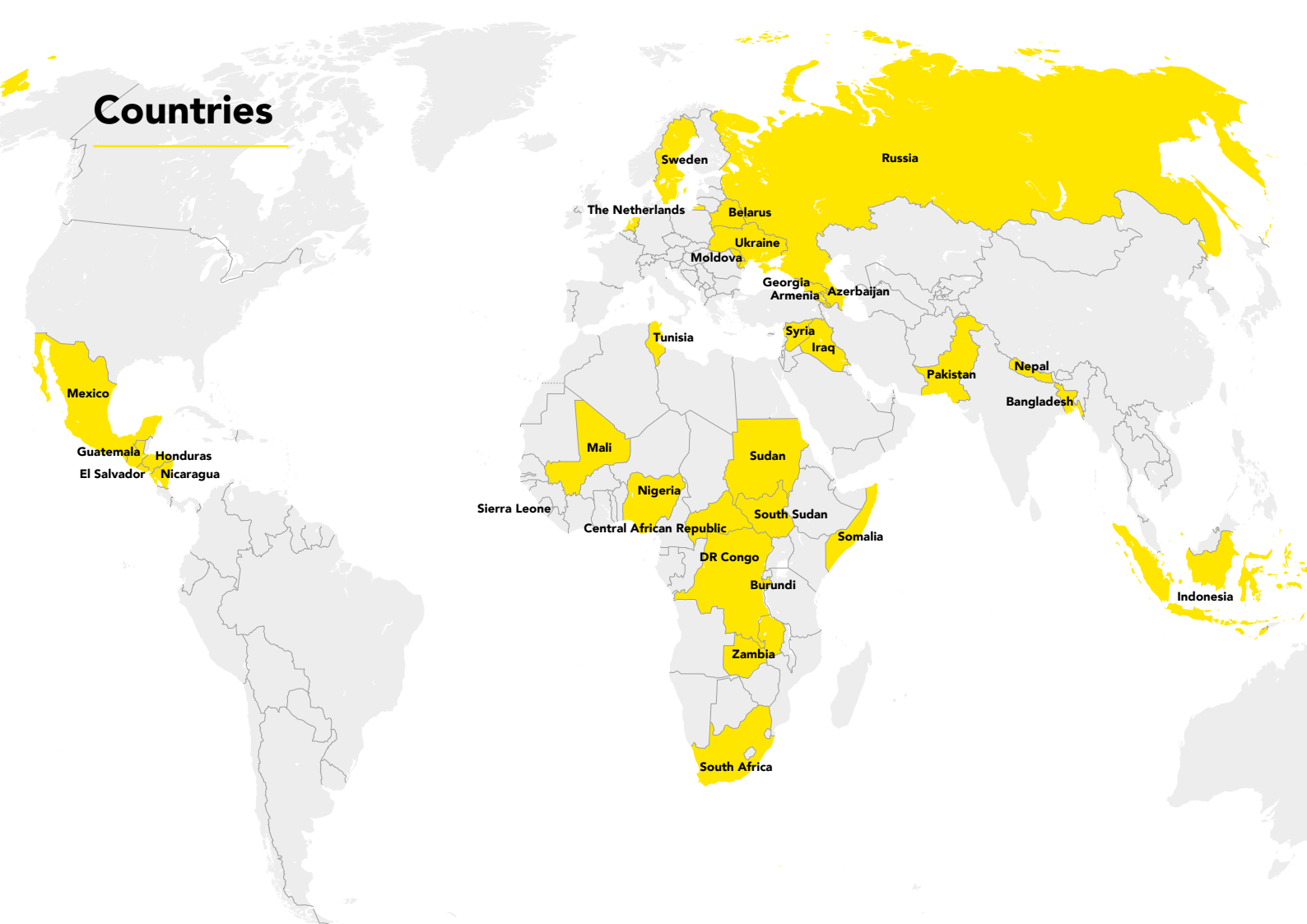
- ✉ 45 applications
- 📄 2 in-depth investigative reports
- 📖 66 publications

Our expenses

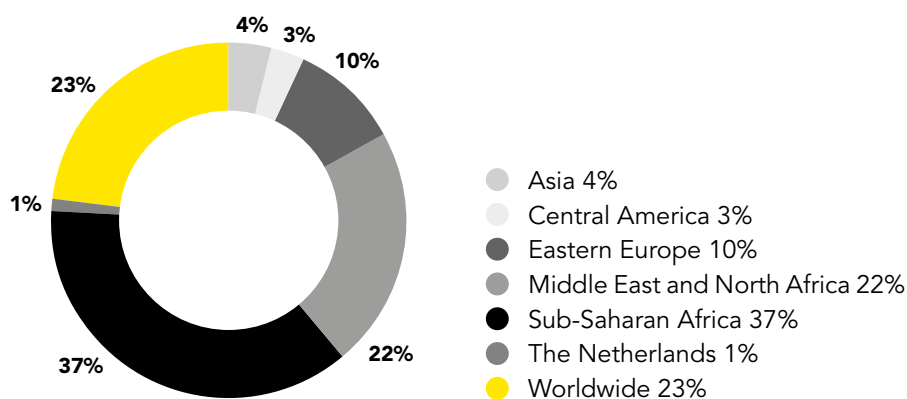


- Organisation's objective € 13,678,857
- Acquisition costs funding € 451,780
- Management & Accounting € 411,796
- Financial gains and losses € 1,395
- Reserve € -196,108

Countries



Geographic distribution of grants



Online reach

Twitter
8,680 followers

Facebook
18,760 likes

LinkedIn
1,255 followers

Instagram
447 followers

YouTube
11,780 views

Newsletter
1,970 subscribers

Numbers



62 Projects



66 Partners



31 Countries



3,085 Friends

Management Report

'Imagine a society without independent media. [...] We must never take independent journalism for granted', said Minister Stef Blok of Foreign Affairs during our event Free Press Live 2018. He hit the nail on the head. Just imagine: what would happen if independent journalists were unable to go to their offices and to power centres, crime scenes and conflict areas every day?



Billions of people would have to do without relevant, reliable and independent reporting. Without Radio Dabanga, inhabitants of Sudan would not know that a cholera epidemic was sweeping over their country (and how to avoid contamination). Without the 100 community radio stations in the network of our partner FRPC, millions of Congolese would remain deprived of information about the recent presidential elections. Closer to home, we would know nothing of the failing monitoring of medical implants. Free Press Unlimited exists to provide that relevant, reliable and independent journalism all over the world; in this annual report we show how we did that in 2018.

Gatekeepers of democracy

Worldwide, things are not looking good for the gatekeepers of democracy. In 2018, at least 54 journalists were murdered and 251 landed in jail, more than in any other year of the last decade. And the murderers of journalists are almost never brought to justice. In short, journalism is a life-threatening profession in many countries.

Journalists, like our Free Press Award winners Rana Ayyub from India and Kemi Busari from Nigeria, who continue to do their work despite countless online and physical threats, are incredibly courageous. They deserve the outspoken and unfailing support of everyone who cares about democracy. For example, colleagues of murdered journalists Daphne Caruana Galizia and Ján Kuciak show

their solidarity by taking over their investigative projects, and the Slovakian population showed its rage over the murder of Kuciak.

Free Press Unlimited has good reason for working globally on strengthening coalitions between civil society organisations and media; they desperately need each other in the fight against injustice and for the right to information.

The Netherlands helps protect journalists

In Central Europe, we are witnessing the emergence of authoritarian regimes and a shocking decline in press freedom, especially in EU member states like Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic. Also, in most Balkan countries, intimidation of and violence against journalists is increasing. In 2018, that was reason enough for Free Press Unlimited to investigate whether we should, after ten years absence, become active again in the Balkans. The conclusion: our former partners can hardly wait for our return.

The European Union stresses the importance of the safety of journalists, but solid action is lacking. In that respect, it can draw on the example of the Netherlands that made a fund of 1.45 million euros available for the Legal Defense Fund that enables Free Press Unlimited to provide legal assistance to journalists. In 2018, Free Press Unlimited advocated even more forcefully for measures that really protect journalists and combat impunity. We

did that at national, European and international level, in close consultation with our partners and jointly with like-minded organisations.

Malian app measures gender (in)equality

Media play an important role in the persistent and widespread gender inequality. Free Press Unlimited helps media to take a good look at themselves: how and how often are women given a place in their columns and headlines? In 2018, our Malian partner, Tuwindi, developed an excellent app for this gender media monitoring, which we adapted together for international use. We are also proud of the growth spurt of our Men4Women (now called Move4Women) initiative. Started in four countries in 2017, a year later, men and women demonstrated in no less than fourteen countries for the rights of women in the media.

A thorough interim evaluation of our largest programme, No News Is Bad News, showed that our work is paying off. We implemented this strategic partnership of Free Press Unlimited and the European Journalism Centre with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in 22 countries all around the world. It turned out that the media we support have significant impact and are increasingly appreciated by their audience. However, they need more knowledge on revenue models, so they can fend for themselves as independent medium. We will work hard to achieve that in 2019.

Outside support

Although we see hopeful initiatives, like Nómada in Guatemala that is experimenting with new revenue models, there are many places where media cannot do their work without outside support. Two radio stations in exile, which Free Press Unlimited has taken under her wing in recent years, once again experienced difficulty keeping their independent heads above water in 2018. Ten years ago, Radio Dabanga was forced to settle in Amsterdam. A radio station in exile with (by now) an enormous reach in Sudan and the refugee camps outside, that cannot survive without funds from donors. Once again, in the last year, Free Press Unlimited had to pitch in financially to keep this life-saving radio station up and running.

Our 2018 partner satisfaction survey showed that partners particularly appreciate the equality and mutual respect in their relationship with Free Press Unlimited. 'Our relationship is based on professionalism, solidarity and trust,' one of them explains the high satisfaction score. We can only wholeheartedly agree with that.

Hard workers, loyal supporters

This partner satisfaction and other great results of our work are primarily due to our driven, expert employees. In 2018, they again unprecedentedly committed themselves to the right to information for everyone. But we are also extremely grateful to our Friends and important donors like the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Swedish Sida, the European Union and the Dutch National Postcode Lottery, for their loyalty and ongoing support.

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



Our approach

Free Press Unlimited believes that everyone has the right to reliable information. We support media and organisations so they can also perform their work safely and professionally in dangerous circumstances. How do we do that and how do we measure the effect of our work?

Citizens and civil society organisations that want to combat poverty and inequality in their societies cannot do so without access to information, independent media and freedom of expression. Conversely, media needs these organisations and citizens so they know what is going on. What issues are important to their readers, listeners and viewers? By enabling independent reporting and public debate on them, independent media can contribute to positive changes in their society.

Free Press Unlimited is strongly committed to this main goal: a diverse, professional information landscape consisting of independent media and journalists that drive (social) change in their society.

Three crucial goals

Three issues are crucial to ensuring local media can fulfil their important social role. We call these our 'intermediate goals', the pillars under the media landscape. These pillars must be firmly rooted, before we can achieve our main goal.

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

This is how we measure the effect of our work

Of course we want to know if our work makes a (positive) difference. That is why we systematically monitor and evaluate all our projects. This is how we learn valuable lessons about what does and does not work and are able to provide sound accountability to our supporters and donors.

We use hard *facts & figures* to measure the effect of our work, but also the stories from journalists who are involved in our projects. We call them Most Significant Change stories, because they answer the question: what is the most important change that – partly through the collaboration with Free Press Unlimited – you have undergone in the last period? In Bangladesh, we collected dozens of stories in 2018, to find out whether

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

the five-year programme of our partner BNNRC had been successful. The 121 young women and Dalits who were trained as journalists at community radio stations actually appeared to be more self-confident and drivers of change in their own community. Conversely, the content of the radio stations became more diverse due to the arrival of the student journalists. Important changes that we managed to bring to about thanks to this method.

Outcome Harvesting is an evaluation method with which partners measure planned and unplanned results. In Congo for example, six partners came together in March 2018 to harvest the outcomes of No News Is Bad News together with Free Press Unlimited. They summed up who they had influenced, what that meant and how the programme had contributed. There were 42 results in total on the table, both positive and negative. For example, in 2018 the Minister of Media and Communication recognised the importance of community radios to the election process.



Evaluation of our largest programme

In 2018, we devoted a lot of time and energy to the interim evaluation of our largest programme: No News Is Bad News. We investigated what had changed for our partners, media and journalists in relation to the baseline situation. We also organised Outcome Harvesting workshops and collected Most Significant Change stories to determine whether our strategies worked. We examined a total of 39 strategies based on 247 harvested outcomes and 107 stories. We drew good examples from projects that have raised the safety of journalists and gender equality, successfully held those in power accountable and helped media stand on their own two feet.

The key question – what does and does not work – resulted in an amendment to our Theory of Change (how change occurs). The evaluation also raised new questions, such as ‘does more gender equality on the work floor automatically lead to content that does more justice to women?’ We will be examining those questions and more in the coming years.

Our work

What are the results of our work in 2018? Have we improved the conditions under which journalists must do their work? We illustrate that in nine stories and a brief description of three of our largest programmes. But first, we explain how we advocate for better protection for journalists by national and international decision makers. How we improve the safety of journalists in practice. And what we do to raise gender equality in the media.

Better protection for journalists and, closely connected to that, an end to impunity for violent crimes against journalists. That is the common denominator of our efforts to convince decision makers that they should take action, if they take press freedom seriously. Internationally, we

stand more firmly, together with the now 24 members of the Safety Coalition, established on our initiative in 2017. In Kenya, Mexico, Myanmar and Nicaragua, the coalition partners now coordinate their strategies and plans with each other and we developed a desperately needed model policy for a basic insurance for freelancers.

Safety for journalists

In 2018, together with ten organisations, we initiated proceedings against the Dutch Security Services Act (Wiv). Free Press Unlimited wants the source protection of journalists to be better regulated in this act. We lost the suit, but we will continue with the main proceedings that the coalition has also started.

UN agencies that keep track of how many journalists are threatened, tortured, imprisoned or kidnapped have an appalling lack of reliable data. This is because there is no one definition of the type of violence and everyone uses their own methodology. Since 2018 therefore, Free Press Unlimited, together with the University of Sheffield, is working on a method with which everyone, also local media organisations, can collect and store data in the same way.





In 2018, the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Stef Blok, announced that Free Press Unlimited can use a fund of € 1.45 million to provide legal assistance to journalists abroad. This is the result of a long-standing lobby from Sjoerd Sjoerdsma, member of parliament for D66, which Free Press Unlimited also strongly supported. Our brand new Legal Defense Fund is an important acquisition for our safety programme for journalists. In 2018, we gave dozens of safety trainings to journalists who work in conflict areas or run online risks. And through Reporters Respond, we helped 73 journalists in 40 countries whose equipment was destroyed or who were seriously threatened or abused.

App for gender media monitoring

Together with our partners in Nepal, Congo, Somalia, Syria and Mali, we systematically track how often and how media report on women; we discuss that with the investigated media. That has been effective: for example, in Nepal women are receiving significantly more cover in two of the nine major newspapers. As of 2018, all our Syrian media partners have a gender policy. The conditions on the work floor also improved: Syrian female journalists are getting paid maternity leave and two Nepalese newspapers arranged a taxi service for women who work late in the evening at their editorial offices.

Our Malian partner, Tuwindi, developed its own monitoring app; it works so well that in 2018 we jointly

developed the app further into an online gender media monitoring platform for international use. Pilots are now running in Mali, Nepal and DR Congo. Tuwindi also threw its own quality label into the fight for more gender equality in Malian media: the GIP label (Gender, Independence, Professionalism). The first labels will be awarded in 2019.

Fourteen female photo journalists in Iraq were the lucky ones (out of 137 applications) who were trained and coached by our partner Metrography to make outstanding photo stories. Their photos were exhibited at five locations and the women appeared in TV programmes. Exactly what we were aiming for: more visibility and recognition for photo journalism as a profession for women.

No News Is Bad News

Thanks in part to the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Swedish Sida, Free Press Unlimited can run three large programmes. No News Is Bad News is a five-year strategic partnership with the ministry, in which, together with the European Journalism Centre, we support 53 media partners in 17 countries to achieve our three intermediate goals (see page 9). The interim review that we organised in 2018, shows that we are quite successful. The conditions under which journalists must do their work, have improved; for example, in Somalia, where twenty media and five civil society organisations

collaborated and managed to amend the new media act. Journalists are better equipped to fulfil their role of watchdog in society thanks to our training in, among other things, investigative journalism. Particularly at local level, this led to clear improvements in the area of governance, human rights and gender equality. For example, after revelations from our Iraqi partner, KirkukNow, the Iraqi election committee amended the procedure so that refugees from Kirkuk could vote in May 2018. Media are also operating more professionally, like the partners in the new IndonesiaLeaks whistleblower platform. Thanks to a training in digital safety, they now communicate in a way that does not endanger their sources or themselves. However, the financial independence of media requires significantly more attention than we have been able to give up to now. We will be tackling that in the second half of No News Is Bad News.

A 2018 survey showed that a shocking 95 percent of Syrians and media professionals within and outside Syria had no confidence in the truth of Syrian and international media. Crucial to restoring this confidence is that media work professionally and independently

Russian-Language News Exchange

A Moldavian cartoon that explains a complicated money laundering scandal in two minutes, a Ukrainian scoop that went global thanks to online media packages: the Russian-Language News Exchange continues to innovate and manages to reach an audience of over 40 million people. The platform, established at the end of 2015 by Free Press Unlimited and seven media partners, unites independent media from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldavia, Ukraine and Russia: countries where a large portion of the population speaks Russian.

Thanks to the cooperating media, they now receive reliable information and penetrating stories that transcend boundaries and connect people. For example, the Georgian JAMnews delivers news about Armenia and Azerbaijan, whose governments stay in conflict, in both languages, so that they can read each other's articles. The Russian-Language News Exchange supports partners editorially, creates multimedia productions with them, advises on the best distribution channels and experiments with new formats like Instagram videos in Russia and Belarus, or video blogs about research projects in Georgia.

Syrian media becoming more professional

The Syrian media sector, despite operating in extremely difficult conditions, is managing to work more professionally. We also examined this programme closely in 2018. Meanwhile, 23 media (organisations) have signed the Ethical Charter that we drew up in 2015, in which they promise to comply with principles such as objectivity and respect for the freedom of expression. As of 2018, the Syrian Journalists' Association (SJA), established with our help, has grown into an internationally recognised media institute that stands up for the freedom of expression, professional journalism and the protection of journalists. The SJA successfully stimulates dialogue and inclusion among Syrian media.

Our gender media monitoring showed that independent media, as promoted by the SJA, contribute to more pluriform reporting on Syria. Just how desperately this is needed, was clear from the unique public survey that we organised in 2018 under Syrians and media professionals outside and within Syria. A shocking 95 percent had no confidence in the truth of Syrian and international media. Crucial to restoring this confidence is that media work professionally and independently. With that objective in mind, again in 2018, we trained almost one thousand employees, 28 percent of whom were women, in matters ranging from organisational development to making videos with smartphones. Coaches gave individual guidance to almost 300 journalists.

Our work in **nine stories**

1.

Peace Councils increase the **safety of Somali journalists**

Journalists in Somalia run the risk of being wrongfully arrested or even murdered because of the work they do. Media, civil society organisations, judiciary and police are making efforts to work together in three regional peace councils, for a safer working environment for journalists.

Ibrahim Mohamed, project officer with our partner, Media Association of Puntland (MAP), paints a solemn picture of the situation in his region. 'We do have media laws, but these exist only on paper. A politician who disagrees with a news report can easily call the police and order an arrest warrant. The police will then arrest the journalist and throw him in jail where he or she will remain without trial for weeks.'

Unlawful arrest is a risk that journalists in Somalia run. But that's not all: in the last ten years, 45 journalists were killed in this country because of their work. Murderers do not need to worry about prosecution: for the fourth consecutive year, Somalia is at the top of the impunity index of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). What makes the situation extra complicated, is that the underpaid journalists in Somalia are often corrupt themselves and take payment for reporting. The result: a deep-rooted mutual mistrust between journalists, politicians and police.

'No one is above the law'

That is why Free Press Unlimited, together with three journalists' associations, organised so-called 'peace councils' last year in Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland, in which all parties concerned spoke about a safer working environment for journalists. Mohamed organised two sessions in Puntland. Based on case studies, the participants discussed which challenges journalists are facing in Puntland and why a safe working environment is so important. Mohamed looks back with satisfaction. 'We now have more friends fighting for the freedom of expression, also within the police,' he says.



Significant results were booked in Puntland. The participants established a committee for the protection of journalists, with representatives from media, police and civil society organisations, like the Puntland Women Lawyers Association. They also set up two helplines, one for male and one for female journalists who are in danger. In November, media and police even drew up a step-by-step plan broadening their cooperation to increase the safety of journalists.

The peace councils also proved to be a success outside the sessions. Mohamed witnessed a change in the attitude of the police. In six cases, the police commissioner, who had been ordered by a politician to arrest a journalist, called MAP first. 'This shows that the police understood that this arrest warrant was unlawful. We managed to resolve the issue in a dialogue,' he says.

These successes are enough reason for MAP to continue with the peace councils. 'What police and journalists agree on, is that no one is above the law,' says Mohamed. 'The peace councils give us the chance to make parties aware of that law – and how to preserve it. It is important to remain in dialogue with each other.'

Since: 2017

Donor: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Contribution: € 82,000



2.

More women in Nepalese media through gender monitoring



In Nepal, women are almost invisible in the media. If Nepalese media want to represent society as a whole, they should also look at the state of gender equality in their own publications. Our partner, Freedom Forum, helps them with this using the Free Press Unlimited gender media monitoring method.

In Nepalese media, the names of female journalists are often not mentioned with their articles. Women also rarely appear as experts on television or in the newspaper. This distorted reflection of society means women feel unheard and are unable to see positive role models for themselves in the media. If media wish to stand up for the interests of women and girls, they should ensure that women are no longer ignored within their own ranks and in the reporting.

Since 2016, Freedom Forum has therefore been monitoring the content of nine major national newspapers, seven provincial newspapers and five opinion websites on a weekly basis. The organisation investigates the image they portray of women, by scanning by-lines, sources and photos.

More by-lines

Every three months, Freedom Forum sends a report of its findings to the media it has examined. However, it goes further than just a report: our partner also organises discussions with chief editors, government officials and civil society organisations about the representation of women, both in the content and on the work floor.

Initially, some chief editors were angry about the conclusions of the monitoring. However, there were soon results: slowly but surely the number of by-lines for women is increasing. 'We are pleasantly surprised with the changes we are seeing,' says Freedom Forum's gender monitoring officer, Nanu Maiya Khadka.

According to Freedom Forum, in 2018, more women also appeared in Nepalese media, as author and as source. And the discussions initiated by our partner about women in the media had another effect: two newspapers, Kantipur and Republica, are now providing transport to and from work for their female employees. This means it is also safe for women to work late shifts in the editing room. An important added advantage: now they can also make the 'hard' news items about politics and the economy, because in Nepal, those issues are often discussed in the evening.

Female leadership

There's no doubt that there is still a lot of work to do. In the provincial media monitored by Freedom Forum, between July and September 2018, no more than 14% of all by-lines were for female journalists. It was also mainly men who were cited as sources in articles – only 16% were women. One way to make the tide to turn faster, is to get more women to the top. For that reason, Free Press Unlimited is initiating a training programme for female leadership in Nepalese media in 2019.

Since: 2016

Donor: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Contribution: € 88,500

3.

Fighting for **press freedom** on the international stage

For four years, Albana Shala was president of UNESCO's IPDC on behalf of the Netherlands. She was the first woman to hold the post. As head of a council of 39 countries, she advocated strongly for gender equality in the media and for the safety of journalists.

Strong legislation for press freedom, good working conditions and professional training for journalists: these are all elements that contribute to free media and a diverse media landscape. IPDC, UNESCO's international programme for communication development, is committed to that. IPDC is the only UN forum in which countries work together to develop media in developing countries.

Free Press Unlimited was therefore proud that its programme coordinator, Albana Shala, was elected president of IPDC at the end of 2014. The Dutch

delegation at UNESCO successfully advocated for a media expert from our organisation. In that position, she could work at international level on matters close to her heart: gender equality and the protection of journalists. Normally, this position is only held by the same person for two years, and then given to a representative from a different country. However, people were so impressed with Shala's work, that she was asked to stay for an additional term.

Better conditions for journalists

What do journalists notice of the work of IPDC in their daily lives? Then you have to think about the media projects that are financed by IPDC, says Shala: 'Young female journalists at community radio stations in Mozambique for example, who can make productions about gender equality. Or a threatened journalist in Colombia who can use a programme to protect human rights defenders and journalists.'

But the IPDC also indirectly makes an important difference to journalists: the programme keeps the safety of journalists and impunity for violence against media workers high on the UN agenda. For example, the UN action plan for Safety of Journalists was devised in this forum. As a result, countries such as Afghanistan, Guatemala and South Sudan have already taken concrete measures to combat impunity. That is desperately needed: 90% of all killings of journalists worldwide still go unpunished.

In defence of press freedom

As president, among other things, Albana Shala worked on a more cohesive relationship between the 39 countries that are members of the IPDC council and jointly determine the policy. Not an easy task with member states like Cuba and Turkey who have very different reputations in the area of press freedom. Nevertheless, Shala succeeded in pushing decisions on the safety of journalists through the council. As president, she could also co-determine which media projects the IPDC finances: 'We made sure most of the selected projects also addressed gender inequality.'

'In a climate in which world leaders depict journalists as the enemy and disinformation spreads like wildfire via social media, it is more important than ever to continue to talk at international level about the importance of press freedom,' says Shala. That is why she will continue to be committed in the coming years: within the IPDC as board member and as of now, fully in her work for Free Press Unlimited.

Since: 2015

Donor: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Education, Culture and Science

Contribution: € 41,000



4. Rappers involve Malian youth in the news

70% Of the population in Mali is under 35 years old. Yet in the media you see very few of the themes that concern young people. The rap-news from our partner Kunafoni is changing that: young rappers deliver the news in a way that engages Malian youth.

It is not strange that many young people in Mali are pessimistic about their future perspectives. Youth unemployment is high, the country has one of the highest percentages of child marriages in the world and the north of the country is suffering under extremist violence. Disadvantaged young people are an easy target for radicalisation by the fighting groups.

Realising goals

Journalist Togola Hawa Séméga wrote independent articles about the situation in her country, but she was unable to reach the youth with them. During a trip to the United States, she became inspired by the rapping weatherman: that could be a good concept for involving Malian youth in the news.

‘The future of Mali is in the hands of the youth, but an increasing number of young Malians want to leave the country,’ says Séméga. ‘They feel they have no opportunities and that they have no voice. With Kunafoni WebTV I want to show young people that they can innovate, create, dream, but even better: that they can actually realise their dreams.’

Free Press Unlimited believed in Séméga’s plan. Together, we worked out a distinctive format: unlike other rap-news in West Africa, Kunafoni WebTV had to be based on objective news. Free Press Unlimited trained a team from Kunafoni, that now has five rappers, three video journalists and a beatmaker, in journalistic techniques like rebuttal and storytelling.

Presidential elections on the beat

Young people are now served online news bulletins by Kunafoni Rappou on a weekly basis where, instead of seated grey suits, young rappers stand behind the semi-circular talk show table. Accompanied by a rousing beat, they talk about hot issues in their country. The presidential elections in 2018, for instance, were widely discussed. The video journalists of Kunafoni interviewed young Malians at demonstrations for the opposition and the rappers reported the official results and allegations of fraud.

An increasing number of Malians are getting hooked on the creative mix of journalism, rap and humour of Kunafoni. The number of followers on Facebook has grown since March 2018 from 26,500 to almost 40,000. In 2018, Kunafoni was rewarded with a second place in *Le Prix francophone de l’innovation dans les médias*, a prize for innovative media formats in the French speaking world. Last year, the bulletins also made their debut on Malian television: twice a week, Renouveau TV broadcasts the rap-news. To make the rapping newsreaders even more well-known to Malian youth, Kunafoni is going on tour with live performances throughout the country in the coming year.

Since: 2016

Donor: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Contribution: € 66,100



5.

Keeping It Real: digitally resilient youth



Clickbait, hoaxes and fake news: the internet is overflowing with seducing or even misleading information. To make young people more resilient, with the Keeping It Real project, Free Press Unlimited is researching the digital media behaviour of thirteen-year-olds in Mexico, South Africa and Sweden.

On social media like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, information comes at you from all angles. The reliability of all that online information varies considerably. Sometimes deliberately misleading “fake news” can hardly be distinguished from objective, independent information.

Young people spend hours every day on social media and the information they come across there forms their worldview. But to what extent can they distinguish between reliable information, biased reporting and fake news? Because critical citizens are crucial for every democracy, Free Press Unlimited started the Keeping It Real project with the support of the Swedish Postcode Lottery last year to find out more about the digital media behaviour of thirteen-year-olds on three continents. Based on this research, Free Press Unlimited will work with experts and young people to develop ideas for programmes that teach young people how to become more online media-literate.

Research gap

In countries like the Netherlands attention is already being given to these types of media literacy projects. Apps, games and teaching programmes teach young people about the difference between reliable information and information that, for political or commercial purposes, tries to influence or mislead an audience.

But outside Europe and the United States, these types of programmes are less common, and hardly anything is known about how teenagers behave online. While it is precisely there that internet use is growing explosively. With Keeping It Real, Free Press Unlimited wants to take a first step towards closing that research gap. The research will focus on South Africa, Mexico and Sweden, to be able to compare these results with a western country.

‘Almost all of the research on media literacy among young people comes from Europe and the US,’ says Free Press Unlimited’s Evaline Schot, who is leading the project. ‘We want to investigate whether young people in countries where information is less easily available, or where it can even be dangerous to say certain things, judge the information on social media differently.’

Hackathons

Last year, Keeping It Real started with an extensive preliminary investigation. Schot: ‘We spoke with numerous experts and read a lot of existing research. We expect that the attitude of young people can vary greatly, depending on their situation: when do they assume a critical attitude or actually trust information? That would mean that you cannot simply export a media literacy project from Sweden to a country like Mexico, where violence is much more prevalent.’

This hypothesis will be tested in the three countries in the coming year. We use the knowledge we gain about digital media use during hackathons, where experts and young people themselves think about tools that help them better evaluate the quality of online information. ‘We want to help young people evaluate information as critical citizens,’ says Schot.

Since: 2018

Donor: Swedish Postcode Lottery

Contribution: € 191,000



6.

Psychological support for Nicaraguan journalists

Since the eruption of violence in Nicaragua in April 2018, journalists in the country are under enormous pressure. Yet media such as Confidential still courageously report on the human rights violations in the country. Free Press Unlimited supports Confidential financially and makes sure there is psychological support for its journalists: how can they continue to do their job in this threatening situation?



Chamorro Foundation registered 712 violations of press freedom between April and December.

Raid on the editorial room

Confidencial is one of the few media houses in Nicaragua that reports independently and has not become a mouthpiece for the government. As the publisher of a news website, two television broadcasts and a weekly printed magazine, Confidencial has been reporting extensively on repression in the country since the outbreak of the crisis. That cost the media house dearly. In December, a police force invaded the editorial room, seized hard disks, computers and documents and confiscated the building shortly afterwards. A number of journalists fled Nicaragua, others continue to work, with all the risks that entails.

Miguel* is one of them. The 21-year-old journalist who has been with Confidencial for two years, has been working long hours since the start of the crisis. He works under constant pressure, is threatened on social media and his interviews are often intense. For example, with mothers who have just lost their sons due to the violence. 'I became moody. Sometimes I slept badly, also due to the fact that I could hear shots outside my house at night,' says Miguel. 'No journalist in Nicaragua now feels 100 percent safe. The threat is always there.'

Traumatic events

The young journalist benefits greatly from the psychological support that Free Press Unlimited makes possible. Yoga sessions and psychotherapy help Confidencial employees cope with the traumatic events they report on and deal with the stress - and with the risk they run themselves. 'It has helped me to better accept the new situation in the country ... help from a professional is extremely important to be able to continue.'

Since: 2018

Donor: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Contribution: € 57,000

In 2018, a serious political crisis arose in Nicaragua. Demonstrations against a pension reform were violently beaten down by supporters of the presidential couple Daniel Ortega and Rosario Murillo. Thousands of Nicaraguans took to the streets to protest the violence. Police and pro-government groups took targeted shots at demonstrators, which included many students. Hundreds of people lost their lives as a result of the violence.

The crisis has far-reaching consequences for the freedom of the press in the Central American country. Journalists who expose human rights violations and criticise the government are threatened, harassed, beaten up and in some cases arrested. One journalist was shot while filming the demonstrations. The Violeta Barrios de

* For security reasons, this name is fictitious.



7.

Metrography: Iraq's first independent photo agency

In war-torn Iraq, Metrography photo agency's wish is to break ethnic, cultural and religious barriers with visual stories from all communities. Free Press Unlimited is helping Metrography develop into a professional organisation, with more and more photographers joining and receiving international recognition.

Metrography is the only independent photo agency in Iraq. The organisation has photographers from all corners of Iraqi society, such as Yazidis, Christians and Kurds. Together, they highlight the many aspects of daily reality in Iraq through their photography; a unique and important achievement in a country where conflict, terror and fragmentation reign.

Wings thanks to professionalisation

Ahmed Najm is at the helm of the organisation. 'Before our partnership with Free Press Unlimited, I was also editor-in-chief, head of finance and the marketing man,' says Najm. 'We undertook just about everything all over Iraq, but were very restricted due to a lack of staff and focus.'

Free Press Unlimited helped Metrography to make a major step towards professionalisation. We organised a strategy session to clarify the goals of the agency. With financial support from Free Press Unlimited, Najm was also able to hire full-time staff to help him with the commercial side of the photo agency, among other things. Where necessary, Free Press Unlimited coaches Najm and his colleagues in the field of operational management.

The more focused method and better division of tasks gave Metrography wings. 'We managed to improve the quality of our photo selection, and the number of affiliated photographers has grown from 8 to 73 since 2015,' says Najm. Last year, Metrography organised the second edition of its photo festival in five regions, where exhibitions drew attention to themes such as the online harassment of Iraqi women.

Copyright victory

The ultimate goal of the professionalisation of Metrography is for the organisation to become financially independent and commercially successful. A major obstacle to this is the poor compliance with copyright law in Iraq. Iraqi media organisations regularly use photos without paying a photographer, or even mentioning her or his name.

To counter this, Metrography set up a volunteer team that brings copyright cases to court. They achieved an important victory last year: photographer Mootaz Sami won a lawsuit after his photo was published without permission. He became the first photographer in Iraq to receive compensation for a copyright violation, which sent a signal to his colleagues that they could actually make a living from this profession.

The growing success of Metrography was marked with special recognition at the end of 2018: Najm was selected as a jury member for the prestigious World Press Photo competition. A great honour, and something that would not have been possible a few years ago, according to Najm. 'I was doing so many different things, I couldn't even have considered it.'

Since: 2016

Donor: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Contribution: € 70,000

8. Arta FM: independent reporting in Northern Syria

For many years there has been little room for independent media in war-torn Syria. Nonetheless, for six years, in the Kurdish part of Northern Syria radio station Arta FM has been working for more peace and quiet in the region through its independent reporting.



Free Press Unlimited has supported Arta FM since the beginning of 2018, not only financially but also operationally. The radio station underwent a growth spurt over the last couple of years and was therefore really able to put the support from Free Press Unlimited to good use. Last year, for example, we gave various journalism and organisational trainings to the editing team and the management of the radio station. In addition, Free Press Unlimited helps Arta FM to safeguard the quality of the programmes by giving regular feedback and tips about the content of the programmes.

The Kurdish area of Northern Syria where Arta FM is mainly active, has many different population groups, all of which Arta FM wants to serve. To that end, Arta FM broadcasts all its programmes in the four most common languages of the region, so everyone can follow the broadcasts. Opposing extremism and stimulating harmony between the various communities are key goals of Arta FM. For the most part, the radio broadcaster offers its listeners local news and calls into question issues that are ignored by the (local) government. In this way, it promotes the interests of all inhabitants of the region.

Emergency situation

One good example of the importance of Arta FM is its reports on the lax attitude of the local government in December, when heavy rainfall and flooding afflicted Jazira region. The damage to the infrastructure and to homes was major. Arta FM immediately received multiple reports from local residents about the negligence and inaccessibility of the local government during this emergency situation. The radio station paid attention to their complaints in different programmes and news broadcasts. During one of the broadcasts, they gave the floor to several victims, who all confirmed that no one had gotten a response on the municipal emergency number after the flooding. In addition, the municipalities appeared not to have taken enough precautions to limit the damage caused by the heavy rainfall.

Hold the government accountable

For a long time, this was denied by the municipality, but thanks in part to the continued pressure from Arta FM, the responsible official admitted that insufficient action was taken. Immediately, local emergency committees were established so that in future, the municipality can take better action in case of an emergency. Also, during the Arta FM morning show, the deputy mayor announced that two responsible officials had been fired on the spot.

Since: 2018

Donor: Sida

Contribution: € 90,000

9.

A press freedom index for Indonesia

With the support of Free Press Unlimited partner PPMN developed its own press freedom index for Indonesia. It now uses it to identify unacceptable media practices and make local governments aware of the importance of a free, independent press.

Indonesia takes the 124th place in the World Press Freedom Index of Reporters Without Borders (RSF). That means the country scores even worse in the area of press freedom than Afghanistan. The cause? Misconduct like violence against local journalists, for example in Papua, and biased reporting in media owned by business tycoons with political interests.

But the (lack of) press freedom is not the same everywhere in the vast area of Indonesia and the causes can also vary greatly per region. To get a better idea of that, and to encourage local governments to take action, in 2016 PPMN (Indonesian Association for Media Development) initiated the first Indonesian press freedom index that reports at national and provincial level. PPMN did this in collaboration with the Press Council of Indonesia and with financial support and coaching from Free Press Unlimited.

A useful instrument

The index quickly grew into an instrument that can improve the media climate in Indonesia. 'The index helps us to monitor and improve press freedom, and holds up a mirror to us as it were,' says PPMN Director Eni Mulia. For example, it examines the extent to which vulnerable groups have access to media, whether or not the government criminalises and intimidates media, and whether the freedom exists to start a media company.

In 2018 the index was used in the run-up to the elections. 'We chose two provinces, East and West Java, where media often do not work independently because they are



owned by business people with political interests,' says Mulia. In both provinces, PPMN organised a meeting in which they explained the press freedom index to about 170 local politicians, policy makers, academics, journalists and police officers.

How to do a professional job

In the sessions, PPMN explained how a professional press does its work and that does not include journalists changing their reporting for payment. 'It is quite normal for local governments to maintain a budget to pay media... There are so many bad practices that are regarded as normal,' says Mulia. At the end of the workshops, the participants signed a statement in which they promised to monitor professional reporting of the elections. Mulia believes this is an important step. 'Not everyone in Indonesian society, and specifically the government, understands that press freedom is important and that it should play a major role in promoting that.'

Also in the coming year, PPMN is organising workshops to continue to raise this awareness. And that's a good thing too: with the upcoming presidential elections, it is even more important that Indonesians get the independent and unbiased reporting they deserve.

Since: 2014

Donor: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Contribution: € 137,000

Our stakeholders

Our most important stakeholders are local media partners, crucial funders and loyal donors. How do we work with them and how do we communicate with all these stakeholders?

Our partners

Without a doubt, the 66 local media partners in 31 countries where we work together, are our most important stakeholders. We have great respect for their work and they appreciate our support, as our partner satisfaction at the end of 2018 survey showed. At 72%, the response was higher than last year (66%). In particular, the communication and the relationship with Free Press Unlimited scored high and partners believe we should definitely continue our successful policy

influencing. What could be better, are our monitoring and evaluation, and the joint quest for promising revenue models for independent media.

Our donors

Free Press Unlimited considers itself lucky with dedicated donors who see the importance of our work, and also understand how complex this often is. They like to share their ideas with us: a valuable addition to our own expertise. For many years, our most loyal donor has been the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs; it is our strategic partner in the No News Is Bad News programme and it makes the new Legal Defense Fund possible.

We are also extremely pleased with the Swedish Sida, which supports the professionalisation of the Syrian media sector in exile. The Swedish Postcode Lottery decided to help youth in Mexico, South Africa and Sweden become more digitally resilient through our new programme Keeping it Real.



The Dutch Postcode Lottery has supported the work of Free Press Unlimited for more than twenty years. We and our media partners are immensely grateful to their 2.9 million participants. In addition to the annual contribution of € 900,000, in 2018 the Postcode Lottery supported the 3-year international research project Money Trail, that we submitted jointly with Oxfam Novib. Journalists in Asia, Africa and Europe are learning how to do (across borders) research into financial misconduct such as illegal money flows and tax evasion.

For ten years, the Postcode Lottery has also facilitated the Postcode Lottery Fund for Journalists, through which 66 unique foreign stories again appeared in Dutch media in 2018. This year we received 45 new requests, 15 of which we approved. Two of these are plans for in-depth investigative journalism abroad – the Postcode Lottery Fund also provides a solution in this difficult to finance discipline.

During Free Press Live, Martin Turček spoke about how the murder of his colleague Jan Kúciak had led to a collaboration between Slovakian media – and how 100,000 enraged demonstrators forced the responsible ministers to resign

In 2018, our employees succeeded in raising over € 14 million in funds for our projects. For that, we submitted 48 proposals, 22 of which were honoured by the end of 2018: a success rate of more than 56 percent, significantly higher than we booked at the end of 2017 (almost 40 percent).

Our Friends

It is with good reason that we call our private donors Friends. Because the 3,085 loyal Free Press Unlimited supporters, 125 more than last year, are friends of press freedom and the right to information. They do not just donate money, but also their critical commitment and passionate voice – for example, when it comes to the safety of journalists or the protection of sources.

In 2018, financial support also came from people who are not (yet) regular donors. In particular, a letter we sent with the *De Groene Amsterdammer* in September shook readers up and earned us more Friends. We received a total of € 70.483,70 in gifts, 38% more than last year.

Our audience

Stories illustrate the impact of our work in a much more appealing way than a dry summary of facts. We are pleased that in 2018 we succeeded in collecting many more stories and publishing them, for example, in the *No News Is Bad News* newspaper and on our website. The figures for 2018 show that we have successfully designed the website so that people quickly find what they are looking for, stay on the website longer, and do more there.

Social media are the most important channels with which we involve people with Free Press Unlimited. The number of Twitter followers grew by 1,780 to 8,680. in 2018. We also made more friends on Facebook: there are currently 18,760. Our LinkedIn network also expanded by about 250 people to 1,255 and on Instagram the teller stands at 447. The Free Press Unlimited YouTube videos were viewed almost 2,000 times more often than in 2017: 11,780 times. Each month we send an e-mail newsletter to more than 1320 subscribers and an English version to 650 subscribers. And twice a year, our Friends receive a letter in which we update them on our work.

Every year, two events draw public attention to the freedom of the press (International Press Freedom Day on the 3rd of May) and the protection of journalists (the International Day to End Impunity for Violence Against Journalists on the 2nd of November). Press Freedom Day attracted about 150 journalists and other interested parties who held discussions and were given a workshop on digital safety. During Free Press Live 2018, Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Stef Blok launched the Legal Defense Fund (see page 12) for an audience of over 300 people. He stressed the importance of courageous investigative journalists for a free society. One such journalist is Rana Ayyub from India, winner of the Most Resilient Journalist Award. Other awards went to the young Nigerian journalist Kemi Busari and the duo Mirjam van Biemen and Mijke van Wijk.

Martin Turček spoke about how the murder of his colleague Jan Kúciak had led to a collaboration between Slovakian media – and how 100,000 enraged demonstrators forced the responsible ministers to resign. Paul, son of the murdered investigative journalist, Daphne Caruana Galizia, emphasised that the killing of journalists is often preceded by years of threats. The Dutch journalists, Paul Vugts and Jeroen Akkermans, told of how they do not let themselves be intimidated by violence against journalists, but continue to do their work and fight for justice.

The organisation

We at Free Press Unlimited attach great importance to the gathering and sharing of knowledge. Our organisation structure is designed for that: we are a network of five project teams and seven support departments that are closely linked with each other.

Each project team has a team leader, four of the support departments have a department head (Communications, Knowledge & Quality, Donor Relations and Finance) and the other three are directly steered by the Board of Directors. The teams range in size from 3.8 FTE (MENA) to 10 FTE in the large Sudan team, which also includes the staff of Radio Dabanga.

Board of Directors and management

Thanks to our choice of Supervisory Board model as our governance form, the directors also form the Executive Team (i.e. Board of Directors). This means it can operate quickly and flexibly. The Board of Directors of Free Press Unlimited consists of Leon Willems (Director Policy & Programmes) and Ruth Kronenburg (Director Operations). This Executive Team conducts the daily policy and is accountable to the Supervisory Board. The annual gross remuneration of the Directors (Leon Willems € 93.908 and Ruth Kronenburg € 92.781) is in line with the remuneration scheme for directors of Goede Doelen Nederland and the Wijffels Code. Their unpaid additional activities are special advisor to the Global Forum for Media Development (Leon Willems) and member of the

advisory committee of Pro Bono Connect and of the TNI Supervisory Board (Ruth Kronenburg).

Instead of a limited management team, since 2017, Free Press Unlimited has a strategic management meeting. This is a quarterly meeting of the directors, the team leaders and the department heads. All team leaders and heads meet every month. They discuss and coordinate operational matters that are important for the entire organisation and support each other as managers.

The Supervisory Board

The Supervisory Board is ultimately responsible for Free Press Unlimited. It monitors the performance of the organisation and intervenes if it feels it is necessary. The Supervisory Board is responsible for the overall strategy of the organisation and makes decisions on the basis of the annual budgets and reports. It met three times in 2018. It discussed the annual report and the annual financial statements, the 2019 budget and strategy of the organisation, among other things.

The term for the members is four years and can in principle be extended to a maximum of three times. In 2018, the Supervisory Board consisted of the following members:

- **Joop Daalmeijer** (chair), second term. Additional activities: media advisor for the Council for Culture, chair Dutch Press Prize, *De Tegel*, member Supervisory Board of *De Buren* in Brussels.
- **Marietje Schaake** (vice-chair), second term. No additional activities.
- **Teus Eenkhoorn** (member, chair Financial Audit Committee), second term. No additional activities.
- **Corine de Vries** (member), second term. No additional activities.
- **Henk Boer** (member, Financial Audit Committee), first term. No additional activities.
- **Ronald Gijsbertsen** (member), first term. No additional activities.

Independent offices

Ideally, Free Press Unlimited wants its partners to pull their own weight (financially) as quickly as possible, on condition that they can run their organisation in a professional manner. To achieve this, Free Press Unlimited gives them the best guidance possible: customised and at a realistic pace, given the often difficult circumstances in which they operate. We are planning to make two of our big projects independent in the course of 2019.



Report of the Supervisory Board 2018

The Supervisory Board of Free Press Unlimited operates remotely. This gives the Board of Directors space to actually direct the organisation and support independent media financially and strategically. Where necessary, the Supervisory Board provides counsel when asked and gives unsolicited advice. In 2018, the Supervisory Board convened three times.

In the area of finance, there is more direct interaction between the directors and the financial expert from the Supervisory Board through the audit committee. The committee reports directly to the supervisory board and was consistently positive throughout 2018.

The remuneration committee, consisting of the chairman of the Supervisory Board and Corine de Vries, held appraisal and performance reviews with the two directors. The conclusion of the conversations was that the two board members functioned excellently, both individually and together as a board.

The Supervisory Board – and especially the member appointed by the works council - also spoke with representatives from this council. These discussions were seen as fruitful and gave the Supervisory Board additional insight into the functioning of Free Press Unlimited. The Supervisory Board believes the establishment of a works council was a good decision and that there is a good relationship between the council and the Board of Directors.

Despite the good news, 2018 also brought worries. These concerns centred on Radio Dabanga and Radio Tamazuj and were mostly due to financial reasons. Recent developments in Sudan, where Radio Dabanga broadcasts, underline the importance of independent media once again: since early December there have been continuous demonstrations, human rights are still being violated and it appears to be very difficult to end the country's war. Now more than ever there is a need for independent radio that is freely accessible and the reporting of which can positively influence the national debate. The Supervisory Board did decide that both Radio Dabanga and Radio Tamazuj, which broadcasts in South Sudan, have to become independent in order to decrease liability. The supervisory board would like to see Radio Dabanga and Radio Tamazuj stand on their own two feet and continue their work that way.



Unfortunately Free Press Unlimited received critical press coverage on two occasions in the past year: in January 2018 on the website of De Correspondent and in October in an article in Villamedia. The Supervisory Board was able to assist the Board of Directors with advice and practical measures.

There are also good developments. Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Stef Blok, freed up €1.45 million to provide legal assistance to journalists in emergency situations. The minister allocated the funds for Free Press Unlimited's programme Safety for media professionals. Free Press Unlimited has long advocated for such a fund and welcomes the ministry's decision.

Joop Daalmeijer – chairman Supervisory Board

Staff

Free Press Unlimited asked and received an extraordinary amount of its staff this year. Once again, commitment was great and we can all be extremely satisfied with the results.

Personnel policy

The three pillars on which we based our new HR policy in 2016, are as relevant as ever:

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

In 2018 we made it even more attractive to work for Free Press Unlimited by first announcing vacancies internally for a week before communicating them externally. In addition, every employee can take paid refresher leave once every five years: three weeks holiday or six weeks for a course or study. In 2018, two people opted for a six-week leave. To keep the HR processes clear for everyone, in 2018 we replaced the Legal Regulations with a Personnel Manual.

In 2018, the number of FTE increased from 64 (56.1 FTE) to 70 (61.6 FTE); we said goodbye to twelve colleagues and we welcomed fourteen new people. Free Press Unlimited employs 39 women and 31 men. The Board of Directors comprises one man and one woman and five of the nine managers are women. Seven volunteers and five interns joined our organisation in 2018.

The sick leave percentage rose significantly in 2018, from 1.83 to 3.36 percent, due to the long-term illness of two employees. Since the end of 2017, we have had an in-house prevention officer who contributes to the daily safety and health at the office.

Education & Training

All the relevant training and courses that people can follow – either individually or as a team – are listed in

our annual Continuous Professional Development Plan. Employees can suggest own ideas for training. In 2018, some chose to take Arabic classes, others a course in time management and still others took a course in how to write good project proposals.

In January and September, we organised Free Press Unlimited Days again for the whole organisation. We talked about diversity, the internal work culture, individual development and how to learn from your mistakes. We also presented the No News Is Bad News Midterm Review, discussed our 2018-2022 multiannual strategy and looked in-depth at themes such as gender, safety and business models.

Integrity policy and Confidential Advisor

We already had a whistleblower procedure and an external confidential advisor, a security policy and a policy to limit the risks for our organisation. In 2018, we took major steps towards a tightened and complete integrity policy, which will be introduced next year. We are broadening the internal and external complaints procedures to make them more accessible and we are bolstering our fraud and corruption policy. In 2018, no complaints were received. Our Code of Conduct, dating from 2012, has been updated and, in addition to a description of standards and values, deals with the practical behaviour of employees.

In 2018, the Confidential Counselor received three reports of unwanted conduct, a drop in relation to 2017 (five reports). In two cases it involved a combination of work-related issues and conduct dating back to 2017. Both reports were rounded off in 2018, under the supervision of the Confidential Counselor. This year, the Confidential Counselor received no official complaints of misconduct.

Works Council

The Works Council meets twice a month. In 2018 it added a short update session to that (twice a week), to prevent issues remaining untreated for too long. The Works Council consulted its rank and file on the new Personnel Manual, and insisted that job vacancies be posted internally first. It gave advice about the integrity policy and whistleblower regulation, among other things. It meets once a quarter with the Board of Directors and twice with the HR manager. The Works Council minutes are accessible to everyone on our internal Wiki. In 2018, two new Works Council members replaced colleagues who left.





Knowledge, quality and continuity

The work of Free Press Unlimited is becoming increasingly dependent on thorough knowledge and research. Our Knowledge & Quality team therefore plays a crucial role in our organisation.

Knowledge & quality

With the questions that emerged from the interim review of No News Is Bad News, we established research agendas in 2018 around three themes: gender and media, financial independence and the watchdog role of media. We identified the gaps we have in knowledge and what methodologies are best suited to finding answers. We will be examining whether it is true that more gender equality on the media work floor leads to higher revenues and a better competitive position of media.

In 2018, we significantly extended our database, where we collect 'evidence' for our Theory of Change, with external publications, evaluations, case studies and stories from partners. Each document helps us check

whether our strategies are correct or should be amended. PROMIS, our project management information system, helps us in another way: in the management of our projects. We are proud of this in-house developed system that runs on our own Wiki. PROMIS is exceptionally user friendly and fully customised to Free Press Unlimited – and also much cheaper than existing systems.

Quality management

How well are we doing as an organisation? To check that we use a number of recognised quality standards.

- ISO 9001. In April 2018, an external audit team determined that Free Press Unlimited meets all the demands of the new ISO 9001:2015, so we are now in possession of the most recent ISO certificate.
- CFB 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. We report on projects in the Strategic Partnership in accordance with these standards.
- Our own Code of Conduct, to which all employees must adhere, and those of Goede Doelen Nederland.



Risk management

Free Press Unlimited works in a complex and dynamic environment. Some risks are inherent to our work, such as partners who are not (yet) able to run a project properly, or working in conflict areas. In 2018, we integrated risk management at every level in the organisation. We differentiate four risk levels: organisation, process, project and individual. We have identified the risks at every level and coupled appropriate risk mitigation measures to them.

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

In the table below, we have listed the most important risks, how likely they are, what the consequences are and what measures we take to prevent these risks. This table is in line with the new RJ650 guideline, among other things.

Sustainability

Free Press Unlimited reduces its carbon footprint as much as possible. We encourage travelling by public transport and working from home. We use green energy from renewable sources and fly climate-neutral. In 2018, we made shorter flights, causing our CO₂ emissions to rise; our aim in 2019 is to travel more by train within Europe. Our paper consumption remained stable, despite the increase in the number of employees. And where possible we choose the most sustainable, greenest variant when purchasing products, installations and services.

	Threat	Measure	Opportunity	Impact
Continuity of the organisation	Funding of media projects becomes more difficult through the decreased attention (also 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 at EU and Dutch politics. Actively search for alternative funding. 	Possible	Major
Reputation	Threat of damage to reputation Free Press Unlimited due to poor project execution or negative reporting about projects / in crisis situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with and regular monitoring of project procedures. Crisis management plan is integrated in organisation and management is trained. Managers followed a media training. 	Possible	Major
Fraud	Fraud or other false information is discovered during the performance of a project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with project procedures, incl. financial controls, location visits, limit sub-grants (1 year), sanctions. 	Probable	Minor
Integrity	Employees and freelancers (trainers, consultants) do not comply with the Code of Conduct and misbehave.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Code of Conduct is part of contracts. Free Press Unlimited has an ISO-complaints mechanism and a Confidential Counselor. 	Possible	Limited
Digital safety	By hacks, phishing, spying or unsecured digital communication privacy sensitive information that may endanger people's lives is leaked.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital environment is outsourced to specialist IT-host Regular training of employees. Security policy is part of the general safety policy. 	Probable	Limited
Compliance	Free Press Unlimited or partner do not or insufficiently meet the agreements with the donor during the performance of a project, resulting in damage to the finances and/or reputation of Free Press Unlimited.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance department checks all the demands prior to project submission and the reports during project performance. Compliance with donor demands is part of the start-up procedure. 	Possible	Limited

Financial Information

The past year saw many successes in the areas of fundraising and implementation of projects. Unfortunately, Free Press Unlimited's financial year of 2018 was characterised by a lack of funding for two large projects. For Radio Dabanga and Radio Tamazuj we did not raise sufficient funds, while costs continued. By now, both projects are fully covered again, but in 2018 they strongly and negatively affected our financial results. 2018 was a successful third year for the Strategic Partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The same goes for the Russian Language News Exchange and the Syria programme, which is supported by the Swedish development organisation Sida.

Radio Dabanga's financial woes began in 2017 and lasted until May 2018. From then on, the project received full funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 2018, Free Press Unlimited spent €350,000 of its own resources to make sure the project, which spans a decade and provides lifesaving information to 2 million people every day, could continue. Since Free Press Unlimited does not have sufficient reserves to contribute for a third year, we are extremely pleased that funding has been found for the coming years. Since January 1, 2019, Radio Tamazuj is also fully funded. In 2018, Free Press Unlimited contributed a total of €275,000 to maintain the radio station.

All in all, we are content with the fact that we kept the operating deficit limited to €196,108. This does mean that our continuity reserves have dipped below our norm of 70% of operating costs. Given the amount of grants that have been pledged until the end of 2020, we deem this acceptable. In 2018 we raised slightly more than 10 million in project funding, with contracts lasting between 10 months and three years. The same amount has been pledged and signed for in the early beginnings of 2019. These pledges should help us rise above the norm again in coming years. The operating deficit has been subtracted from the continuity reserve which amounts to just over €2 million. Our policy is for our continuity reserve to contain between 70% and 150% of the operating costs. At the end of 2018, the reserve stood at 68%.

The total income for 2018 was about €1.5 million less than the budgeted €14,347,740. The main cause for this is that we did not secure new funding from other non-profit organisations. We included about €1 million in projects in the budget, but these never materialised.

Unfortunately the income from businesses was also less than the amount in the budget. To a lesser extent the same is true for government grants and lottery organisations. Relatively speaking, income from private individuals rose sharply, thanks in part to a crowdfunding campaign for Radio Dabanga. We hope this trend continues as it's a healthy diversification of income and direct support from the public has intrinsic value. Obtaining funding for our activities after 2020 shows up high in our risk analysis. After 2020, a number of large donor contracts will expire. This includes the Strategic Partnership. Our current fundraising capacities are therefore fully focused on securing income for the period after. Other risks, such as working in conflict areas, are much lower because our experience in the field enables us to better control them.

Ruth Kronenburg, April 2019

Balance sheet as of 31 December 2018

All amounts in euro

Assets	31-12-2018	31-12-2017
Fixed Assets		
Intangible fixed assets		
· Website	4,332	3,614
Tangible fixed assets		
· Renovation	113,596	123,636
· Office supplies	50,149	52,447
· Hardware and software	38,178	28,545
· Total tangible fixed assets	201,923	204,628
Total fixed assets	206,254	208,242
Current assets		
· Accruals	121,358	172,928
· Accounts receivable and advances	19,997	66,249
· Grants to be received	1,894,089	1,883,399
Total current assets	2,035,444	2,122,576
Liquid assets		
· The Netherlands	5,311,670	4,387,495
· Abroad	399,749	294,670
Total liquid assets	5,711,419	4,682,164
Total assets	7,953,117	7,012,982

Balance sheet as of 31 December 2018

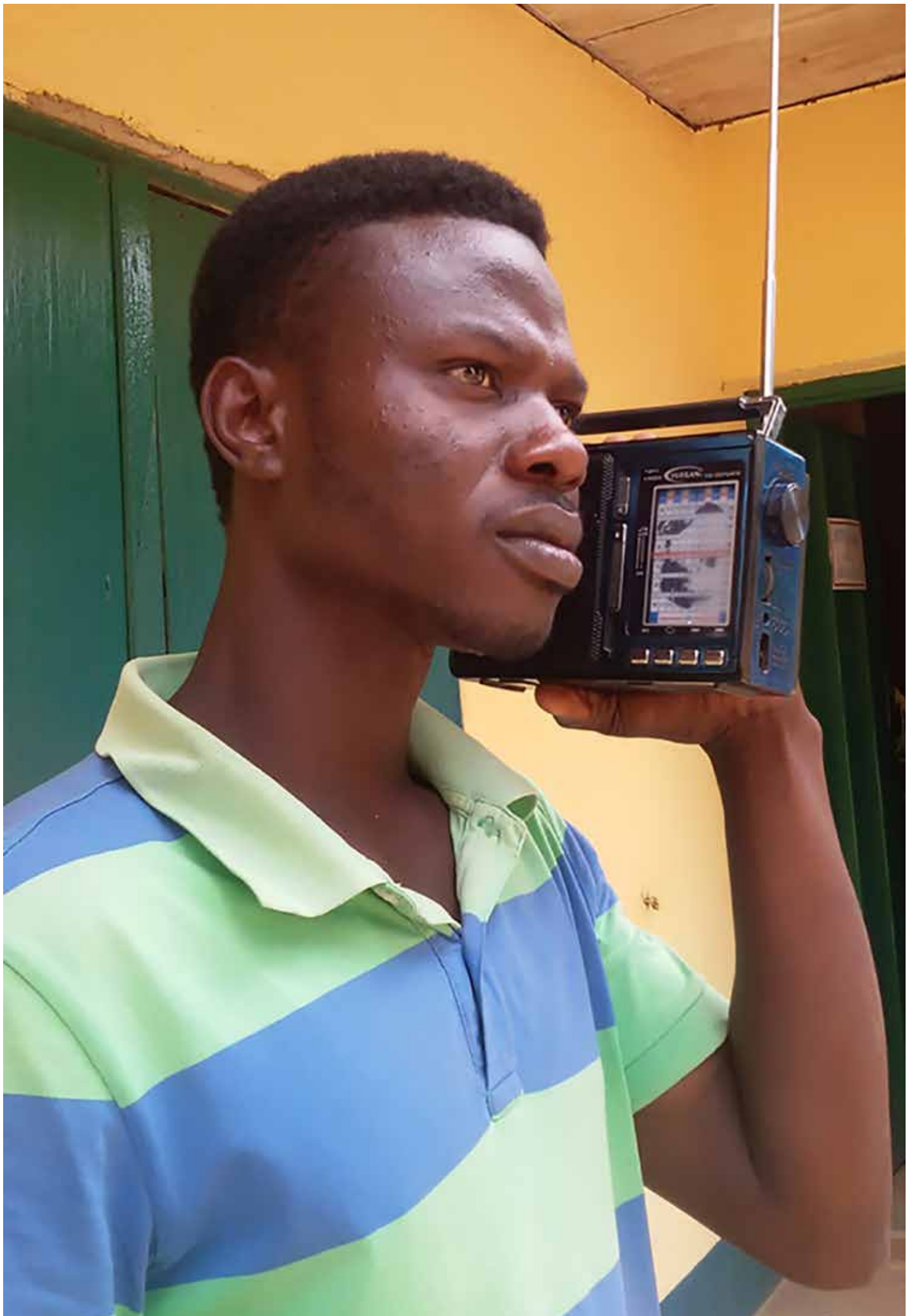
All amounts in euro

Liabilities	31-12-2018	31-12-2017
Reserves and funds		
· Continuity reserve	2,037,299	2,233,407
· Security Fund	27,490	27,490
Total reserves and funds	2,064,789	2,260,897
Current liabilities		
· Payable to staff	267,543	235,118
· Payable to suppliers	204,573	407,246
· Other short-term liabilities	124,844	131,188
· Obligations related to current projects	1,148,397	1,459,570
· Grants received in advance	4,142,972	2,518,963
Total current liabilities	5,888,328	4,752,085
Total liabilities	7,953,117	7,012,982

Statement of income and expense

All amounts in euro

Income	2018	begroting	2017
Income from government subsidies	12,752,158	12,940,000	11,469,865
Income from Dutch Postcode Lottery	1,131,815	1,335,000	1,655,187
Income from other non profit organizations	356,057	1,325,000	698,290
Income from companies	27,284	225,000	207,647
Income from individuals	80,405	50,000	51,208
Total income	14,347,720	15,875,000	14,082,197
Expenditure			
Spent on the organisation's objective			
Media support programme	13,678,857	14,794,806	13,303,362
Cost of income generation	451,780	494,271	316,441
Management and accounting costs	411,796	508,497	448,817
Total expenditure	14,542,433	15,797,574	14,068,620
Result excluding financial gains and losses	-194,713	77,426	13,577
Financial gains and losses	-1,395	-25,000	-44,144
Balance of income and expenses	-196,108	52,426	-30,566
Appropriation of the balance			
Additions to/withdrawals from:			
Continuity reserve	-196,108	52,426	-31,305
Reserves for private donor projects	0	0	0
	0	0	0
Total	-196,108	52,426	-31,305
Financial ratios			
Spent on the organisation's objective/Total generated income	95.3%	93.2%	94.5%
Spent on organisation's objective/Total expenses	94.1%	93.7%	94.6%
Costs of income generation/Total generated income	3.1%	3.1%	2.2%
Management and accounting costs/Total expenditure	2.8%	3.2%	3.2%



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