



peacebrigadesinternational

Promoting nonviolence and protecting
human rights since 1981

Annual Review 2015



Dear friends

In 2015, we worked with more than 300 inspirational women and men risking their lives to defend the rights of others in Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico and Nepal. These brave human rights defenders (HRDs) are at the heart of all we do.

2015 saw the expansion of our newest field projects. In Indonesia months of research and preparation culminated in the launch of a new intensive training programme for Papuan HRDs. In Kenya we undertook our first physical accompaniments

in the informal settlements of Nairobi. In Honduras we doubled the number of organisations we accompany. We strengthened work in our more established, Latin American field projects in 2015 too, celebrating 15 years of work in Mexico and producing the documentary film Land of Corn, about environmental and land rights defenders. We also advocated for human rights from the local to the global level, and our work was commended by the UN Special Rapporteur on HRDs Michel Forst.

We know, sadly, that HRDs will continue

to face threats in 2016. Our work, vital to their protection and wellbeing, is made possible by our volunteers, activists and supporters across the world. On behalf of all the HRDs we work with, thank you for continuing to support us.

In peace,



Dana Brown
PBI President

Peace Brigades International (PBI) envisions a world in which people address conflicts nonviolently, where human rights are universally upheld and social justice and intercultural respect have become a reality. We believe that enduring peace and lasting solutions to conflicts cannot be achieved by violent means.

PBI works in countries where communities experience violent conflict, intimidation and repression. We work at the request of human rights defenders and in response to their needs. We believe that lasting transformation of conflicts cannot come from outside, but must be based on the capacities and desires of local people. We avoid imposing, interfering or getting directly involved with the work of the organisations we accompany. Our work ranges from protective accompaniment and capacity building to bridge building and policy advocacy. Our work is effective because we take an integrated approach, combining presence on the ground alongside human rights defenders with an extensive network of international support.



Regional assembly for village women organised by AMISMAXAJ, Jalapa, Guatemala, April 2015

Cover photo



PBI volunteer accompanies HRD Cristina Auerbach from Pasta de Conchos during her visit to an open pit mine in Coahuila, Mexico

The following people served on PBI's International Council in 2015:

Dana Brown (President), John Carlarne (Vice-President), Ellen Kaas (Treasurer), Denise Cauchi, Kelleen Corrigan, Stephen Darvill, Isabella Flisi, Jonathan Glennie, Shane Guthrie, Sonia di Mezza, and Erika Zarate.

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What we do

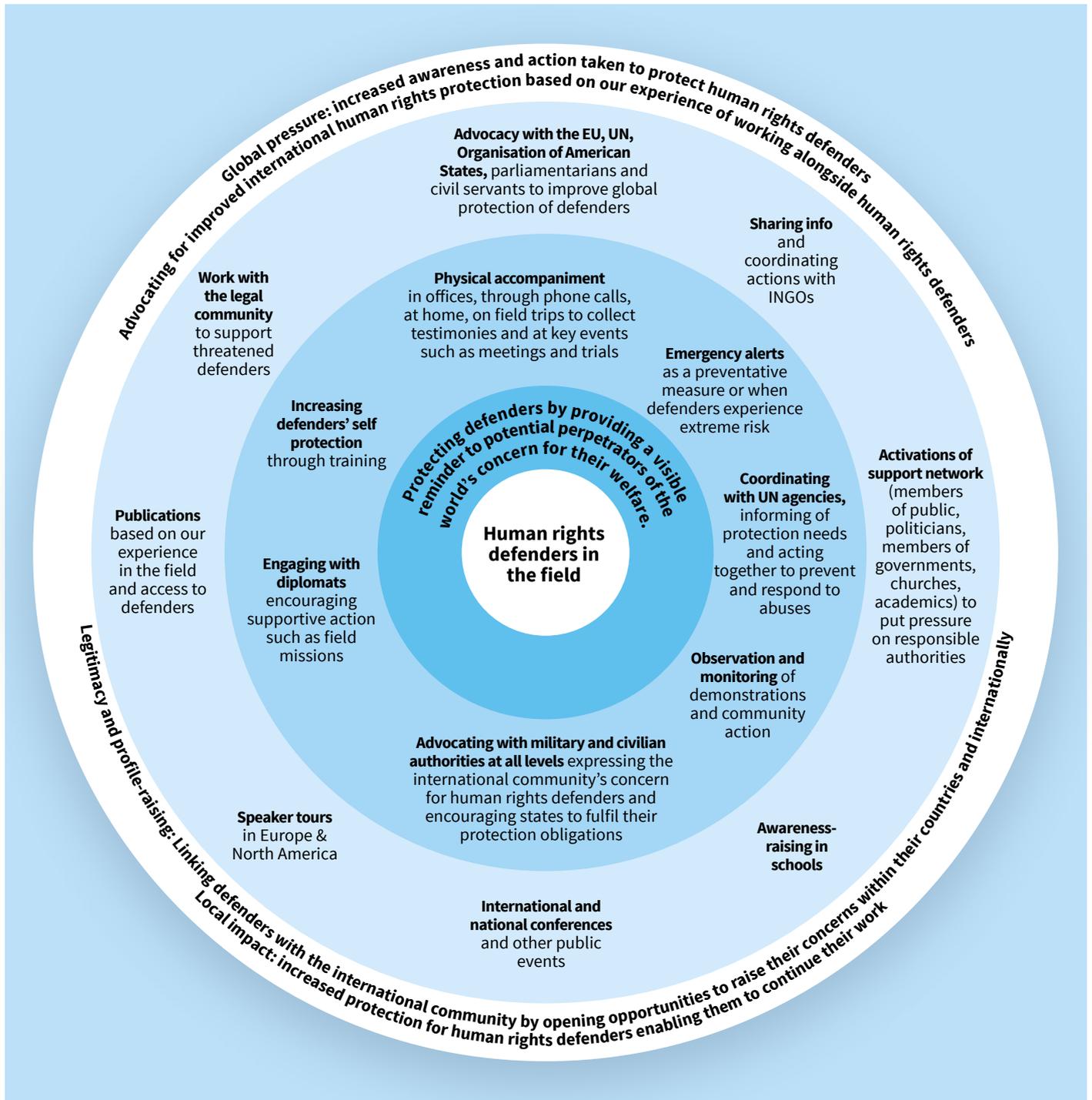
Human rights defenders – courageous people who stand up for the rights and dignity of others because they believe in peace and justice for all – are at the heart of what we do.

We provide protection, support and

recognition to human rights defenders who work in areas of conflict and repression, at their request. We help them make links with others and raise awareness of the issues they face.

We advocate at all levels – from the

soldier at a local check point to national governments and international bodies such as the UN – for human rights accountability. Our volunteers send a powerful message that the world is watching and prepared to act.



2015 in numbers

In 2015, PBI provided protection and support to **148 women and 161 men human rights defenders¹ from 50 organisations.**

Between them, these organisations helped thousands of women, men and children who have been denied their basic rights – from being forcibly evicted from their land, to seeing family members ‘disappeared’, to suffering torture and rape at the hands of armed forces.

We provided **1012 days of physical accompaniment** to human rights defenders. We **visited and met with accompanied organisations and individuals 847 times**, providing moral support and practical advice ranging from checking on defenders’ wellbeing to helping with responses to specific security incidents. We made **hundreds of phone calls** to check on defenders’ whereabouts and safety.

TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING Indonesia

PBI launched a new training and capacity building programme in partnership with the Indonesian NGO Institute for Policy Research and Advocacy (ELSAM) in 2015. 12 at-risk HRDs from the remote regions of Papua and West Papua participated in four months of intensive training in Jakarta. Divided into four modules, the programme strengthened participants’ ability to document, report and advocate human rights abuses, and enabled them to develop sustainable self-protection strategies to mitigate the security challenges they and their organisations face on a daily basis.

In response to a clearly identified need, PBI ran expert workshops on dealing with aggression. These reached 35 HRDs in total and included a “train the trainers” session. PBI also co-organised and contributed to a number of further training workshops in Indonesia, including a learning exchange between Nepalese and Indonesian HRDs.

“Aggression is in many places in daily life and also inside me. Today I learnt how to deal with that.”

PARTICIPANT
Dealing with Aggression training,
Indonesia

PHYSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT Paso del Norte Human Rights Centre, Mexico



Relatives of missing persons participated in the ‘March of National Dignity’ in Mexico City to ask the Federal Government to carry out an effective search for their loved ones

PBI has accompanied lawyers from the Paso del Norte Human Rights Centre, based in Ciudad Juárez, since 2013. After winning two ground breaking legal cases in 2014, the centre is now recognised as a leading organisation in the struggle against torture. But this reputation is not without risk; the centre’s lawyers as well as their clients regularly face threats and harassment. Throughout 2015, the centre represented Cristel Fabiola Piña Jasso, 25, who was raped and tortured by police and district attorney officers and, on reporting the crime, accused of belonging to a band of extortionists. During the trial both Cristel’s family and members of Paso

del Norte were harassed and threatened. Diana Morales, the lead lawyer on the case, regularly requested accompaniment from PBI. PBI accompanied Diana on prison visits and during the trial as well as raising concerns for the security of torture victims and members of the centre in our dialogue with Mexican authorities. After two years and three months in prison, Cristel was found not guilty of the extortion charges formulated against her. The presiding judge also ordered an inquiry against the police officers accused of Cristel’s torture. PBI provided 32 days accompaniment to the Paso del Norte Human Rights Centre in 2015.

EMERGENCY ACTIVATION La Puya, Guatemala

We ran or hosted **83 workshops attended by 603 women and 560 men human rights defenders**, providing security and advocacy training and helping defenders to cope with constant stress and psychological pressure.

We expressed our concern for human rights defenders in **343 meetings with government, local and regional authorities**, urging officials to uphold their human rights obligations in Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Kenya and Mexico. Country groups also championed defenders in **200 meetings with government representatives** in Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and the UK.

We produced over **70 publications, videos and radio appeals** amplifying defenders' voices and exposing the realities and challenges they face to public and official audiences. We also sent detailed information on the human rights situation on the ground in areas where we work to members of our support network each month. Our unique access to information, rigorous analysis and objectivity are key to the effectiveness of our integrated protection and advocacy.

We **activated our emergency support networks 10 times** in response to the most pressing and serious issues faced by defenders we accompany.

We attended **1259 meetings with diplomatic corps, intergovernmental organisations including the UN and a range of local, national and international NGOs and coalitions** to raise concerns about the safety of human rights defenders, provide information on the effectiveness of protective and preventative measures, propose ways in which policy and practice can be improved and work strategically with others to strengthen global civil societal action around human rights defenders.

We organised **speaker tours for 10 women and 12 men human rights defenders**, enabling them to travel across Europe and North America to raise international awareness of, and support for, their work. These tours empowered defenders to develop relationships with key allies, from parliamentarians to grassroots activists, and gain invaluable political, moral and financial support.

¹ Which includes cis, trans, and gender non-conforming individuals. Each time we refer to men and women human rights defenders, we are including the full gender spectrum of those we accompany. PBI's guiding principles and work include supporting gender non-conforming, gender queer, and trans individuals and groups.

the mining company to comply with a writ to suspend its activity, PBI activated its emergency support network. PBI volunteers ensured a continuous presence in the camp while detailed information was provided to a wide audience of local, national and international concerned parties. As a result, the Human Rights Ombudsman stepped up its monitoring of the case and a high level national dialogue about the impact of the mine on the local population was re-opened.



La Puya community members mark the third anniversary of their peaceful resistance, March 2015

INTERNATIONAL OBSERVATION López Lone and others vs. Honduras

A key element of PBI's protective accompaniment strategy is international observation – a visible reminder of the international community's concern for human rights violations. In 2015, at the request of the Association of Judges for Democracy (AJD), PBI Honduras observed the sessions of the case of López Lone and others vs. Honduras before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in Costa Rica. The case concerned three judges and a magistrate who, in their fight for democracy and the rule of law,

were dismissed from their positions for dissenting against the June 2009 coup d'état in Honduras. The Honduran state was found responsible for the violation of several rights, including freedom of expression, assembly and association. This ground breaking ruling is the first Inter-American Court of Human Rights judgement to include specific reference to the 2009 coup d'état in Honduras and deal with judicial independence in a Central American country. It is likely to establish guarantees for due process with greater clarity and limit the arbitrary use of disciplinary processes to punish judges who act independently, setting an important precedent for the region.

PBI volunteers observe HRD Juan Francisco Martínez's burial, January 2015



Where we work

Key to map

-  **Field Programmes**
-  **Country Groups**
-  **International Office**

Field Programmes

Colombia

16 international volunteers accompanied 88 defenders working on a range of issues such as human rights violations due to economic interests and enforced disappearances. Volunteers are based in Bogotá, Barrancabermeja and Apartadó.

Guatemala

Eight international volunteers accompanied 82 defenders working on the environment and land rights, impunity and globalisation. Volunteers are based in Guatemala City and travel to other areas of the country.

Honduras

Five international volunteers accompanied 24 defenders working on business and human rights, land rights, indigenous rights, freedom of expression, support for victims, women's rights and LGBTI rights. Volunteers are based in Tegucigalpa.

Indonesia

Three international volunteers worked on PBI's new project in partnership with the Indonesian human rights organisation ELSAM. 12 Papuan defenders were supported through intensive, four-month training programmes in Jakarta in 2015.

Kenya

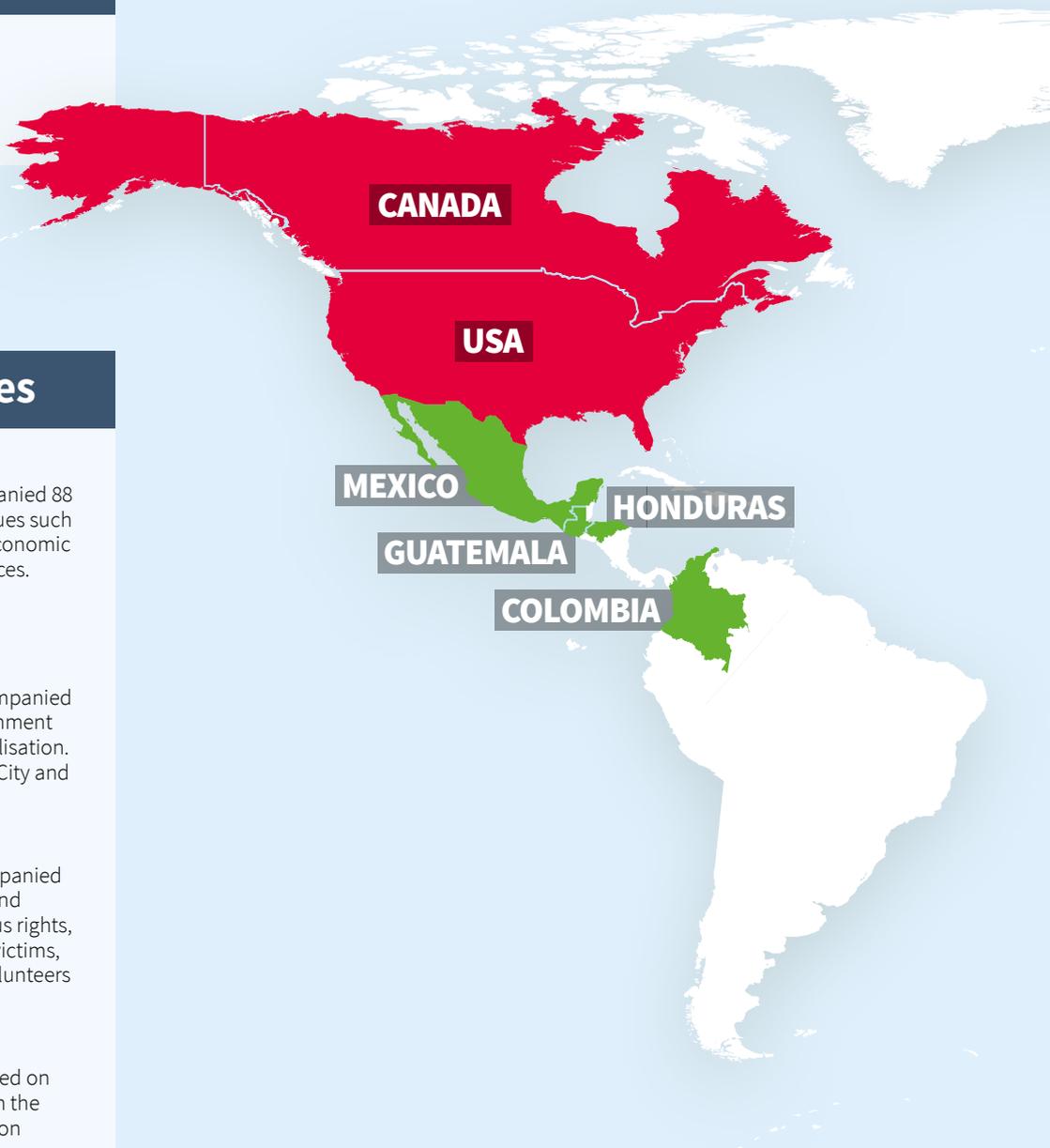
Three international volunteers carried out around 70 accompaniments with 15 grassroots defenders in the informal settlements of Nairobi. These included attending court cases, community forums and police stations. Volunteers are based in Nairobi.

Mexico

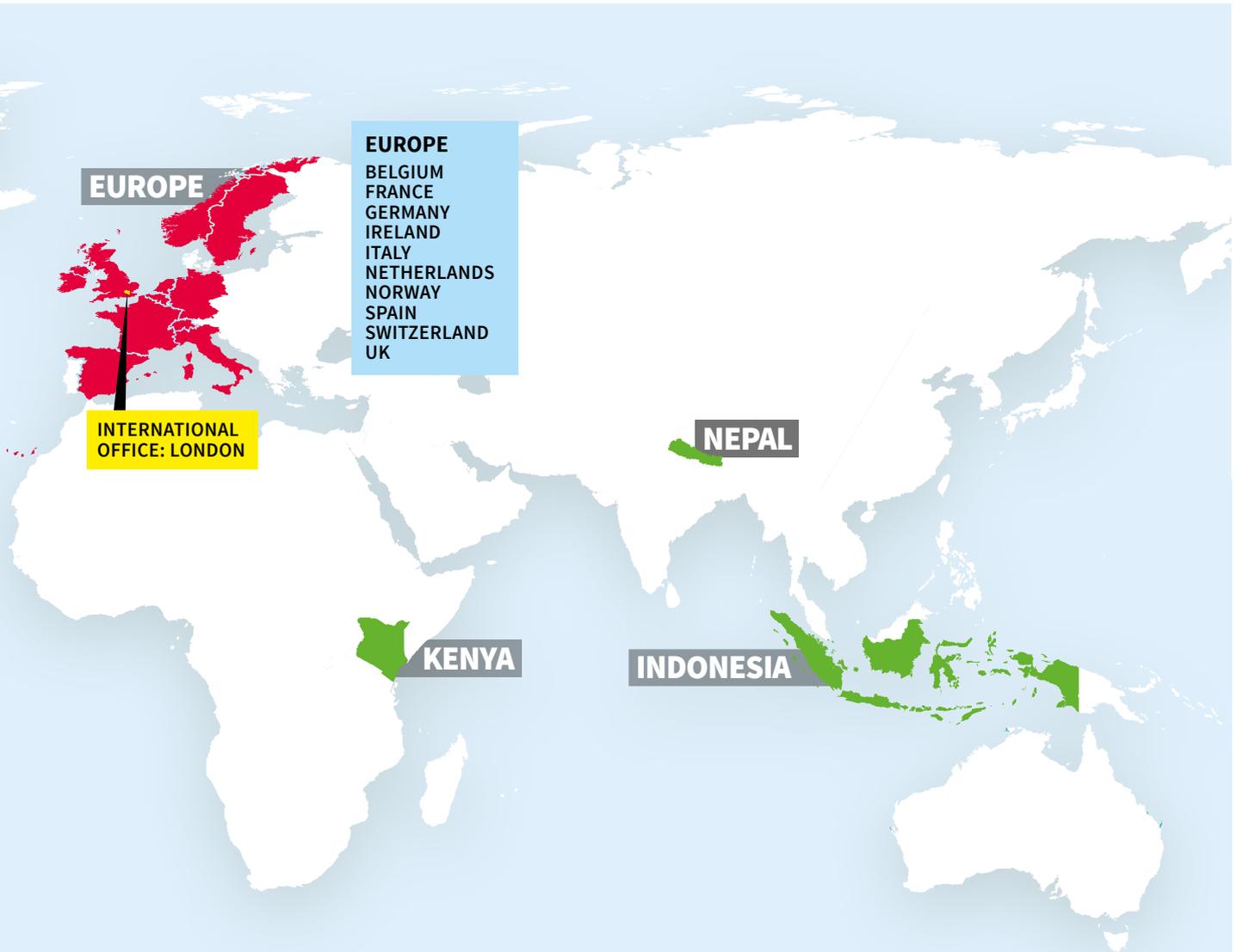
Ten international volunteers accompanied 100 defenders working on forceful disappearances, impunity, indigenous rights and environmental protection. Volunteers are based in two field teams in the north and south of Mexico; covering the states of Chihuahua, Coahuila, Oaxaca and Guerrero and a coordination office in Mexico City.

Nepal

NepalMonitor.org was officially launched as a COCAP protection and conflict prevention initiative, supported by PBI in February 2015. Since the end of 2014, 3,342 reports about security and human rights incidents have been mapped in total. One international volunteer, based in Kathmandu, works on this project.



Volunteer numbers included here are the average number of volunteers serving in each field programme at any one time.



Country Groups

Belgium	Italy	UK
Canada	Netherlands	USA
France	Norway	
Germany	Spain	
Ireland	Switzerland	

PBI Country Groups

Without country groups, PBI would be unable to offer international protective accompaniment to human rights defenders and would have limited global support or impact. Country groups find, train and support our international volunteers. They raise funds for our field projects. They develop links with elected officials, embassy staff, lawyers, judges, academics, NGOs, churches, community groups and others to support human rights defenders. Country groups raise awareness of human rights abuses and advocate for action in the international community.

Advocacy highlights

In 2015, PBI worked in Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico and Nepal – countries where human rights defenders face intimidation, harassment, persecution, arrest, enforced disappearance, torture and death for their beliefs and actions. Just as crucially, we used detailed and accurate information from defenders on the ground to raise awareness and mobilise action amongst the international community, contributing towards making the world a safer place for human rights defenders.

These pages illustrate just some of the highlights of our advocacy and awareness-raising work this year.

Promoting protection at the UN

Thanks to its Special Consultative Status at the UN, obtained in 2014, PBI Switzerland attended debates at the Human Rights Council in March, June and September 2015. PBI hosted a delegation of Honduran HRDs in September when the Honduran government was receiving recommendations under its Universal Periodic Review (UPR). During a week-long process of profile-raising PBI organised a series of meetings with UN officials and diplomatic representatives for the delegation. Donny Reyes of Arcoiris participated in a side event and gave a speech during the session for the adoption of UPR recommendations, raising awareness of the discrimination, persecution and violence faced by the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) community and those who defend LGBTI rights in Honduras.

Donny also visited Spain, Germany, Norway and France where he raised awareness of Arcoiris' work defending LGBTI rights in Honduras with many different audiences. He was interviewed on French radio and in the press. He participated in

Protecting women human rights defenders

Mainstreaming protection of women human rights defenders continues to be a major theme of our work. In 2015, PBI UK developed a new toolkit to help WHRDs access information and gain skills and knowledge about advocacy, campaigning, awareness of national, regional and

conferences and meetings with lawyers, parliamentarians, civil servants and NGOs. Donny made valuable new connections with organisations including the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA), expanding Arcoiris' international support network. This proved invaluable in the following months when the situation for LGBTI defenders in Honduras deteriorated further. PBI's February 2016 emergency alert, detailing 21 attacks and 5 murders of Arcoiris association members between July 2015 and January 2016, was disseminated widely by the ILGA as well as through other support network channels, and four special rapporteurs issued a joint communication condemning the murders. At the following Human Rights Council session in March 2016 the UN Secretary made a call, backed by Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Uruguay in a joint statement, for the Council to maintain its attention on human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity.

PBI provided evidence on the situation of HRDs to UN Special Rapporteur on HRDs Michel Forst in 2015 at consultations and meetings in Bogotá, Brussels, Florence and Geneva. In November, we submitted



Juan José Villagómez, from the Mexican human rights organisation Saltillo Migrants House, at the UN in Geneva, October 2015

international protection mechanisms, and tools for reporting and documenting violations. The tools consist of a training platform, a publication, Empowered, and an online toolkit for WHRDs working on land and environmental issues. PBI Netherlands published 'strong women safe in action: a comprehensive guide on WHRDs' protection', in follow up to two roundtables held in 2014, to support training on security and protection issues, help organisations undertake their

“PBI is one of the most useful organizations [...] to concretely protect defenders”

**Michel Forst
UN Special Rapporteur on HRDs**

a detailed paper about protection best practice. Using examples from our field projects, we highlighted the importance of international protective accompaniment as an integrated strategy to deter attacks and empower defenders and capacity building work which addresses HRDs' protection, advocacy and wellbeing needs. We stressed the need for international observation and recognition of HRDs and the important role that regional and national support networks can play in protection. In December PBI co-organised Michel Forst's visit to the UK where he met with government officials and human rights organisations to discuss issues relating to his mandate. He participated in panel and roundtable discussions, as well as meeting with the Foreign Office and DfID. The visit supported the Special Rapporteur's work with governments and voluntary organisations to strengthen awareness, networks, research and action about the situation of HRDs worldwide, and fed into his upcoming report on best practice. Many of the key findings and recommendations in the Special Rapporteur's February 2016 report reflected PBI's input. The report highlighted protective accompaniment as an important and useful tool to support and protect defenders, both in their day-to-day work and during emergencies.

own risk assessments, and develop security and protection guidelines. PBI Spain co-organised events in Madrid and Barcelona to highlight attacks on Women Human Rights Defenders in Mesoamerica (2012-2014) and develop strategies for WHRDs' recognition, protection and wellbeing in light of these. PBI Spain also published "Women's faces: Women Human Rights Defenders raise their voices", highlighting the work of WHRDs accompanied by PBI.

Protecting the most at-risk defenders

PBI worked closely with 11 other human rights organisations to create protectdefenders.eu, a worldwide, stable, comprehensive and gender-sensitive protection mechanism for HRDs facing extreme danger because of their legitimate human rights work. Launched in October 2015 and funded by the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), the new mechanism provides emergency support, temporary relocation, training and capacity building for HRDs worldwide as well as a platform for coordinated monitoring and advocacy work. Our presence on the ground through our monitoring, protection and capacity building in seven countries where HRDs are at severe risk as well as our longstanding experience in advocating for HRDs' protection needs makes us an important partner in this work. The mechanism reinforces and strengthens our coordination and collaboration with key partner organisations who share the same protection aims and supports our ongoing work on the development and implementation of the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders.

Building support for human rights

PBI country groups play an essential role in advocacy at all levels, supporting the global advocacy efforts outlined here and helping coordinate speaker tours for more than 20 defenders in 2015. In addition, PBI volunteers and staff in all 12 country groups worked hard to raise awareness about human rights and the work of HRDs in their countries through an array of human rights related activities including public meetings and events, educational and arts workshops, publications and online campaigns.

Public events included 'Prosecuting Genocide', a film screening and panel discussion held by our newest country group, PBI Ireland. Educational events included theatre workshops, delivered by PBI Germany and PBI Italy, and "Could I be a human rights defender?", a workshop for

secondary school and university students delivered by PBI Spain.

PBI Switzerland launched Peace Angels, an online awareness-raising campaign following the experiences of two newly recruited Swiss volunteers as they prepared to depart for Colombia and during their first months supporting HRDs in the field. The campaign gave people in Switzerland the opportunity to learn more about what it takes to be a PBI volunteer and their day-to-day experiences as well as highlighting the work of the HRDs PBI protects in conflict zones. The campaign culminated in the creation of a large cloth banner displaying messages of support for the displaced communities of Curvaradó which was presented to Enrique Cabezas during his visit to Switzerland in May. Other online activities included the creation of a Basque language website to bring PBI's work closer to Basque speakers and a new blog for Belgian volunteers to highlight human rights work in Mexico.

Protecting defenders of indigenous and environmental rights

Many of the HRDs that PBI supports are indigenous and environmental defenders resisting large scale economic projects and powerful corporate interests. In 2015, PBI joined the International Corporate Accountability Roundtable (ICAR), a global coalition of organisations working on Business and Human Rights. At ICAR's annual meeting in September the importance of the protection of defenders working at the front line on these issues emerged as a major and universal theme. PBI is playing a key role in the development of a new initiative to strengthen ICAR members' knowledge and skills in practical protection strategies and help them address the risks faced by colleagues and counterparts in the field. This will be an important focus of our work with ICAR in 2016.



PBI volunteers accompany ACVC members, Cimitarra River Valley, Colombia August 2015

Focus on **Field Projects**

In 2015, PBI worked with human rights defenders in Latin America (Colombia, Guatemala,

Honduras and Mexico), Africa (Kenya) and Asia (Nepal and Indonesia). These pages provide a snapshot of the complex

challenges and risks defenders faced, and how PBI was able to support them in their work.

Indonesia

In 2015 PBI launched a new project in Indonesia, in partnership with the Indonesian human rights NGO ELSAM, following extensive research into the situation of at risk HRDs in Papua and how PBI could provide support without having field level access. Working with HRDs based in remote regions of Indonesia, the project aims to strengthen their ability to document, report and advocate human rights abuses, and to develop sustainable self-protection strategies to mitigate the security challenges they and their organisations face on a daily basis.

The project supports at-risk HRDs from remote regions of Indonesia through an intensive four-month training programme in Jakarta. We ran two training courses in 2015, reaching five women and seven men human rights defenders from nine organisations in the provinces of Papua and West Papua. The training programme was based in Jakarta to take advantage of the larger political space in the capital and to enable these grassroots organisations to build networks with key civil society and government institutions based there.

Developed and led by ELSAM and PBI, the programme covers four modules: human rights basics (concepts and legal foundations); investigation, monitoring and documentation of past and on-going

“Aggression is in many places in daily life and also inside me. Today I have learned how to deal with that.”

**Participant
Dealing with Aggression training**

human rights abuses; protection and security strategies (risk analysis, security plans, digital security, dealing with stress and trauma); advocacy and network building. A wide range of leading human rights NGOs, civil society leaders and other stakeholders provided guidance on course content, acted as mentors for the HRDs, led sessions as guest lecturers, and hosted participants for ‘live-ins’ or short-term field work in Jakarta.

Following each course, participants returned to their sponsoring organisations and conducted field research projects to apply their new knowledge. These covered a wide range of human rights topics, including the health impacts of palm oil plantations, dealing with past military atrocities, rural access to clean water, criminalization of protest, freedom of religion for indigenous peoples, and economic access for indigenous women, reflecting the diversity of the participants. Participants were supported by project staff and mentors from Jakarta throughout their research projects,

including running a writing workshop in Papua in response to participants’ needs. The project also organised a two day workshop on Monitoring Security Sector Reform in Conflict Regions, bringing participants together with HRDs working on issues related to the military and police presence in Aceh, Sulawesi, West Timor, Ambon, Bandung and Jakarta.

In 2015 PBI also delivered training sessions to a wider HRD audience in Indonesia. These included three workshops on dealing with aggression, reaching 35 HRDs and including a “train the trainers” session attended by nine HRDs, and workshops on organisational security planning and practices. At the request of PBI’s Nepal Monitor Project and Saferworld Nepal, PBI Indonesia participated in a learning exchange on Community-based Early Warning Early Response systems between Nepalese NGOs and the Titian Perdamaian Institute on the eastern Indonesian island of Ambon.

In 2016 we will run two further intensive training courses, each reaching 6-10 HRDs working in remote regions of Indonesia. We will also develop a manual which can be used by course alumni and others to bring key lessons from the course to a larger audience of HRDs based in remote regions of Indonesia – there are already two local human rights training programmes being started by alumni from our first training course, and we hope to see many more in the future.



Face-to-Face meeting between the Indonesia Project Committee and ELSAM in Jakarta, December 2015

Colombia

2015 marked the third anniversary of the initiation of peace talks between the government and the country's principal guerrilla group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The negotiation process has been marked by ups and downs, involving ceasefires and attacks that have at times plunged the process into a serious crisis. The crisis was resolved, however, in July with the resumption of dialogue. But the situation of human rights defenders has remained extremely serious, with 577 acts of aggression occurring in the first nine months of the year – an increase of over 100% compared with the same period in 2014.

In response to this situation PBI volunteers carried out over 600 accompaniments of individuals and organisations in 2015. The PBI house in Bogotá hosts the project's Coordination Office, covering communications, reconstruction of the



PBI volunteers accompany the San José de Apartadó Peace Community, March 2015

social fabric, fundraising and coordination (volunteer teams, IT, advocacy and the management and analysis of information).

Advocacy activities, carried out inside and outside the country, play a very significant role in the project. 110 meetings were held with the Colombian authorities and the Diplomatic Community in Colombia. These activities were complemented by the activities of the project's representatives in Europe and the United States, who for their part met with government bodies in the USA and Canada (134) and the European Union (114).

The Area for the Reconstruction of the Social Fabric (known by its Spanish acronym, ARTS) offered workshops to 660 people on protection, digital security, psychosocial well-being and integral protection with a gender perspective.

Publications produced in 2015 included a 30 minute documentary, *Land of Corn*, which was filmed and edited by PBI Colombia's communications team. The script was prepared, and the filming carried out, jointly with PBI's projects in Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico.

Guatemala

The defence of human rights in Guatemala has become a high risk activity, which exposes defenders to high levels of defamation, criminalisation and persecution. In 2015, 493 attacks were registered against human rights defenders. In particular, communities that have mobilised to defend human rights that are threatened by foreign economic interests have been subjected to a repressive response by the state. Of the 12 organisations accompanied by PBI Guatemala during 2015, nine defend the right to land and to natural resources. PBI Guatemala has drawn attention to an increased level of threat and discrimination against the process of peaceful resistance of La Puya and against the Nuevo Día Ch'orti Indigenous Association.

The international community has responded by expressing its concern at the situation facing the men and women who defend human rights to the Guatemalan authorities and by visiting and meeting the recipients of threats. These actions have dissuaded possible future attacks. Defenders of indigenous and environmental rights suffer the highest levels of persecution and criminalization, because of their determined opposition to large scale economic projects. PBI Guatemala drew attention to this

problem, and to its consequences, organising a Public Forum on criminalization, in which more than 100 people participated; the forum was followed by a workshop to design strategies to respond to the situation.

Women human rights defenders are the targets of half of all reported attacks and, because of their gender identity, the impacts on them of legal proceedings are greater than they are for their male counterparts. They must take on full responsibility for their families when their partners are imprisoned or are stigmatised by their communities.

As part of its overall protection strategy PBI Guatemala has organised two healing experiences, in which 60 women human rights defenders took part. These experiences have contributed to the collective construction of security strategies and have been enthusiastically received by the women who have taken part. This demonstrates the need for this kind of initiative, especially in the rural areas.

In 2016 it will be necessary to pay greater attention still to the situation of human rights defenders in Guatemala.

PBI observes peaceful protest calling for the resignation of Guatemalan President Otto Pérez Molina, Guatemala City, August 2015



Focus on **Field Projects**

Mexico

Following his visit to Mexico the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, indicated that Human Rights Defenders and journalists continued to suffer attacks as a consequence of the work they carry out on impunity and violence committed by state and non-state actors. Similarly, following a visit to the country, a delegation of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) confirmed that Mexico is suffering from a serious human rights crisis that in particular affects the most vulnerable groups, such as human rights defenders. Against this background we launched the campaign 'PBI Mexico: 15 years for the right to defend' which sought to cast light on the stories of the people who bravely and with commitment dedicate their lives to the defence of human rights, in spite of the risks that are inherent to this work.

Because of the situation of risk that has been documented by civil society in a diagnosis of the implementation of the federal protection mechanism for Human Rights Defenders, PBI Mexico presented a series of recommendations to the recently appointed Under Secretary for Human Rights Roberto Campa Cifrián and the Director of the Human

Rights Unit Sara Irene Herrerías Guerra during bilateral and multilateral events.

At the beginning of 2015 PBI Mexico published a report on public security from the perspective of human rights defenders, and on the impact the context of violence has had on their activities. During the launch event civil society organisations shared their concerns with representatives of the German, Dutch, Canadian, French, Swiss and Norwegian embassies and of the Delegation of the European Union. The report formed the basis of an advocacy campaign designed to draw attention to the risks faced by human rights defenders who handle cases of grave human rights violations including torture, forced disappearance, arbitrary detention and extrajudicial executions.

Northern Mexico organisations meet in Chihuahua City for the Regional Meeting on Disappearances



In order to raise the profile of the legitimate activities of human rights defenders, and to strengthen its support network, in March PBI Mexico invited members of the Fray Juan de Larios Centre to participate in an advocacy trip to Washington D.C. where they took part in bilateral meetings with members of the United States Congress and Senate, the Department of State, several IACHR bodies and a selection of international NGOs. In October, PBI Mexico invited the Saltillo Migrant House to travel to five European countries and meet with government representatives, the European Parliament, the UN, and representatives of European civil society. In Ireland the Saltillo Migrant House received an award from the Mayor of Dublin in recognition of its work. PBI

Mexico facilitated a fact-finding mission from the University of Boston that examined the question of forced disappearance in Mexico, with a particular focus on migrants. The delegation will publish its report in 2016.

Nepal

2015 in Nepal was marked by devastating earthquakes in April and May, which killed more than 8,000 people and politically by the promulgation of the new constitution, followed by violent protests and human rights violations. Along with these major developments, the NepalMonitor.org project observed a high rate of caste-based discrimination and sexual violence against women.

In February 2015 NepalMonitor.org was officially launched as a Collective Campaign for Peace (COCAP) protection and conflict prevention initiative, supported by PBI. It is an online platform that shares information about human rights and security incidents, enabling local, national and international organizations to better respond to human rights violations. Since the end of 2014, 3342 reports about security and human rights incidents have been mapped in total, 2251 of them reporting on security incidents. The Asia Foundation assessed several monitoring tools in Nepal, of which they

found NepalMonitor.org to be the one with the widest coverage of different incidents.

A relatively high number of reports (596) related to gender-based violence (GBV), which became a key focus of work in 2015. To mark the *International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women* on 25 November, the project held an event on how to fight GBV and subsequently published a series of articles on the topic on its blog.

Information gathered on NepalMonitor.org is made available to local HRDs directly. It is also used for advocacy and outreach activities. In 2015, more than 370 HRDs, civil society activists and COCAP volunteers were trained in how to deal with security issues in the field and how to use the NepalMonitor.org platform. These activities will intensify in 2016, with a new team member on board since October to develop and implement more outreach activities.

The Nepal Monitor team used the information gathered to bring single cases to the attention of the national authorities and international community. In nine cases, the team supported victims of Human Rights abuses networking with HRDs in the field to

take up their case, or conducted lobby and advocacy work with representatives of the international community on behalf of HRDs at risk, for example with the EU-Working Group on the protection of HRDs. PBI's international volunteer works closely with EU embassies and UN representatives, raising awareness of specific HRDs' cases.

In cooperation with Saferworld's Capacity 4 Peace program, Nepal Monitor conducted activities in the field of Early Warning Early Response (EWER) for conflict. Together with several partners from Nepali civil society, they organized a learning trip to Indonesia, where peace activists set up a community-based EWER system. In the city of Ambon, they met with Indonesian civil society and shared experiences with PBI's Indonesia project in Jakarta. Also in cooperation with Saferworld, NepalMonitor.org publishes an *Early Warning Early Response Report* on a quarterly basis. Since the constitution's promulgation in late summer, it has reported on human rights violations by protestors as well as security forces, mainly taking place in the southern Terai region.

Kenya

Following the trend of the last few years, the space for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Kenya is shrinking. Government policies, bills and amendments to the 2010 Constitution are limiting CSO activity, restricting the media and increasing executive control. In 2015 the ICC court case against the Deputy President William Ruto was ongoing and anti-western and anti-CSO sentiments remained present in Kenya.

After a Strategic Review at the beginning of the year, the Kenya Project started to provide more targeted physical accompaniments and, with a fresh team of 3 field volunteers, has been able to provide around 70 accompaniments to 15 grassroots Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in the informal settlements of Nairobi. These included attending court cases, community forums and police stations.

During the last months of the year the PBI Kenya team prepared a training course for Prosecutors that will take place in March 2016. There is a particular need for human rights training for prosecutors. At present, there is no obligatory or consistent human rights training at university or any other level and there is little awareness of how the



PBI volunteer Sabine Dwinger with human rights organisation Bunge la Mwananchi in Milimani Law Courts, Nairobi, 2015

rights provided for in the Constitution relate to individual cases before the court. This project will contribute towards developing recognition of human rights within Kenyan court procedures, an issue that has been identified by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) in Kenya who has requested UK technical assistance to support the training of prosecutors in this field.

The training for prosecutors project will be delivered in collaboration with PBI-UK and the Law Society Human Rights Committee. A novel approach will be the participation of several grassroots HRDs accompanied by PBI. Its aim is not only to teach technical and legal skills to prosecutors but also to

sensitize Kenyan officials about human rights and the role that HRDs play in promoting and defending the rights of all. We also want to generate a space in which HRDs and prosecutors can interact with each other and discuss the challenges, limitations and opportunities they all share.

PBI Kenya's relationships with various organisations have been strengthened in 2015 and we successfully re-submitted the amended registration application to the NGO Coordination Board and formalised our strategy for the following year. 2015 has set the stage for an active, visible and stable PBI presence in Kenya with new proposals and the team set to expand in March 2016.

Honduras

Two years have passed since the first PBI Honduras team arrived in the country. Honduras continues to be embroiled in dynamics that perpetuate the impunity, corruption and violence that are caused by the situation of extreme vulnerability lived by the individuals, communities and organisations that defend human rights. PBI Honduras has accompanied the Honduran Centre for the Promotion of Community Development (CEHPRODEC) and Honduran journalist Dina Meza since June 2014. In 2015 the project accepted two new requests for accompaniment, from Gladys Lanza, Director of the women's organisation Visitación Padilla and from the LGBTI group Arcoiris. A formal cooperation agreement has also been reached with the International Platform against Impunity (PICI). In coordination with the Acceso Foundation we have also facilitated the diagnostic phase and preparation of integral security plans for six Honduran organisations. With PICI we initiated a workshop cycle on

the application of the European Union (EU) mechanisms for the protection of Human Rights Defenders.

In 2015 the team met some 27 times with national authorities, raising concerns about the human rights situation and monitoring protection measures for human rights defenders. During the same period, 41 meetings were held with embassies in Honduras, to provide concrete information on accompanied cases and urge application of the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders. PBI Honduras also participated in missions to Costa Rica and Guatemala, organised with the aim of strengthening relations and discussing human rights with the diplomatic community and international bodies concurrent to Honduras.

These initiatives in the region were complemented by other advocacy activities carried out in Geneva, Brussels and Washington. In Geneva, several actions were organised around the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and the opening of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Honduras. In Washington, information

was provided on the situation of Human Rights Defenders in the context of Inter-American Commission on Human Rights hearings on the country, alerting officials to worrying trends of criminalisation and violent repression against persons who engage in social protest. In Brussels, regular contact was maintained with the European External Action Service officials responsible for the region. PBI Honduras also participated in several discussion spaces with the EU Council's Human Rights Group and with members of the European Parliament. In these spaces we emphasised the need to seek greater coherence between EU policies, in particular in relation to trade and human rights.

These activities formed part of a communications strategy designed to raise the profile of individuals, communities and organisations that defend human rights. Our annual bulletin summarised the events of the year while the 2015 thematic bulletin focused on the UPR process. We also produced a documentary, *Land of Corn*, on the security situation of the Lenca indigenous communities living in the municipality of La Paz.

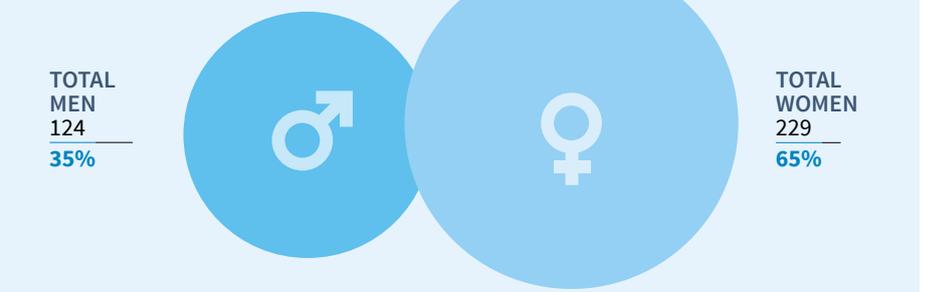
Our volunteers and supporters

In 2015, PBI was supported by a total of **353** volunteers who worked in our field projects, our country groups and our international office:

267 volunteers provided support to **12** PBI Country Groups and our International Office in 2015

86 international volunteers provided protection to **309** human rights defenders in the field in 2015

PBI volunteer gender



Field volunteers came from



Our supporters in 2015

We would like to thank the many organisations and individuals who made generous contributions to our work in 2015, including:

Agencia Catalana de Cooperación al Desarrollo (ACCD)
 Agencia Española de Cooperación al Desarrollo (AECID)
 Amnesty International
 Ayuntamiento de Barcelona
 Ayuntamiento de Pamplona
 Ayuntamiento de Reynosa
 Ayuntamiento de San Sebastián
 Ayuntamiento de Santander
 Ayuntamiento de Valladolid
 Bureau de Avocats de Paris
 Basilian Human Development Fund
 Berti Wicke-Stiftung
 Brot für die Welt - Bread for the World
 Campbell Foundation
 Canadian Auto Workers Social Justice Fund
 Canadian Embassy
 Canton of Lucern
 Chiesa Evangelica Valdese Unione delle Chiese metodiste e valdesi

Christian Aid
 Civil Peace Service (Germany)
 Civil Society Fund - Irish Aid
 Colegio Oficial de Trabajo Social de Cantabria
 COSUDE
 Diputación de Córdoba
 The European Union
 Fedevaco Canton de Vaud
 Fedevaco Ville de Lausanne
 Fedevaco Ville de Renens
 Ferster Foundation
 Finnish Embassy
 Foreign Ministry of Germany
 Foreign Ministry of Norway
 Foreign Ministry of Switzerland (FDFA)
 Generalitat Valenciana. Conselleria de Transparencia, Responsabilidad Social, Participación y Cooperación
 GKG Bern
 HIVOS International
 IBIS / Plataforma Internacional contra la Impunidad
 Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO)
 Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (ifa), Zivik programme (Civil Conflict Resolution)
 Jenö Stähelin-Stiftung
 Kanton Basel Stadt

MacArthur Foundation
 Maya Behn-Eschenburg Stiftung
 Mensen met een Missie
 Misereor – German Catholic Bishops' Organisation for Development Cooperation
 Misereor Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Foundation – International Assistance Programme
 Non-Violence XXI
 Norway Human Rights Fund
 Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU)
 Open Society Foundations
 Oxfam Intermón
 Oxfam Solidarity
 Région Île de France
 Résérve Parlementaire (France)
 Rosa Luxemburg Foundation
 Secours Catholique
 Servicio Internacional para la Paz (SIPAZ)
 Sigrid Rausing Trust
 Solidarité International - Canton of Geneva
 Swedish Amnesty Fund
 Swisslosfonds Kanton St. Gallen
 The Overbrook Foundation
 Trócaire
 UNIFOR
 Ville de Bernex

Without hundreds of dedicated individuals and organisations who support us with their time, energy and financial contributions our human rights work would not be possible.

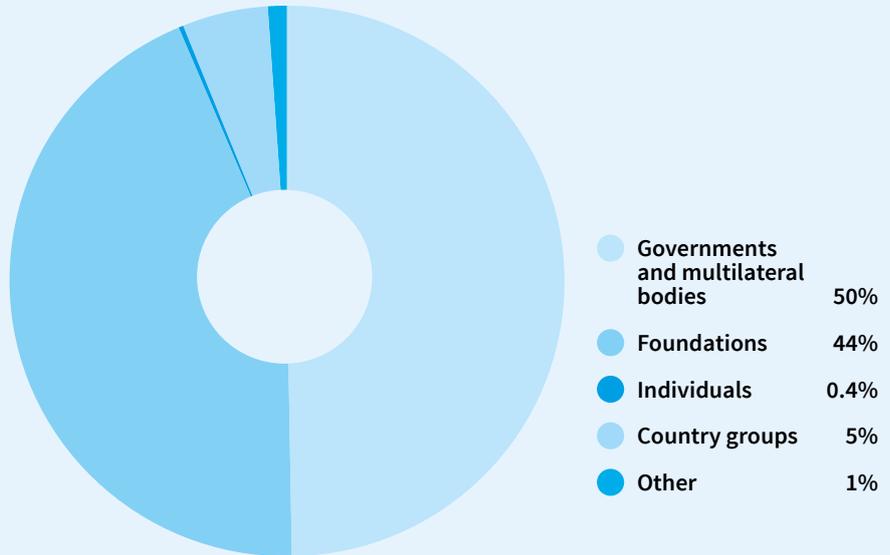
Thank you for your ongoing commitment to PBI.

Who funds PBI?

In our work protecting human rights defenders, we rely on the support of individuals, trusts, foundations and religious groups as well as governments and other multilateral funders.

Most of our income from governments and foundations is raised by country groups with project support. Country groups also work closely with our committed individual donors in Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, the UK and the USA.

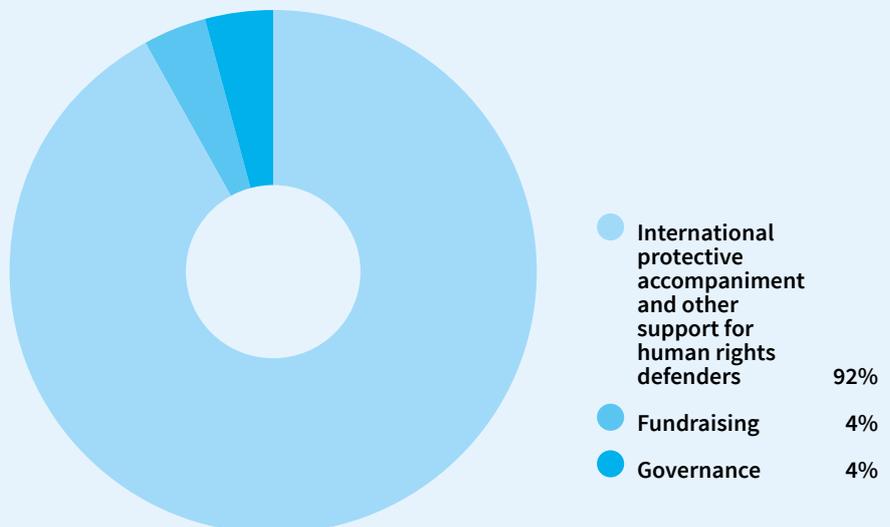
**Total income in 2015:
EUR €2,110,169**



How we spend your money

From every €1 you give us, we spend 92 cents on our human rights work and 4 cents on ensuring best practice in organisational governance is followed in line with PBI's principles of non-hierarchy and consensus decision-making. The remaining 4 cents is used to raise the next €1.

**Total expenditure in 2014*:
EUR €2,121,632**



*All figures are in EUR € and subject to final audit. This financial analysis does not include the accounts of PBI country groups which are separate legal entities.



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Promoting nonviolence and
protecting human rights since 1981

www.peacebrigades.org

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