

ANNUAL REPORT 2016

P B I H O N D U R A S



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PBI HONDURAS

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Protecting the defence of human rights in a high-risk context

INTRODUCTION



During 2016, PBI Honduras observed a serious deterioration of the situation for human rights defenders in Honduras, with a noticeable closure of spaces and, in general, a hostile work environment. There were various kinds of attacks on organisations, movements, and defenders in the country, including murder, physical and gender-based violence, the use of law to criminalise social protest, as well as defamation of defenders' work.

By way of example, from 2010 to 2016, more than 120 people who promoted rights to land, territory, and the environment were murdered in Honduras for confronting economic interests and defending their natural resources, making the country the most dangerous in the world for this group.¹ This panorama is not unfamiliar to other defenders who promote women's rights, sexual diversity, or freedom of expression. At least 16 indigenous leaders, as well as activists, journalists, and people who in one way or another defend human rights, were murdered last year:² Javier Vásquez Benítez, Paola Barraza, Berta Cáceres, Nelson Noé García Laínez, and René Martínez Izaguirre are just a few of their names.

2016 was a year of particular concern, and the country was the object of intense international scrutiny, particularly after the death of celebrated defender Berta Cáceres, who was killed in March 2016 by a man who broke into her home. As a result of this incident, regional and international organisms made continuous calls to the Honduran state regarding its obligation to protect defenders and prevent them from being killed.

On the other hand, protests organised by students at the National Autonomous University of Honduras (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras – UNAH), with the aim of obtaining a more democratic university, continued throughout 2016, and the presence of the security forces at the university was constant. In July, during an eviction of buildings taken by the students as a protest, 22 students were arrested and then later released. Some leaders of the movement, such as Dayanara Castillo, also suffered serious reprisals for participating in the student struggle.

¹ Global Witness. Honduras: the most dangerous country to defend the planet. UK. January 2017.

² ACI Participa. La Vida, el precio de defender los DDHH en Honduras. Informe situacional de defensoras y defensores de los derechos humanos. Honduras noviembre 2015 - octubre 2016 (*Report in Spanish*). Honduras. November 2016.

In August of last year, she was abducted by police within walking distance of her home in Tegucigalpa.³

Likewise, Honduran civil society organisations stated that the lack of coherence in government actions in relation to human rights had a negative impact on the protection of those who defend these rights. On the one hand, in 2016, regulations were approved for the Law on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators, and Justice Operators. Its protocols were developed, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Mission to Support Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (Misión de Apoyo Contra la Corrupción y la Impunidad en Honduras - MACCIH) were both installed in the country. On the other hand, the reform of the Criminal Code and the drafting of a consultation law for indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples, among other legislative proposals, were highly controversial, as they could place defenders at even greater risk.

In this context, 2016 was a year of intense work for PBI Honduras. The killing of Berta Cáceres alarmed local organisations and accompaniment requests increased in subsequent months. The number of accompaniments also increased exponentially. In order to respond to these requests, we strengthened our presence both inside and outside Honduras. At the international level, with the support of PBI national groups, more Honduran human rights defenders had the opportunity to make their work visible in both the United States and Europe and to build a support network ready to respond to attacks against them. With the aim of facilitating long-term protection, we launched a new project for comprehensive protection workshops that included aspects such as digital security, legal and political tools, and personal self-care in situations of risk.

In 2016 PBI Honduras demonstrated its ability to respond to emergency situations and adapt to an adverse context for defenders. We also strengthened ourselves as a sustainable project with a strong commitment to the defence of and respect for human rights in the country. We believe that this year our presence in Honduras can continue to contribute to opening spaces for defenders. We hope that those we accompany are encouraged by our support to continue fighting for fundamental rights in Honduras.

PBI Honduras

Our work

Peace Brigades International (PBI) is a non-governmental organisation that promotes the protection of human rights and conflict transformation through nonviolent means. Via international accompaniment, PBI provides protection for individuals, organisations and communities who carry out actions to promote and defend human rights, always at their request and in response to their needs. In this way, PBI helps to protect the space for human rights, social justice and peace initiatives. PBI currently has projects in Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Kenya, Nepal, Indonesia and Honduras, and 16 active national groups in Europe, North America and Australia.

PBI's mandate in Honduras:

PBI Honduras seeks to contribute to improving the human rights situation and the development of participatory processes in the country, through an international presence that offers support to protect and extend the workspace of individuals, organisations and other social initiatives that face repression for their work defending human rights.

Our principles



Non interference



Non violence



Non partisanship

Our areas of work



Physical
presence



Advocacy
work



Security and
protection
training



Dissemination
of information

Notable activities and achievements in 2016

The international accompaniment that PBI provides to at-risk organisations and individuals who work to defend human rights goes far beyond physical presence in the field. Our intervention strategy encompasses complementary activities including local and international political advocacy work, the distribution of publications, and capacity-building through the facilitation of workshops on comprehensive protection. Together these activities mean that our presence with human rights defenders has a dissuasive effect.

Working with defenders

Accompanied human rights defenders have told us that regular visits to their places of work have a positive effect, as they enable these defenders to keep the international community constantly informed about their risk situation. In 2016, there were no attacks or raids on the offices of organisations we accompany. Of the hundreds of times that PBI provided physical presence last year, there were only four instances of violence or intimidation towards defenders. Accompanied organisations tell us they positively value the field presence of PBI Honduras, as it provides credibility to both our work and theirs. They also told us that the authorities have been more receptive to dialogue when PBI is present, in particular at the local level. One defender stated that being accompanied by PBI Honduras while carrying out activities in his community helped to lower the level of tension and to avoid confrontations, and he was able to carry out his work without security incidents against him.

Strengthening our support network

In 2016, PBI consolidated its role as a reference point on the situation of human rights defenders in Honduras. The diplomatic corps in the country maintained regular contact with PBI Honduras to obtain our reading of the human rights situation. The tragic events of March resulted in an increase in the number of calls and meetings we held with the diplomatic corps and international organisations.

It is also important to highlight the role that PBI Honduras played in 2016 within the human rights group of the Association for International Cooperation (Espacio ACI), by presenting cases to the Focus Group

 146
Accompaniments

 117
Office visits

 60
Observations

 134
Meetings with the international community

 33
Meetings with the Honduran authorities

(Grupo Enlace).⁴We also contributed to the work of the Copenhagen Initiative on Central America and Mexico (CIFCA) with the European Union, to the work of the Latin American Working Group (LAWG) with the United States State Department, as well as to the work of PBI Switzerland and other organisations in Geneva with the United Nations.



As a result of international speaking tours in 2016 by the Honduran Centre for the Promotion of Community Development (Centro Hondureño de Promoción para el Desarrollo Comunitario – CEHPRODEC), the Pico Bonito National Park Foundation (Fundación Parque Nacional Pico Bonito – FUPNAPIB), and the Association of Judges for Democracy (Asociación de Jueces por la Democracia – AJD), the PBI support network took several actions: CEHPRODEC established a direct communication with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) which facilitated the implementation of precautionary measures in favour of the Independent Indigenous Lenca Movement of La Paz (Movimiento Independiente Indígena Lenca de la Paz – MILPAH), and the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales sent an amicus curiae brief to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights on issues of compliance with the sentence in the case of López Lone et al. v. Honduras.

Sharing learning experiences

Organisations that participated in our comprehensive security workshops in 2016 implemented their own security plans, formed internal security committees, transferred workshop lessons to other members of their organisations or communities, and improved the recording of security incidents. Participants evaluated the workshops as very useful because they covered various aspects of security namely physical, digital, legal, and political. They also valued the workshops as spaces to discuss the differential impacts of risk on women and to deepen their understanding that security issues do not only affect male defenders.



As a result of the workshops facilitated by PBI Honduras and the International Platform Against Impunity (Plataforma Internacional Contra la Impunidad), on the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders, the workshop participants agreed to form a network. They subsequently asked the EU Delegation in Honduras for a meeting to discuss the security situation of one woman defender in particular.

Reporting from the field

In addition to the annual Bulletin, other PBI Honduras publications had positive impacts in 2016. PBI Honduras produced a special publication⁵



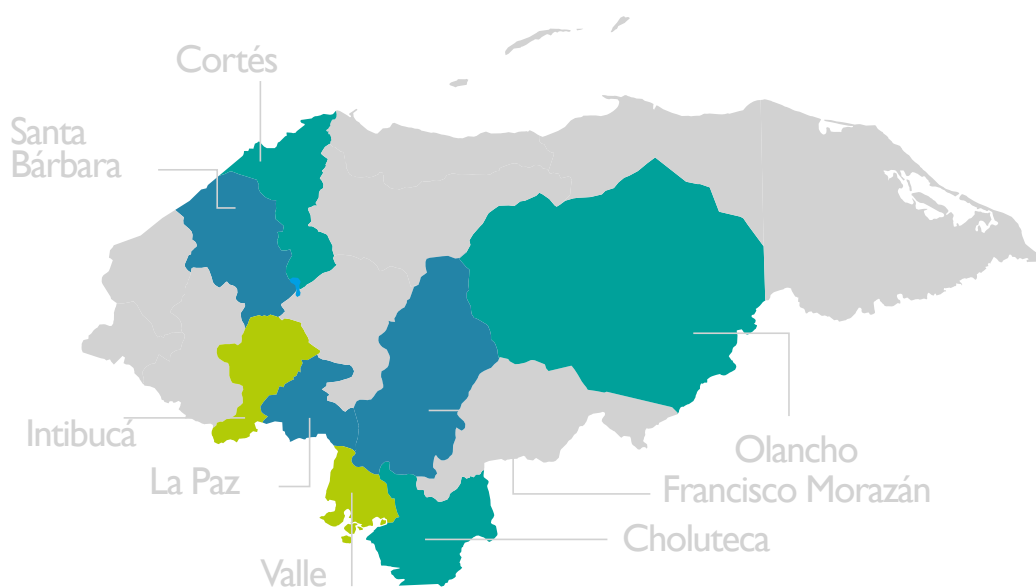
4
Coordination group led by the European Union (EU) Delegation in Honduras as part of the action plan for the promotion of human rights defenders in activities established within the Local EU Strategy for Human Rights Defenders in Honduras.

5 PBI Honduras. Honduras – Economic, social and cultural rights. Briefing on the situation of human rights defenders. June 2016.

for the second examination of Honduras by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), drawing the attention of the Committee and the international community to the lack of protection for and the vulnerability of those who defend said rights, as described by Honduran organisations themselves.

PBI's urgent alert in April, after the attack against members of the "Berta Cáceres lives" international meeting,⁶ was highly valued by members of the diplomatic corps within the country for the clarity with which it explained the facts. The same was said of the alert regarding the murders of members of the LGBT Arcoiris Association in February of 2016.⁷ This publication led to a number of actions, including a public communiqué from the EU Delegation in Honduras expressing concern about the security situation of members of the organisation and the LGBTI community.⁸ In the weeks after the alert, Arcoiris did not report any security incidents, after having experienced a period of constant attacks. Moreover, following the alert issued by PBI Honduras in October after police repression during a Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (Consejo Cívico de Organizaciones Populares e Indígenas en Honduras – COPINH) demonstration,⁹ British MP Ann Clwyd submitted a written question to the UK government about respect for the right to peaceful protest in Honduras.¹⁰

Where we were in 2016



6 PBI Honduras. ALERT: Attacks and intimidation against participants and international observers at the International Meeting "Berta Cáceres Lives". Honduras. April 2016.

7 PBI Honduras. ALERT: LGBT community at high risk, security situation of Arcoiris Association in Honduras. 1 February 2016.

8 EU Delegation in Honduras. Statement on difficult situation for LGBTI community in Honduras. Honduras (*Statement in Spanish*). 17 February 2016.

9 PBI Honduras. ALERT: State repression of peaceful protest at the Public Prosecutors Office demanding justice in the case of Berta Cáceres. Honduras. 25 October 2016.

10 British Parliament. Honduras: Human Rights: written question – 51593. 2 November 2016.



“We are extremely pleased to work with PBI to strengthen security for defenders”

**INTERVIEW WITH MICHAEL GORT,
CANADIAN AMBASSADOR FOR
HONDURAS**

The Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) is part of the Canadian government’s international aid, aimed at promoting the implementation of projects for development and human rights by civil society organisations at the local level. Through this fund, in 2016 PBI Honduras carried out a project consisting of comprehensive security workshops, monitoring visits, and the preparation of a booklet with basic information for human rights defenders in Honduras with the goal of strengthening protection capacities. On one of his visits to the country, Michael Gort, the Canadian ambassador for Costa Rica, Honduras, and Nicaragua, shared with PBI Honduras Canada’s perspective on the defence of human rights, the importance of this kind of initiative, and what the Canadian government is doing about the risk situation for human rights defenders in Honduras.

How does Canada view the situation of human rights defenders in Honduras?

There are important issues for Canada in Honduras, and the issue of human rights is one of them. We know that there are sectors of the population who are particularly vulnerable, including indigenous peoples, women, Afro-descendant peoples, journalists, the LGBTI community and defenders from these sectors, who are even more vulnerable. That is why one of our main priorities is to create space for dialogue and security (for the defence of human rights). We are extremely pleased to work with PBI to strengthen security for these individuals and groups.

Do you think the role of international accompaniment organisations is important, and why?

I began my human rights career in Guatemala, in 1995, working in MINUGUA, the United Nations Verification Mission. One of the most important roles we played was accompanying communities. Guatemala had experienced an armed conflict lasting almost 36 years and, in addition to verifying compliance with a human rights agreement that had been signed between the government and the guerrillas, we played a role listening to the communities and accompanying them. I realised then that the role of accompaniment is extremely important because it enables us to better understand the challenges of living in communities, especially the human rights challenges. Having witnesses also favours protection, especially witnesses from the international community, nearby and watching. Accompaniment also enables awareness-raising with the international community. So I think PBI's work in the current context in Honduras is really important.

In 2016, the CFLI funded a PBI Honduras project for comprehensive protection and security workshops with human rights defenders in Honduras with a gender perspective. Why do you think it is relevant to contribute to this kind of project in the country?

This is a country where the evidence shows us that human rights defenders are extremely vulnerable. That means that special attention, special support, and protection must be given to these people. For this reason, the work that PBI has done to raise defenders' awareness on security issues is highly valuable in this context.

Do you think the result was positive?

The training began with just over 30 people from about 20 organisations and that enabled further training of almost 200 people from more than 30 organisations, so there was a multiplying effect to PBI's work. Some of the participants I had a chance to talk to told me that they did not know what a safety plan was before the workshops. They already knew the importance of safety, but the training has offered concrete measures that they can use and helps defenders to use protection tools more consciously. In my opinion, another result is related to putting people from different sectors in contact with each other. The context here is complicated; it is difficult for defenders and for journalists, and they must always be given more support. So I hope that PBI and other organisations can build on the foundations that you have started laying down.

“I think PBI's work in the current context in Honduras is really important.”

At the end of the project, PBI Honduras organised a meeting so that the Honduran defenders who had participated in the workshops could share their situation with the Embassy. How would you describe the experience?

The possibility of meeting with a representative group of human rights defenders in Honduras enabled us to verify the current human rights situation, to exchange information on specific cases and to consider joint strategies that favour the promotion of human rights and the protection of human rights defenders. During the meeting, it was highlighted that promoting civil society dialogue with other sectors, including with the Honduran government, is particularly important with the aim of improving the situation of human rights in general, and specifically the protection of human rights defenders.

To contribute to the protection of human rights defenders, last year the Canadian government launched guidelines to support this collective around the world. Can you tell us more about this initiative, and what kind of support defenders at risk in Honduras can expect?

The guidelines are published by the Foreign Ministry for ambassadors with the aim of promoting the protection of human rights. They provide concrete tools such as the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, a small fund which enables us to support excellent projects with organisations like yours. The guidelines also urge us to participate in trials related to the protection of human rights, in particular defenders' cases, as we are doing in the case of Berta Cáceres. The good thing is that these guidelines are public and everyone can see them. Everyone can take responsibility for them, so our government, our Foreign Minister, can demand that we fulfil the duty we have to respect and promote the work of human rights defenders.

Looking towards the future, will the protection of human rights defenders in Honduras continue to be a priority?

With the publication of the guidelines that we have just discussed, yes. And I wanted to mention that our Minister of Cooperation has just published a new feminist strategy for international cooperation, which was developed through consultations in Canada and other countries, within which six priority themes have been defined. One of them is "inclusive governance," including human rights and democracy. It is embodied in our new cooperation policy, in the guidelines and through the Canada Fund—human rights remain a priority issue, especially here in Honduras.

“Human rights continue to be a priority issue, especially here in Honduras.”



Who we accompanied in 2016

Honduran Centre for the Promotion of Community Development (Centro Hondureño de Promoción para el Desarrollo Comunitario – CEHPRODEC)

The work of CEHPRODEC is focused on community development through the defence of economic, social, and cultural rights. The organisation offers technical and legal support to indigenous and small-scale farming communities.

In 2016, CEHPRODEC continued its work in hundreds of communities throughout the country and consolidated its international support network during visits to Europe and the United States. PBI Honduras accompanied the organisation in its visits to communities, during roundtables with the authorities, and during community consultation processes and open community assemblies.

In July, we accompanied CEHPRODEC during its visits to the municipality of Santa Elena in the context of an “auto-consultation”¹¹ process with indigenous Lenca communities organised by the Independent Indigenous Lenca Movement of La Paz (Movimiento Independiente Indígena Lenca de La Paz – MILPAH). As a result of this process, the communities confirmed their rejection to the Los Encinos S.A. hydroelectric dam on the river Chinacla. The communities also denounced the lack of prior, free and informed consent in relation to the project as well as targeted attacks on MILPAH members

“PBI has played a key role in enabling all of CEHPRODEC’s high-risk activities.”
CEHPRODEC

¹¹ This type of vote is known as “auto-consultation” (*autoconsulta* in Spanish) as it is not organised by the government.

and communities for their opposition to the dam. The international monitoring presence of PBI Honduras during the auto-consultation contributed to CEHPRODEC and MILPAH being able to carry out their work and meant that members of the communities were able to exercise their right to consultation.

LGBT Arcoiris Association (Asociación LGBT Arcoiris)

The LGBT Arcoiris Association works to empower and inform the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender) community in Honduras on emancipation, comprehensive health, advocacy, and the human rights of sexual diversity. Its work is aimed at raising awareness in society with the goal of reducing stigma and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation.

During the year, PBI Honduras accompanied members of the association during dialogue meetings with authorities and accompanied Donny Reyes (coordinator) to public events and meetings. Our team also attended workshops on LGBT rights organised by the association for public prosecutors and policemen, and for families on the process of accepting their LGBT sons and daughters.

In April, PBI Honduras facilitated a workshop for the organisation that enabled its members to implement new protocols and security measures. The workshop had a strong psychosocial approach, which the organisation described as highly useful.

Dina Meza

Dina Meza is the director of the Honduran Association for Democracy and Human Rights (Asociación por la Democracia y los Derechos Humanos de Honduras – ASOPODEHU), as well as the president of PEN Honduras. The defender and journalist has worked on cases of conflict related to mining in the country among other issues. Through her organisation, she defends threatened journalists, as well as social leaders who have been persecuted for their work defending human rights.

In 2016, PBI Honduras accompanied Dina Meza to public events and activities related to student protests in the National Autonomous University of Honduras (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras – UNAH). In particular, PBI was present at meetings to monitor agreements between the student movement and university authorities, as well as actions related to the case of criminalisation and harassment of the student Dayanara Castillo. In addition, we provided accompaniment to Dina Meza during training workshops on the defence of the right to freedom of expression for journalists and social communicators in the department of La Paz.

***“PBI accompaniment
has been very
important to show
that we are not
alone.”***

Arcoiris Association

***“They are attentive
at all times, they
make sure that
nothing will happen.
They are really
committed and
sensitive.”***

Dina Meza

In October, Dina Meza visited Spain to participate in an event organised by the Spanish national PBI group, Front Line Defenders, Just Associates (JASS) Mesoamerica, Iniciativa de Mujeres Defensoras de Derechos Humanos (IM-Defensoras), and Calala Fondo de Mujeres. The event focused on the particular situation of women human rights defenders and how the gender component plays a substantial role in violent actions against them.

Gladys Lanza

Until her death in September 2016, Gladys Lanza was the coordinator of the Visitación Padilla Women’s Movement for Peace “Las Chonas” (Movimiento de Mujeres por la Paz Visitación Padilla “Las Chonas”). The organisation provides psychosocial care and legal advice to women who have suffered violence and provides training to individuals and communities. It also conducts advocacy work with local actors and international authorities in defence of sexual and reproductive rights and a life free of gender-based violence.

In 2016, Visitación Padilla assumed the legal defence of Lesbia Pacheco, who had made a sexual harassment complaint against Juan Carlos Reyes, director of the Foundation for the Development of Urban and Rural Social Housing (Fundación para el Desarrollo de la Vivienda Social Urbana y Rural – FUNDEVI). In turn, Mr. Reyes filed a lawsuit against Lesbia Pacheco for having written public comments on the case. Subsequently, Lesbia Pacheco was sentenced by the Supreme Court of Justice (Corte Suprema de Justicia – CSJ).¹²

Throughout 2016, PBI Honduras accompanied Gladys Lanza to several hearings in the trial of Lesbia Pacheco before the CSJ and was with the defender during the march for Honduran Women’s Day on January 25th. Gladys Lanza was also sued by the director of FUNDEVI and sentenced in 2015 to 18 months in prison. The defender appealed the sentence before the CSJ, but the case was still pending at the time of her death.¹³

Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (Consejo Cívico de Organizaciones Populares e Indígenas en Honduras – COPINH)

COPINH is an organisation composed of more than one hundred communities from four departments of the country: Intibucá, Santa Bárbara, Lempira, and La Paz. The organisation works for the protection of indigenous territories and the recognition of the economic, social, and cultural rights of indigenous communities in Honduras.

In March 2016, Berta Cáceres, a COPINH coordinator, was murdered

“They are my guardian angels.”
Gladys Lanza

12 PBI Honduras. Bulletin 04. Honduras. December 2016.

13 PBI Honduras. Statement on the death of Gladys Lanza Ochoa who was accompanied by PBI Honduras. Honduras. 27 September 2016.

in her home. As a result, PBI Honduras began to accompany the coordinators of the organisation. Throughout the year, we regularly visited COPINH offices in La Esperanza, Intibucá, and observed a number of activities including protests in May, June, and October outside the Presidential House and the Public Prosecutor's Office in Tegucigalpa, where the organisation demanded information and progress in investigations into the case of Berta Cáceres.

At the request of the family of Gustavo Castro, who witnessed the murder of Berta Cáceres, PBI Honduras maintained regular contact during the month of March with Mr. Castro and his brother via visits to the Mexican Embassy and telephone calls. This temporary accompaniment was highly valued by Gustavo and his family as important moral support

Association of Judges for Democracy (Asociación de Jueces por la Democracia – AJD)

AJD is an organisation of independent judges which aims to strengthen the rule of law and the independence of the judicial power in Honduras. One magistrate and three judges from AJD were arbitrarily removed from their duties for opposing the 2009 coup. The case (López Lone et al. v. Honduras) reached the Inter-American Court, which ruled in favour of the AJD members and recognised the active role that the CSJ played in the 2009 coup.¹⁴ More than a year after the verdict, in November 2016, the Honduran authorities had still not complied with the sentence,¹⁵ and they still have not.

PBI Honduras followed this case closely and supported AJD. In December 2016, PBI organised a visit by Guillermo López Lone to Europe, where he met with governmental officials, the UN, and civil society actors in the United Kingdom, France, Switzerland, and Belgium. The tour resulted in concrete support from several international actors, such as an amicus curiae that the Human Rights Council of England and Wales filed with the Inter-American Court as part of the follow-up on compliance with the sentence.

Kevin Ramírez

Environmental defender Kevin Ramírez is from El Listón, a community located in the department of Santa Bárbara, affected by the installation of a hydroelectric dam. In 2013, the company began construction of the dam, despite the fact that 27 communities, organised under the leadership of Kevin Ramírez, were opposed to the project.¹⁶ As a result of his work, the defender was repeatedly threatened, which forced

**“PBI’s
accompaniment
makes me feel safer.
I don’t get as many
threats.”
Kevin Ramírez**

14 IACtHR. Case of López Lone et al. v. Honduras. Sentence of 5 October 2015 (Preliminary objection, merits, reparations and costs).

15 PBI Honduras. Situation of the judgment of the Inter-American Court in the case of López Lone v. Honduras; Expiration of the term of compliance. 10 November 2016.

16 PBI Honduras. Honduras – Economic, social and cultural rights. Briefing on the situation of human rights defenders. June 2016.

him three times to leave his community, located in the municipality of Quimistán.

In 2016, PBI Honduras began to accompany Kevin Ramírez. In October, we observed an open community informative assembly in Quimistán, during which a representative of one of the hydroelectric companies involved in the project explained the work already in progress.

During the assembly, PBI Honduras observed acts of intimidation towards people who questioned the project and towards the PBI volunteers themselves, as well as direct threats against Kevin Ramírez. Nevertheless, as a result of the PBI Honduras presence in Quimistán, Kevin Ramírez' security situation improved and the threats against him decreased.

Moreover, after participating in security workshops facilitated by PBI Honduras in 2016, Kevin Ramírez shared the security information with more than one hundred people from local communities.

Committee for Freedom of Expression (Comité por la Libertad de Expresión – C-Libre)

The Committee for Freedom of Expression (C-Libre) is composed of journalists and members of civil society. The organisation was established in 2001 to defend and promote freedom of expression and the right to information in Honduras.

PBI Honduras accompanied C-Libre in August this year during its activities at the International Forum “Freedom of Expression in Honduras and Presentation of the ILE-2015 Annual Report” in August 2016. Also present at the forum was Edison Lanza, Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression in the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.



Observation: First “auto-consultation” in Honduras

Early in the morning of Saturday July^{9th} 2016, in Tegucigalpa, six PBI volunteers left the offices of CEHPRODEC, the first organisation that PBI accompanied in Honduras. We were heading for Marcala, a municipality located in the department of La Paz, a four-hour journey by car south-west in the direction of El Salvador. We were set to accompany the process of auto-consultation for two days in the municipality of Santa Elena. We were really looking forward to it; this was the first time that we were going to witness a process of this kind, and in fact this was the first time such a process would be carried out in the country. At the same time, we were concerned about the members of CEHPRODEC and MILPAH, which was organising the process at the local level, because in the days leading up to the auto-consultation they had reported several security incidents.

MILPAH is an indigenous organisation that brings together members of the Lencan community, who live in five of the country's 18 departments. The organisation was created in 2010 to defend the Lencan people's natural assets and their way of life in the department of La Paz. One year after it was founded, the local government approved the construction of the Los Encinos S.A. hydroelectric dam in the municipality of Santa Elena. The hydroelectric dam was to be built on the Chinacla River, which crosses the departments of La Paz and Intibucá and supplies water to communities located in seven nearby municipalities.

For CEHPRODEC, Santa Elena is an emblematic example of the reality that exists in many municipalities and communities in the country, where the concession of extractive projects to private companies has been granted without respect for the right of indigenous and non-

indigenous peoples to free, prior and informed consent. In Honduras more than 80% of the population is mixed ethnicity,¹⁷ and these people are also affected by the concessions given in their territories. This lack of consultation often leads to confrontations, which have in turn led to the murder of human rights defenders such as Berta Cáceres. Inhabitants of municipalities such as Santa Elena report that this type of project puts at risk their natural assets, which they depend on, and threatens the worldview and way of life of native peoples.

During the first day of the auto-consultation, CEHPRODEC, who were providing technical and logistical support to MILPAH, worked on the final details of the event organisation, such as the distribution of the ballot boxes. In the evening, after dinner, a meeting was held to deal with last-minute details.

On the final morning at 5am, we divided into three groups, with PBI accompanying different members of CEHPRODEC. We accompanied people to the different voting centres: El Zancudo, Monte Copado, Llano Alegre, Azacualpa, etc. The tables were installed at nine in the morning as planned. The morning was calm and cool with the weather warming up before noon. The voting did not start until a little after 11am. In all areas, PBI volunteers were making our presence visible, and the auto-consultation appeared to proceed without any hitches.

Once the voting had finished at around 4pm, each group of PBI volunteers observed the vote counting at the different tables. After each table was removed and the voting station closed, we accompanied CEHPRODEC to pick up the other people in charge of the other tables. Finally, we returned to Comedor Iris for the general counting of the votes. Fortunately, no acts of violence were recorded during the event, and all the residents of the communities in Santa Elena were able to participate in the auto-consultation without major problems. More than a thousand people voted, and more than 80%¹⁸ gave a resounding “no” to both the installation of a hydroelectric dam in indigenous territory and to a land registry and individual titling of communal lands in the municipality.

In Honduras more than 80% of the population is mixed ethnicity, and these people are also affected by the concessions given in their territories.

17 There are no precise or updated figures on the indigenous population in Honduras. According to the 2001 national census, 7% of a total population of 6 million were indigenous or afro-descendant. According to the census carried out by indigenous organisations in 2007, the indigenous and afro-descendant population is approximately 20%, or 1.5 million of the total population of 7.6 million people. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples upon her visit to Honduras, United Nations, 21 July 2016.

18 Sobre la Autoconsulta de los pueblos Lenca de La Paz”, CEHPRODEC, July 13, 2016. Available at: <http://cehprodec.org/index.php/noticias/55-sobre-la-autoconsulta-de-los-pueblos-lenca-de-la-pa>



Financial report and donors

The main funding of PBI Honduras comes from governmental funds and to a lesser degree, from foundations and private funds. The funds used for the work of the project in 2016 were raised from 21 donors in eight countries. The PBI National Groups play a fundamental role in fundraising and the diversification of funds: 71% of the resources obtained in 2016 were identified and managed with their support.

In 2016, PBI Honduras managed a budget which was 76% higher than in the previous year. The net income up to December 31st 2016 was 265,484.35 EUR. This amount includes 25,000 EUR of “restricted funds” (funds received in 2016 to be spent in 2017).

The total expenditure in 2016 rose to 239,775.51 EUR, that is to say, 99% of the final budget approved for the year. In March, after the killing of Honduran defender Berta Cáceres, PBI Honduras increased the project by almost 30% of the expected budget, with the aim of guaranteeing greater international presence and responding to requests for protection workshops.

21
Donors

in

8
Countries

PBI HONDURAS INCOME 2016

NATIONAL GROUP/DONOR	EUROS
PBI GERMANY	
Bread for the World – Protestant Development Service	20,500.00 €
Misereor	19,600.00 €
Civil Peace Service	23,705.00 €
PBI CANADA	
Embassy of Canada	8,308.00 €
PBI SPAIN	
Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation	10,000.00 €
Basque Agency for Development Cooperation	6,350.00 €
PBI FRANCE	
Caritas France	15,000.00 €
Fond Barreau de Paris Solidarité	6,000.00 €
PBI ITALY	
Donations	600.00 €
PBI UK	
Open Society 2015-2016	3,525.90 €
Open Society 2016-2017	8,600.00 €
PBI SWITZERLAND	
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	25,514.85 €
International Solidarity Service – Canton of Geneva	8,771.44 €
Kanton Basel-Stadt EZA	12,592.19 €
Smartpeace Foundation	6,296.10 €
Biel Catholic Church	3,247.88 €
Individual donations	389.65 €
PBI USA	
Overbrook Foundation	9,198.00 €
Private donations	1,839.60 €
EMBASSY OF THE NETHERLANDS	50,000.00 €
EIDHR	18,894.00 €
TRÓCAIRE	2,100.00 €
TRÓCAIRE - ACCESO	4,400.00 €
OTHER INCOME	51.74 €
TOTAL	265,484.35 €

PBI HONDURAS EXPENDITURE 2016

BUDGET LINE	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE	% SPENDING
HUMAN RESOURCES			
Field officer	17,600.00 €	20,301.49 €	115.35%
Coordination	37,910.00 €	35,506.06 €	93.66%
Advocacy consultancy	1,500.00 €	1,500.00 €	100.00%
Financial supervision	15,278.00 €	15,278.00 €	100.00%
Fundraising	7,150.00 €	7,150.00 €	100.00%
Training for new volunteers	2,400.00 €	2,400.00 €	100.00%
PROJECT COSTS			
Domestic transport	8,720.00 €	10,962.13 €	125.71%
International transport	13,000.00 €	11,219.49 €	86.30%
Advocacy travel in Europe/North America	1,300.00 €	1,278.93 €	98.38%
Volunteer stipends	14,355.00 €	12,970.13 €	90.35%
Housing rental	11,400.00 €	10,818.03 €	94.90%
Household supplies	3,000.00 €	3,620.46 €	120.68%
Food and other costs	12,180.00 €	15,611.62 €	128.17%
Visas	5,000.00 €	6,671.04 €	133.42%
Repatriation	7,525.00 €	6,949.23 €	92.35%
Mental health	2,500.00 €	2,869.56 €	114.78%
Medical insurance	6,955.00 €	5,083.40 €	73.09%
Medical costs	500.00 €	187.54 €	37.51%
Accompaniment accommodation	2,500.00 €	1,554.28 €	62.17%
TRAINING AND VOLUNTEER SELECTION			
Stipends of trainers and logistics	800.00 €	800.00 €	100.00%
Trainer transport	535.00 €	533.25 €	99.67%
Accommodation and maintenance	1,075.00 €	1,076.82 €	100.17%
Grants for participants from Global South	940.00 €	940.00 €	100.00%
OFFICE COSTS			
Office equipment	1,600.00 €	1,774.14 €	110.88%
Office material	1,600.00 €	1,576.81 €	98.55%
Unexpected costs	1,000.00 €	260.76 €	26.08%
COMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY COSTS			
Communication costs	1,990.00 €	2,224.21 €	111.77%
Translations	1,000.00 €	933.00 €	93.30%
Reference materials	250.00 €	54.18 €	21.67%
PBI image and visibility	500.00 €	319.58 €	63.92%
Publications	3,000.00 €	3,025.42 €	100.85%
Membership quotas (CIFCA, Espacio ACI)	1,050.00 €	873.16 €	83.16%
INTERNAL PROJECT MEETINGS			
Travel	5,300.00 €	3,103.50 €	58.56%
Accommodation and maintenance	900.00 €	1,654.25 €	183.81%

ACTIVITIES AND WORKSHOPS WITH DEFENDERS			
Security workshops	9,200.00 €	7,228.85 €	78.57%
Psychosocial workshops	825.00 €	959.30 €	116.28%
Workshops on international protection mechanisms	2,600.00 €	3,115.69 €	119.83%
Defender speaking tours	3,800.00 €	6,117.31 €	160.98%
EVALUATION			
Project evaluation costs	4,000.00 €	4,000.00 €	100.00%
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION COSTS			
Bank costs	750.00 €	1,252.83 €	167.04%
Legal costs	900.00 €	139.15 €	15.46%
Accountancy fees and other costs	3,400.00 €	3,020.21 €	88.83%
External audit	2,500.00 €	2,000.00 €	80.00%
Accounting software	300.00 €	293.60 €	97.87%
ISEC contribution	20,938.00 €	18,899.00 €	90.26%
Variation in exchange rate costs		1,669.10 €	
TOTAL	241,526.00 €	239,775.51 €	99.28%



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