

8 FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN MOBILIZING SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

I-ACT Quick Start Guide



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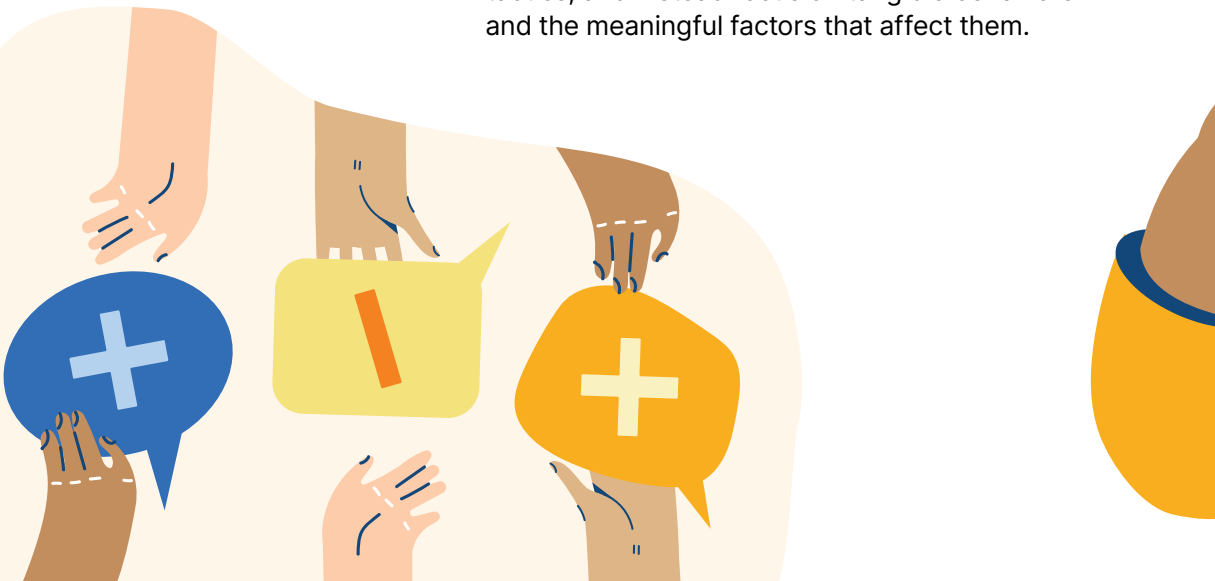
THE ATTITUDE-ACTION GAP

When abstract agreement fails to translate to concrete support

I-ACT research findings contradict the long-held notion that poor engagement in human rights advocacy is solely due to negative attitudes towards human rights.

Filipinos overwhelmingly expressed positive views about human rights concepts, values, and laws, with a majority of 69% also having reported that they have sufficient knowledge of human rights. Specific human rights issues like same-sex marriage and the death penalty yielded more varied opinions, but still did not manifest the presupposed one-sided anti-human rights majority.

As it turns out, thinking positively about human rights is no guarantee of taking action to support human rights. Consequently, it is crucial to look past rote awareness-raising and attitude-changing tactics, and instead focus on tangible behaviors and the meaningful factors that affect them.



2

BRIDGES & BARRIERS TO BEHAVIOR

Whys and hows of action and inaction

If attitudes and knowledge on human rights are less significant than previously thought when it comes to sparking action, where then should civil society organizations (CSOs) focus their efforts? Self-reported behavioral factors may hold the key.

Filipinos who perform positive human rights behaviors are primarily spurred on by the beliefs that “good will come out of my action” and that they are “capable of doing the action.”

In contrast, when Filipinos are asked about barriers to action, three statements generally arise: “It is not important to me,” “I did not know how,” and “It would put me at risk.”

Therefore, CSOs must design interventions that address the “why” of each behavior, linking action to good outcomes and personal importance while also providing the “how,” bolstering self-efficacy and capability to act.



3

OUTLIERS & OPPORTUNITIES

Charitable Giving: Never say never

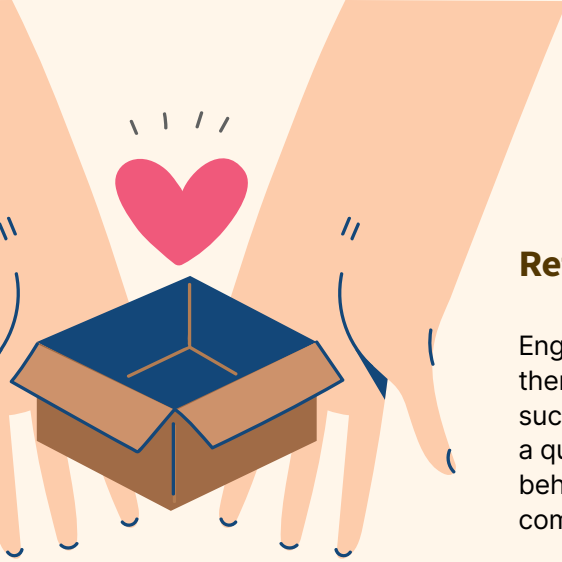
Not only was low engagement evident across the whole range of desired human rights actions, but Filipinos also stated that they were not likely to do most of these actions in the future. The obvious exception? Donating money to charities and/or human rights organizations.

Previously unengaged Filipinos surmised that they might participate in charitable giving should something important happen in the future, e.g., perhaps a change in their fortunes given that the top reason for not donating was “it was too expensive to do.”

Voting: Just biding time?

Casting votes in elections was another outlier. The majority of those that were yet to vote indicated that they were open to doing so in the future. Barriers to following through on this intent may be relatively easy to overcome as most non-voters are either not yet registered to vote or are not yet of voting age.





Referral: Do as I say and as I do

Engaged Filipinos who encouraged others to join them in civic and political participation reported success rates upwards of 60%. With less than a quarter of action-takers performing referral behaviors, the opportunity is ripe to create a compound effect by telling them to “bring a friend.”

Even increasing visibility of desired forms of engagement may prove effective, with many action-takers reporting that they engaged in human rights behaviors after seeing others do so.

Touchpoint Infrastructure: Yes, and...

CSOs looking to increase engagement shouldn't just be concerned with bringing newcomers into the fold; they must also strive to keep action-takers involved and progressing into further participation.

Target behaviors can be mapped out as a behavioral journey in advance, allowing for the identification and establishment of touchpoints that capture actions, as well as calls to action and funnels that seamlessly transition from one behavior to another.



4

THE SWEET SPOTS

Target Audience





I-ACT targeting parameters (low engagement, high accessibility, high influence) were considered in selecting areas and audiences, alongside contextual factors such as the operational presence of coalition partners, population size, and media reach.

Geographic Priority Areas

1. Central Luzon
2. CALABARZON
3. Western Visayas
4. Central Visayas
5. Northern Mindanao
6. Caraga

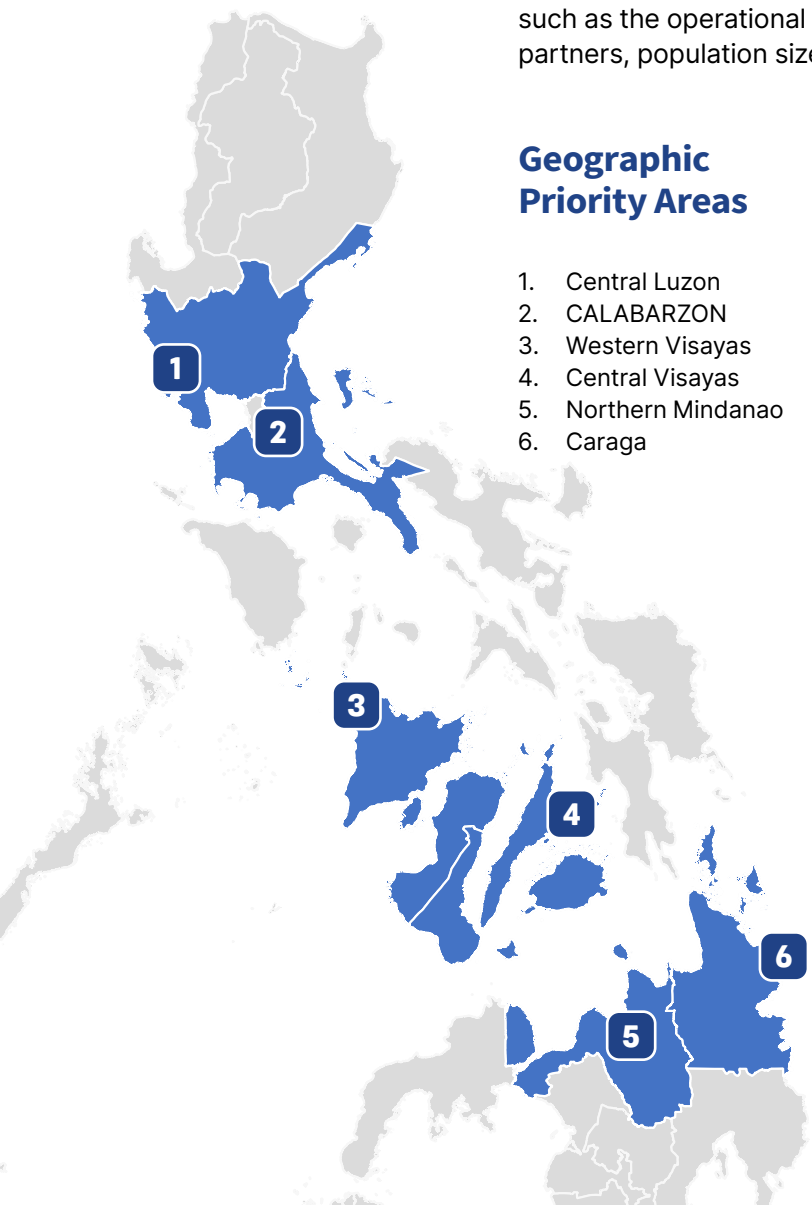
Audience Segments

Priority

-  Internet users
-  Class C
-  Gen Z
-  Workers

Prospective

-  Mothers
-  Relatives of Migrant Workers
-  Millennials
-  Boomers



5

THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

High alignment means accessibility is more important than ever

While a majority of Filipinos identify as internet users, a significant remainder (33%) is offline and sources their information from traditional media.

Television remains the most accessed news source for online and offline Filipinos alike, followed by social media and radio. This platform preference is mirrored in recent sources of information about human rights, with TV identified 70% of the time, followed by radio at 27% and social media at 26%.

Online, Filipinos go to social media and chat applications rather than websites for general use and entertainment, but prefer social media for social issues and current affairs — a cause for concern with the proliferation of misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation.



6

MESSAGING THE MIDDLE

Empathy = Engagement

It is critical to meet the movable middle where they are before planning interventions. Filipinos from different backgrounds interpret human rights concepts differently. More importantly, they interpret them differently from the human rights sector. Key messages must be attuned to the sentiments, knowledge, and concerns of audiences to capture attention and boost engagement.

Communicating Community

Whether as models, comrades, or beneficiaries, the respective communities Filipinos belong to play pivotal roles in inciting action demonstrating support for human rights. When they are evident, positive social norms and desirable behaviors should be highlighted to provide social proof. However, when the default is inaction, shifting focus to community members in need can trigger the desire to help.



7

WORKER WELLNESS

Resilience rooted in care, not stamina

Human rights workers aren't just battling increasing rights violations and adversarial narratives; they also struggle against personal attacks and burnout. Communications workers in the sector are particularly vulnerable to mental health concerns given the "always-on" nature of digital labor.

It's a matter that requires more than just wellness workshops and retreats. The human rights sector and those that support it must reexamine internal culture and structures to prioritize community care and fair work arrangements.

8

INCORPORATING INCLUSION

Creating a culture beyond compliance

The nature of human rights interventions requires that Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion must be woven throughout all stages —from research to testing to scale-up. Rather than adding complexity to urgent or unwieldy activities, a pre-defined integrated approach allows for meaningful inclusion to be organic rather than an afterthought.



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I-ACT Project

The Initiative for Community Transformation (I-ACT) is a five-year project pioneering Social and Behavior Change with the Philippine human rights sector to increase public support for human rights.

Learn more by scanning
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© 2023 The Asia Foundation

ISBN 978-971-95652-9-1 (paperback)

ISBN 978-621-96828-0-0 (PDF)

Published by The Asia Foundation – Philippines

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I-ACT is a project of The Asia Foundation made possible by the generous support of the American People through the USAID. The views expressed in this guide do not necessarily reflect the views of the USAID or the United States Government.

