

Community / Audience Survey Report

Eastern Samar, Philippines

Summary of key findings with a brief analysis and discussion (February 2014)



Purpose and objectives

The purpose of the survey was to understand the listenership and value of Radio Bakdaw, the information needs of the community and sources people would use to address specific information needs.

Particular questions we wanted to answer were:

- How many people listen (are reached) and who they are.
- What radio programming / information listeners most value.
- Whether people have taken any action as a result of listening.
- The information they would most like now (key question to be solved).
- How informed they seem to be, and any differences between listeners and non-listeners.
- What information sources they rely on / trust.

This community /audience survey builds on the survey undertaken in December 2013 by Internews in Guiuan, but focussing more on understanding how Radio Bakdaw serves the community as well as its information needs.

The survey was conducted **24 January – 2 February** thus relates to two months of Radio Bakdaw broadcasting.

Methodology

To sample adult residents in two different barangays (villages) including an island in the 9 most affected municipalities of Eastern Samar (Guiuan, Mercedes, Salcedo, Balangiga, Giporlos, General Macarthur, Hernani, Quinapondan, Lawaan, ie excluding Llorente and Balangkayan) all with reception (to some degree) of Radio Bakdaw. A total of 19 barangays were sampled, representing less than 10% of total barangays but a varied mix by population size and locality.

The residents were surveyed (in the local language Waray-Waray) by individual face to face basis both in public places and in homes applying basic quota sampling to get a fairly representative sample of the population by gender and age, and also by mobile phone usage. We can reasonably say the respondents are typical of those who live in the sampled areas.

The major sampling issue was a bias to car-accessible barangays (apart from an island). Harder to access barangays (inland, hills-based) were largely not surveyed, and it is fair to say their experience and views could well have been different taking into account anecdotal evidence from humanitarian agencies.

As well more female respondents (54%) were interviewed than males (46%), which does not reflect the population profile of Eastern Samar where males outnumber females from the ages 0 to 59 years. Another factor was internally displaced persons / those living temporarily in a different barangay, these were not included in the sample and may well have had different experience and views compared with residents.

339 residents aged from 16 to over 65 – led by those aged 26-35 (27%) and 46-55 (20%), with 46% accessing a mobile phone - completed the survey, which contained 17 core questions plus collected demographic data, striking a balance between depth and numbers given available time and resources. A greater than 98% survey completion rate was achieved by the interviewers.

Listeners with a mobile phone were asked if they would like to participate in a listener panel, 86 agreed to do so and are providing program based feedback via SMS.

Note, this is not statistically valid study of the research questions but one that is simply designed to give reasonable insight to the matters of interest bearing in mind resource and timing constraints, with the survey data forming part of a more comprehensive analysis using qualitative and other quantitative data.

Key findings

Reach. 51% of respondents claim to listen to Radio Bakdaw, translating to about 45000 adult persons across the 9 municipal areas (based on census data). This result was skewed by the sizeable chunk of Victory Island respondents (23 of 27) who were mainly regular heavy listeners and the survey focus on more accessible barangays as noted. Hence it probably over-estimates actual listeners.

The major reason for not listening was lack of access to a functioning radio (72%), this compares with the December survey that reported 80% and may also reflect the continuing radio repair efforts of Radio Bakdaw and increased market availability of radios. Other key reasons noted were not being aware (12%) and not able to receive the signal (11.5%), some of these people may of course be listening to other radio services (not asked in survey).

Highest listening rates were recorded in Guiuan barangays, followed by those in Salcedo, Mercedes and Balangiga (Bacjao). Lowest numbers were in Lawaan, Hernani, Balangiga (Santa Rosa) and General Macarthur (Calutan), in part reflecting remoteness and reception issues.

Listening frequency and duration. 56% of listeners claim to listen every day, 31.6% less than once a week and the balance (12.4%) once a week to several times a week on average. Those that listen every day also listen much longer (69% do so for several hours) than the others, who mainly listen for an hour or less per day. This gives us a sense of listening volume during the week, given Radio Bakdaw broadcasts for 14 hours per day. Hence we can roughly estimate that about 61.4% of listeners on average catch 1-2% of the broadcast per week, whilst 38.6% may listen to 30% or more of what is broadcast. Note, we did not ask about usual or preferred listening times.

Most listeners listen with others, 4-6 persons was the common listening group size (and this could be assumed to include children). This compares with a finding of 10-11 in the December survey, a result influenced perhaps by sampling method (eg Guiuan tent city residents). 56% claim to share what they hear on Radio Bakdaw with those who don't listen or have a radio though this was not quantified in the survey. This group listening is important as mainly anecdotal evidence suggests that around 10% of households own a working radio.

Reasons for listening. Weather (37%), general / local news (27%) and information on distributions (19%) were the main reasons for listening to Radio Bakdaw, whilst 6% mentioned it allowed them to connect to the world and 4.6%

stated music. **Most useful information heard** over the past week was the weather report (62%), Government plans (18%) and distribution of aid/materials (9.8%) followed by health advice, school times and jobs ads.

Desired information from Radio Bakdaw. Listeners wanted Radio Bakdaw to communicate more on weather (16%), closely followed by electricity plans (15.5%), re-housing / re-location (12.6%), how to find work & jobs (12%) and local news (12%). This compares with relief information, national news and music as the more desired items found in the December survey and indicates a possible change in information needs over time, as can be expected.

Satisfaction with thematic programming. The only regular thematic content available at the time of the survey was the health program featuring a local doctor answering questions on a different topic each week. 47% of listeners had listened to it and all thought it was either very useful (86%) or useful (14%).

Contact with the station. 15% of listeners had contacted the station mainly (70%) to lodge a song request, whilst 30% did so to advise of a community problem (12%), to ask a question (8%), publicise a complaint (4%) and comment on an on-air topic (4%), meaning almost 5% of all listeners had engaged with the station on at least one occasion other than to lodge a song request. Younger people were more likely to contact the station than older ones.

Actions taken after listening. The intent was to discover, primarily via unprompted recall, what actions listeners have taken as a result (in some way) of listening to Radio Bakdaw.

70% claimed to have taken action which mainly involved discussing what they learned with family/friends followed by addressing Barangay captains/councillors. The other reported actions include changing plans, securing a job, solving the immediate problem and easing of concerns. 30% could not recall taking any action after listening. Females reported more actions than males, refer below the comparison of male and female listening below.

Most important question / needed answer right now. The aim was to understand what specific information was the most important (ie front of mind) for residents at that point in time, without prompts.

The distribution of housing materials was clearly the most important, followed by electricity connection, relief continuation / distribution, availability of livelihoods programs, clean and safe water and advice on how best to re-build homes. The top responses to this question overall are listed below:

Distribution of housing materials / timing	30.97%	105 mentions
Other	23.60%	80 mentions
Unsure	13.57%	46 mentions
Electricity connection / timing	6.78%	23 mentions
Relief continuation / distribution	5.60%	19 mentions
Availability of livelihoods program / assistance	5.31%	18 mentions

Housing / shelter related responses included people seeking advice on how to build better and find tradespeople.

Of note is the substantive number of people being Unsure, in part explained by some not understanding the question (interviewer feedback), whilst Other consisted of a range of items notably the following queries / comments (and similar), reflecting a sense of despair and uncertainty:

“Where we can ask for help”

“Is there someone who could help us”

“If there is a typhoon coming, can we still survive”

“How to start our life again in these very difficult situation”

“Can we survive”

A lack of clarity about where to go for help / who-does-what was also reported in the December survey and continues to be a significant issue despite the continuing efforts of the humanitarian agencies and Radio Bakdaw.

Differences between listeners and non listeners

In terms of the most important question for respondents at this point in time, listeners and non-listeners gave similar responses though more non-listeners were unsure what to say, and a few more non-listeners were concerned

about electricity connections.

With respect to unfair distribution of aid, listeners specified more clearly to whom they would address the matter chiefly Barangay officials (followed by radio), whereas non-listeners were less sure and proffered a wider range of options including appealing to the national Government.

This was also the case with respect to seeking information about re-starting work or a business, 34% of listeners claimed they would use Radio Bakdaw whilst 25% were unsure on source. 37% of non-listeners were unsure with 15% stating they would seek out an experienced business person.

For advice on how to handle an approaching typhoon listeners stated they would rely on Radio Bakdaw whilst non-listeners would depend heavily on their Barangay officials and as above offered a wider range of sources. Non-listeners were also 20% less likely to access a mobile phone, which further suggests they would be relying more on word of mouth than listeners.

Age differences in listening and information needs

A higher percentage of people aged 16-25 (72%) and 46-55 (53%) appear to listen to Radio Bakdaw though all age groups report at least 45% listening. Older people tend to listen a little more regularly than younger ones, those aged 56-65 listen longer each day but more often alone / with fewer people than younger age groups.

Older people tend to value listening to local news more than younger ones, who more appreciate weather reports and distribution updates, and would rely much more on Radio Bakdaw if a typhoon was coming than older people, who trusted their barangay officials more.

Younger age groups were slightly more interested in hearing more about electricity connections and work opportunities on the radio, older people were keener on housing / re-location information, but there were no substantive differences in key information required now (and situational comments, including anxious ones) across the age groups.

Gender differences in listening and information needs

More males (55%) than females (47%) listened to Radio Bakdaw but females were more likely to listen every day, more often for hours at a time, and also a little more with others (9% of men and 3% of women listen alone).

Women claimed a wider range of reasons for listening and favoured local news almost equally with weather whereas for males weather updates was the primary reason for listening.

Females undertook a wider range of actions as a result of listening including contacting Radio Bakdaw, were more concerned about receiving information on distribution of housing materials and less unsure of what to do than males in response to specific scenarios. This suggests women listen a little more actively and with more intent than men.

Analysis and discussion of the findings

Radio Bakdaw may have around 17300 adult listeners on a regular and substantive daily basis (representing about 12% of people overall) in the 9 municipal areas that could be reasonably assumed to rely on radio as a key information source (and be more impacted by listening).

We need to keep in mind that radio as a primary source of information has fallen in importance from 23% to 9% (8% local radio) of people post Yolanda according to a larger wider-area survey conducted by UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) due to the widespread loss of radios (and minimal replacement of). Based on the survey data (which has limitations as mentioned) radio and Radyo Bakdaw in particular would likely be a more significant source of information than reported in the UNFPA survey.

The degree of active versus passive listening amongst this group was not tested and will be explored in group conversations. Given the prevailing commercialised, politicized and talking-heads nature of radio in the Philippines (including Eastern Samar) we can safely surmise that habitual radio listening (as radio tends to be) would be heavily passive and may continue to a large degree in a crisis situation, this resident factor would hence impact on the efforts of Radio Bakdaw especially over a short time.

Noting that a majority of listeners are occasional and fractional-time then information broadcasts on radio,

especially the more important ones, and key programming, need to be very regular / repeated several times where possible in order to reach and influence people (many of whom may be in less set routines compared to before Yolanda) as Radio Bakdaw seeks to do with its evening highlights program.

The infrequent listening patterns (which can be better understood) coupled with a high proportion of people who do not listen to Radio Bakdaw nor access any other humanitarian broadcast media (as applies to most people in Eastern Samar) affirms the need for other communication tools / networks to be used to a far greater extent to reach and inform a highly literate population and complement the information broadcast by Radio Bakdaw and other mainly verbal sources (like NGOs). This should include cell phone texting into Barangays, as cell phone ownership is much higher than that of radio. This also requires active production of suitable content by humanitarian and Government agencies.

The station has had notable impact on listeners (and we could say to a lesser extent non-listeners) as evidenced by listeners referencing the station as a key source to help them improve their livelihood and address bad weather conditions, positive comments on the health program and also by the number of people that contact the station with an information-related request, trusting the station to help in some way.

The beneficial effect of radio listening is supported by the finding (if tentative) that listeners appear more sure about information sources (where to go) than non-listeners though overall there remains a lack of clarity as identified in the December survey and is also demonstrated in a noted sense of despair / anxiety amongst some people (issues which the weekly Radyo Bakdaw conversations / mental health program is designed to address). Group and individual discussions underway involving listeners and non-listeners (on thematic humanitarian programming) will shed a little more light on this matter.

More importantly, 70% of listeners have taken action as a result of listening, even just sharing what they have learned with others. This action outcome would be interesting to compare with that achieved in other humanitarian radio / media projects, and something we are exploring via group discussions at the Barangay and household level.

Information on housing materials, re-building and re-housing / re-location is by far the number one area of priority according to residents and this fact should ideally be reflected in radio programming (as Radyo Bakdaw has done with its weekly shelter program) and through other information channels.

Surveys on information needs should be undertaken periodically to track changes in information needs (ie questions) both geographically and demographically (in conjunction with data that agencies collect from the field and operational plans) and support more proactive targeted responses by humanitarian agencies. This is also evident when we compared what people value from Radio Bakdaw currently and what they would like to hear more about.

Whilst the survey did not specifically ask about 'trust' the answers provided by respondents confirms that radio is well trusted by listeners (evidenced also by the UNFPA survey which showed trust in radio at 22%). However it is not the most trusted source overall as reported in the December survey. Barangay captains / officials (community leaders) are the most trusted source (as also found by the UNFPA survey) and work as primary information intermediaries in communities, a role we are currently exploring via group discussions to identify how to improve community knowledge by leveraging this network.

Age and gender do not appear to be very significant factors that need to be especially taken into account in humanitarian information strategy planning in Eastern Samar, with vulnerable groups (including young people) having comparable access to radio and mobile phones, combined with substantial group listening and sharing, and the house to house information work of Barangay officials.

Survey data can also inform any proposed distribution of radios in Eastern Samar. It indicates radio distribution should look to target especially less accessible barangays notably in Lawaan, Hernani, General Macarthur and Balangiga (with reception), and explore the idea of providing relatively more radios to women including in Sari-Sari (small retail) stores often run by women (and other meeting places, as Internews did with its initial distribution of 200 radios to Barangay captains) to not just address a listenership gap with men but more importantly, more quickly impact listening, sharing and action outcomes in a crisis situation. This also correlates a little with the connection people have between information and physical localities identified in the Internews December survey.

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