



## INTERNEWS IN THE PHILIPPINES

**Internews** is an international nonprofit that supports independent media in more than 100 countries. We train journalists and digital rights activists, tackle disinformation, and offer business expertise to help media outlets thrive financially. For nearly 40 years, we have helped our partners reach millions of people with trustworthy information that saves lives, improves livelihoods, and holds institutions accountable.

In the **Philippines**, we work with partners from media, academia, civil society, and the business community to ensure a healthy information ecosystem, responding to challenges like attacks against media, disinformation, closing civic space, the climate crisis, and public health.

### INITIATIVE FOR MEDIA FREEDOM (IMF) 2019-2024

Through IMF, a five-year USAID-funded project, Internews is supporting media safety and independence and countering disinformation in the Philippines. The IMF consortium includes 20 media, civil society, private sector, and academic organizations. The consortium's activities tackle disinformation, both from the supply side – by tracking malign actors and influence operations and supporting fact-checkers and investigative journalism – and the demand side, by promoting media literacy and critical thinking. The program also supports media self-regulation to consolidate trust in independent journalism and promote ethical standards. IMF empowers Philippine organizations and individuals including the marginalized and youth to seek, receive, and impart quality information and ideas.

### IMF IMPACT

- **7,490** citizens participated in freedom of expression, freedom of information, and digital rights activities.
- **Almost 8,300** Facebook likes and followers of [#BarangayHub](#) online community.
- Trained **18** peer mentors on physical safety, digital security, and overall well-being.
- Trained **728** journalists on physical, digital, psychosocial, and legal safety.



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## Trained 1,597 journalists and media workers Assisted 801 news organizations and media CSOs as of December 2023

- Disseminated 25 monthly briefs analyzing 19,300 reports of disinformation to TotooBa.info and DIAL from December 2021 to December 2023 and taken down 180 posts and accounts on social media.
- Trained 5,300 individuals on media literacy and fact-checking.
- Out of 30 entries, three best posters and three best TikTok videos received the Audience Choice Award in the Spoof Ads Competition.
- Surveyed 19,000 Filipinos on media consumption, habits, and perceptions.
- Trained 9 community media outlets on social media use to improve reach and engagement.
- Supported 19 story grant fellows who produced 182 election stories.
- Formed 1 media-citizen council to increase trust between the community and local media.
- Reached 11,400,000 Filipinos and engaged almost 900,000 in social media posts on critical thinking and responsible social media use.
- Produced 6 major publications that have been downloaded 5,500 times: [Information Dystopia and Philippine Democracy](#), [Patient Zero: A study on the Philippine Information Ecosystem](#), [Journalist Safety Guide](#), [Ethical Journalism Guide](#), and [Digital Rights Reports](#).
- Obtained commitments by 3 major companies to spend PHP6M (~USD100K) on direct advertising in Philippine media listed in Internews' Trustworthy News Site Index.

### PHILIPPINE FACT-CHECKER INCUBATOR (PFCI) 2021-2022

Internews, with support from Facebook, incubated new fact-checking organizations ahead of the 2022 Philippine general elections. Selected organizations received training, technical and financial support, mentorship, and guidance following global fact-checking standards like those of the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) Code of Principles. This assistance was provided by Internews in partnership with VERA Files and Rappler. PFCI also established a coordination mechanism to enable fact-checking organizations to collaborate.

#### PFCI IMPACT

- Provided five news organizations with intensive fact-check training and mentorship to create fact-checking units.
- Supported five news organizations to apply to become verified signatories of the International Fact-Checking Network Code of Principles, three of which—MindaNews, PressOne.PH, and Probe—have already been accepted.
- Produced 374 fact-checking pieces.

## SIX-TRACK ENGAGEMENT AGAINST DISINFORMATION INITIATIVE (STEAD-i)

The Strengthening Disinformation Resilience in the Philippines: Six-Track Engagement Against Disinformation Initiative (STEAD-i) implemented a multi-stakeholder approach and mobilized a diverse coalition of Filipino stakeholders from civil society organizations, academia, media, and the creative industry who effectively responded to the information disorder issue. Internews—together with AI4GOV, Break the Fake Movement, Filipino animator Allan Leycano, the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines (FOCAP), PumaPodcast, and leading Filipino researchers—identified solutions and tested strategic interventions to address the disinformation phenomenon. From June 2022 to July 2023, STEAD-i collaborated with over 100 partners, engaged 501 persons directly in activities, and achieved an online reach of 403,986 through various social media and online platforms. Results and impact included equipping the public with knowledge and skills to factcheck, providing avenues for citizens to be more media and information literate, tracking disinformation sources, encouraging platform accountability, engaging in discussions to counter disinformation, advocating for context-based interventions and policy changes.

### STEAD-I IMPACT

- Developed a series of disinformation inoculation videos
- Supported Media Civics Lab: Fact-Checking Academy for Influencers in partnership with Break the Fake Movement
- Organized ThinkTalk Series in partnership with the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines (FOCAP)
- Sponsored Season 2 of the podcast Catch Me if You Can in partnership with PumaPodcast
- Oversaw two research studies, one on disinformation trends and influence operations and one on social media influencers and the political economy of manipulation in the Philippines, by authors including Dr. Jonathan C. Ong (University of Massachusetts, USA), Dr. Nicole Curato (University of Canberra, Australia), and Fatima Gaw.

## MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE ON ELECTORAL DISINFORMATION (MDED) 2021

This project sought to strengthen the information environment and mitigate the impact of disinformation on the May 2022 elections. Internews worked with Filipino researchers Jonathan C. Ong and Nicole Curato to conduct innovative and action-oriented research and network-building including key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and a deliberative forum.

### MDED IMPACT

- Published Multistakeholder Dialogue on Electoral Disinformation Report.
- 72 representatives from civil society, media, government, public relations, and academia engaged in key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and a deliberative forum.

## EARTH JOURNALISM NETWORK (EJN)

EJN launched the Philippine Network of Environmental Journalists (PNEJ) in 2010 to strengthen the capacity of journalists and media organizations on environmental reporting. EJN builds journalists' knowledge and skills to provide factual and engaging environmental information to policy makers and amplify the voices of the most vulnerable communities by providing training and workshops, story grants, year-long media grants for news and media organizations, webinars, podcasts and resources for reporting, and fellowships to participate in local and global conferences. In 2019, EJN helped establish the conservation news and information website Mongabay Environews Philippines. EJN launched the first-ever Certificate Course on Climate Change Reporting in the Philippines in 2021 with the Asian Center for Journalism-Ateneo De Manila University. EJN launched in 2022 the pilot Master Class on Water and Climate Change Reporting with Climate Tracker Philippines. In 2023, EJN supported PumaPodcast in producing a series of podcasts exploring environmental health issues, and a collaboration between Lyf Solutions Inc. and the PNEJ to strengthen local and national reporting on pressing environmental issues. EJN also introduced the Environmental Data Journalism Academy to develop environmental journalists' data journalism skills and support data-driven investigations.

### EJN IMPACT

- Provided training and capacity-building activities for over 1,000 national and local journalists on environmental reporting and the use of innovative reporting tools like data journalism, fact-checking, geojournalism, mapping, among others.
- Produced hundreds of news and feature stories and investigative reports with national and community journalists and media organizations. Mongabay Environews Philippines alone has published over 200 stories since 2019.
- Assisted more than 300 journalists, through small grants, to produce local environment-related stories.
- Produced and distributed journalists' reporting resources such as Tipsheets on Climate Change Reporting; the SMS Mobile Reporting Manual for Philippine Journalists; the Championing Climate Change Adaptation Resource Book; Reporting Environmental Issues through Gender Lens; a Training Module on Gender Sensitivity and Safety focusing on the environment; and the Klima 101: A Climate Change Guidebook for Philippine Journalists.
- Internews, in partnership with VERA Files, the Asian Center for Journalism at the Ateneo de Manila University and the University of the Philippines Journalism Department, launched Media Action for Sustainable Infrastructure in the Philippines (MASIP), a year-long project aimed at increasing the quality and quantity of reporting on the societal and environmental costs of infrastructure projects in the Philippines.

MASIP, funded by the US Department of State Global Engagement Center, aims to strengthen the media's watchdog role, and raise public awareness on the social and environmental impacts of infrastructure development in the Philippines.



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## GREATER INTERNET FREEDOM (GIF)

GIF used a two-pronged approach to advance digital rights and other fundamental freedoms, enhance digital safety for civil society and media, and increase citizen engagement in internet governance. GIF worked with EngageMedia in the Philippines to improve organizational security, technical support, and incident response. GIF leveraged Internews IMF networks, to raise public awareness on digital rights and cyber laws.

## INDO-PACIFIC MEDIA ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM (IPMAP)

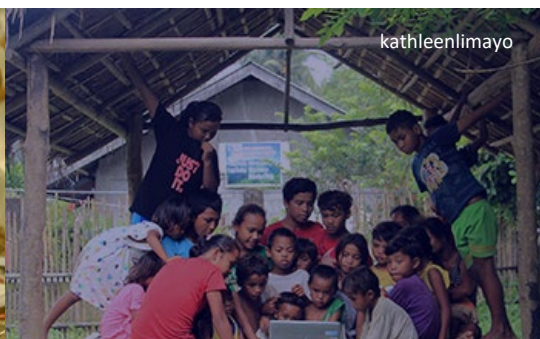
The Philippines has been included as one of the 29 target countries that will be the focus of a recently awarded new Internews initiative, the Indo-Pacific Media Advancement Program (IPMAP). Funded by the United States Department of State, this two-year project will cover countries in the South Asia, Southeast Asia and Pacific regions. It will be implemented by Internews and key partners Centre for Information Resilience (CIR) and Doublethink Lab (DTL), together with up to 30 media partners from the 29 target countries. IPMAP will contribute to strengthening the capacity of independent media in the Indo-Pacific region to develop their business strategies, enhance their ability to conduct independent journalism and counter disinformation.

## INDO-PACIFIC MEDIA RESILIENCE (IPMR)

After a series of stakeholder consultations with local journalists and newsrooms under its inception phase, IPMR is now geared towards implementing tailored activities based on the stakeholders' expressed needs and gaps on media capacity-building, countering disinformation, monitoring disinformation, and media sustainability. Internews will also foster co-learning and collaboration between journalists and partners from the Philippines and from other IPMR focus countries under this project through network convenings and working groups.



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