

USING FACEBOOK ADS FOR

DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT

ON HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

IN THE PHILIPPINES



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Cover photos: Two young women affected by natural disasters in the Philippines share their stories with International Organization for Migration (IOM) Philippines staff in the field. © IOM 2022

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USING FACEBOOK ADS FOR DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT ON HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IN THE PHILIPPINES

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In the 2022 [WorldRiskIndex report](#)¹, the Philippines ranks highest among all nations for natural disaster risk, and, as natural disasters increase in intensity and frequency due to climate change, the way they threaten loss of lives, livelihoods, and displacement are only expected to rise. In 2020 alone, the Philippines experienced three super typhoons, which displaced more than one million people and led to unprecedented destruction in public and private infrastructure.

When such emergencies occur in communities with pre-existing vulnerabilities and long-term unmet needs, the effects are even more devastating. Natural disasters disproportionately affect women and girls due to the limited access to key social services like safe shelters, schools and health services, which can exacerbate the risk of gender-based violence.

As [one of the biggest contributors to the Philippines' economy](#)², US-based Filipino diaspora communities can play a role in every phase of the disaster management cycle. Following Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) in 2016, the Filipino diaspora made [significant contributions to support relief efforts](#)³. Beyond remittances, Filipino Americans continue to demonstrate they, like other diaspora groups, have immense desire, expertise, cultural knowledge and skills to contribute to their countries of origin or heritage before, during and after disasters occur, including during long-term crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

With all of this in mind, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Meta's Data for Good team collaborated on a pair of online campaigns to raise awareness about the impact of recurring natural disasters in the Philippines in Filipino American communities and ways to increase diaspora's safer shelter knowledge and practices through IOM's ["Build Back Safer" initiative](#)⁴.

Campaign Strategy

The goal of the campaigns was threefold. The main goal was to engage a key demographic in the United States, the Filipino American diaspora, and raise awareness of the importance of diaspora communities in building back safer after disasters. Secondly, the campaign sought to further raise awareness of IOM's ["Build Back Safer"](#) initiative and other ways for Filipino Americans to get involved in recovery efforts. Lastly, the campaign aimed to highlight the disproportionate impact of natural disasters on women and girls.

Targeting of the campaigns was based on interests that are relevant to the Philippines and the culture of people of the Philippines (e.g., languages, geographical areas, national brands, etc.). Numerous tags and interests were suggested by some of IOM's Filipino diaspora partner organizations, including the [PUSO Foundation](#)⁵, and incorporated based on availability of the tags within the Ads Manager system.

Each campaign tested a different messaging strategy:

- Fact/Stats-Based content or
- Emotional/Testimonial content.

IOM Washington’s Diaspora Engagement Unit (DEU) designed draft ad campaigns using both above messaging strategies to understand which strategy would be best suited for their outreach and project goals. To understand how well the two different approaches performed with the target audience, a [brand lift survey](#)⁶ was conducted comparing people who saw the ads (the test group) and those who did not (the control group) on questions about the IOM campaigns to measure effectiveness and impact of the messaging.

Messages

Facts/Statistics-Based Content (2 Ads)

This content featured two short videos about the impact of natural disasters in the Philippines and how women are disproportionately affected by natural disasters. The content highlights statistics and facts explaining how natural disasters exacerbate gender-based violence (GBV) and abuse against women following natural disasters. For example, one statistic highlighted that women are 14x less likely to survive natural disasters. The end of the ad features a message about how Filipino American communities can help impacted communities in the Philippines, and a link to the [“Build Back Safer” initiative page](#)⁷ on IOM’s global iDiaspora platform with free resources.

Click the titles below the images to view the full ad videos on Vimeo.



Natural Disaster-Focused Ad⁸



Gender-Based Violence Ad⁹

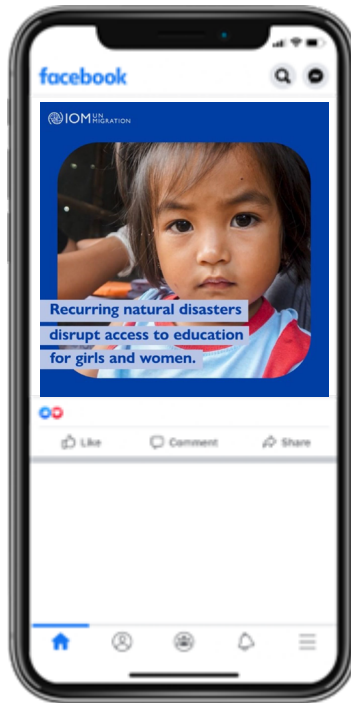
Emotional/Testimonial-Based Content (3 Ads)

This strategy featured testimonials from people who were impacted by recent hurricanes in the Philippines with one ad also featuring a Filipino American who assisted in humanitarian coordination after a natural disaster. The testimonials underscored how natural disasters disrupt access to safe shelters, with one of the ads specifically outlining how lack of safe shelter impacts women and girls' education. The ads concluded with ways for the Filipino American communities to learn more and support IOM's "Build Back Safer" initiative.

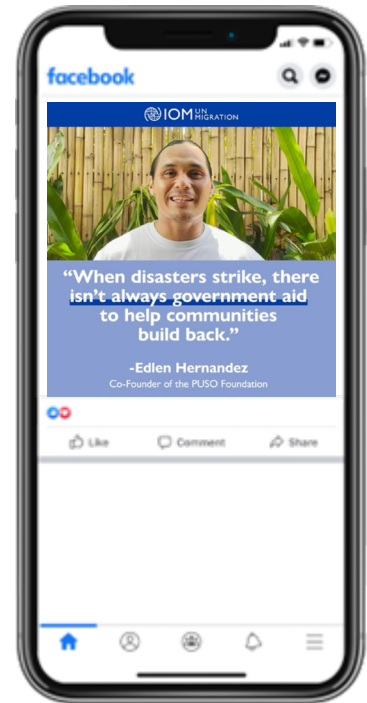
Click the titles below the images to view the full ad videos on Vimeo.



U.S. Diaspora-Focused Ad¹⁰



Education + Relief Ad¹¹



Community Impact Ad¹²

Results

The campaign reached more than **10.7 million people** on Facebook and Instagram. It resulted in more than **21.2 thousand clicks** to IOM's resource page about the "Build Back Safer" initiative. Testimonial ads achieved statistically significant lift for two questions. People who saw the testimonial ads were **+2.8 percentage points** more likely to agree that natural disasters in the Philippines disproportionately affect women compared to people who didn't see the ads. This indicates that the content in these campaigns was effective in highlighting the impact of natural disasters on women. Secondly, **+2.5 percentage points** of those who had the opportunity to see the testimonial ads agree that Filipino Americans can make a difference in helping communities recover from natural disasters in the Philippines.

The question on intent to support or get involved with the "Build Back Safer" initiative, did not achieve statistically significant increases for either campaign but showed positive directional insights for the Testimonial content. The Fact/Stats campaign was not effective in achieving statistically significant outcomes for any of the questions. Neither campaign was successful in leading to awareness/memorability of IOM's "Build Back Safer" initiative.

Table 1: Campaign Results Highlighting Where Exposure to the Ads Caused a Lift (Test vs Control)

Questions	Facts/Statistics-Based	Testimonials-Based
Do you recall seeing ads for the “Build Back Safer” initiative from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) online or on a mobile device in the last 2 days?	No lift	+0.1 Pts
Would you consider supporting, getting involved with, or learning more about assisting people displaced by or vulnerable to natural disasters in the Philippines?	+0.9 Pts	+1.9 Pts[^]
Do you agree that the Filipino diaspora community in the U.S. can make a difference to help communities recover from natural disasters in the Philippines?	+0.9 Pts	+2.5 Pts[*]
Do you think that natural disasters in the Philippines disproportionately affect women and girls?	+0.9 Pts	+2.8 Pts[*]
Have you heard of the International Organization for Migration’s (IOM) “Build Back Safer” initiative for Filipino American diaspora communities?	No lift	+0.6 Pts

*Campaign performance reflects the chance of *brand lift 90% or greater and ^brand lift 80% or greater.*

Learnings for Future Engagement of Target Communities

Through this collaboration we reached a large audience and learned that the emotional/testimonial content performed better in generating clicks and communicating campaign objectives when compared to the statistics/fact-based content. These results suggest that emotional/testimonial content may produce more successful campaign outcomes for future campaigns but perhaps facts and statistics can be incorporated where necessary to tell a compelling story. Overall, the results demonstrate well the efficacy of digital outreach for engaging communities in disaster recovery efforts and transferring knowledge of safe shelter messaging.

“Our goal for this campaign was to enable, engage and empower transnational communities to serve as agents for change, especially in the case of future disasters. Through this study and continued collaboration with Filipino diaspora organizations in the United States, we have strengthened our knowledge and understanding of diasporas that can also help bolster our outreach with other diaspora groups across humanitarian sectors and around the world.” - Vincent Houver, Chief of Mission, IOM Washington, DC.

Special thanks to Kadeem Khan, Data for Good Research Manager at Meta, the IOM Philippines team, the PUSO Foundation, and the broader Diaspora Engagement Unit at IOM for their support behind the development and implementation of these campaigns.

About Data for Good and IOM

The Data for Good at Meta program provides privacy protecting data to assist in disaster response, health crises, poverty alleviation, and climate change. Data for Good products can help organizations respond to disease outbreaks and natural disasters, as well as plan vaccination campaigns and water and sanitation programs. Some products are publicly available; others require data-sharing agreements. Data for Good partners with hundreds of organizations across every continent, including universities, non-profit organizations, and international institutions.

Learn more about their initiatives by accessing www.dataforgood.facebook.com.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is the leading intergovernmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners. With 175 member states, a further 8 states holding observer status and offices in over 100 countries, IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. It does so by providing services and advice to governments and migrants.

IOM works to help ensure the orderly and humane management of migration to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people.

For more information about the Diaspora Engagement Unit, contact diasporaforhumanity@iom.int.

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*All hyperlinks were working at the time of writing this report.

