

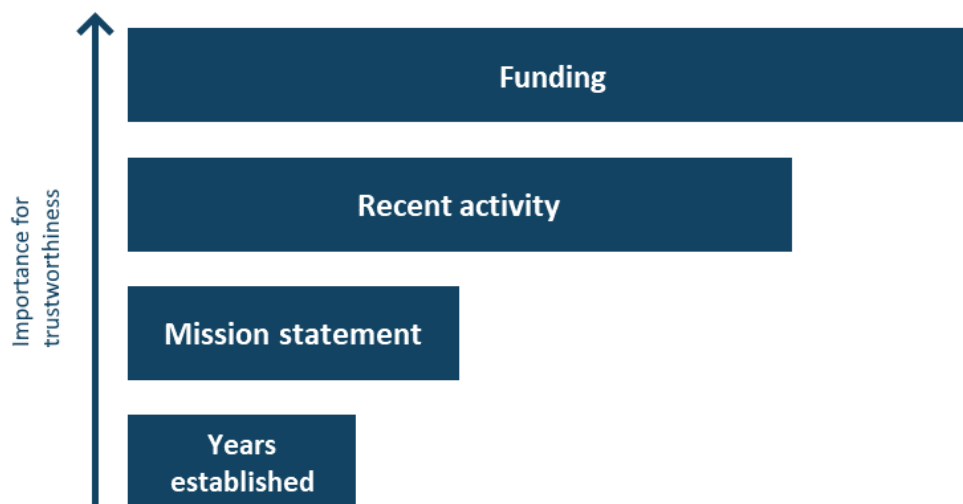
# Credibility of Human Rights Organizations: Indonesia

## Overview

As attacks on human rights organizations (HROs) increase, it is imperative for them to establish and nurture local support networks to sustain their vital work and continue advancing global rights, even amid a dwindling space for civic engagement. Despite the important role of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), many people perceive them as having hidden agendas, not genuinely representing local interests, or potentially being corrupt. This perception significantly hampers HROs' efforts to broaden their constituencies. Consequently, Freedom House conducted a multi-country survey to identify specific attributes that shape public perceptions of HROs in Africa, Asia, Eurasia, and Latin America.

Freedom House structured the survey to detect the attributes of HROs that drive public perception in ways that mimic real-world choices. Individual respondents were shown two profiles of hypothetical HROs that varied across four attributes: funding source, recent activities, mission statement, and year established. In this head-to-head matchup, Freedom House asked respondents to choose which of the two HROs they thought was more trustworthy based only on the attributes listed for those HROs. Analyzing the results allowed Freedom House to determine which attributes were more important for respondents in determining trustworthiness and, for each attribute, the values that enhanced or decreased trustworthiness of HROs. While the focus of the study was human rights organizations, the survey used the term "nongovernmental organization" or its acronym "NGO" based on the assumption that it is more commonly understood and used.

## Key takeaways from the Indonesia survey



1. Funding source and recent activity were the main drivers of respondents' perceptions around HROs in Indonesia. An organization's mission statement and the number of years established were less important factors in respondents' assessments. Considered together, an HRO's source of funding and recent activity influenced 73

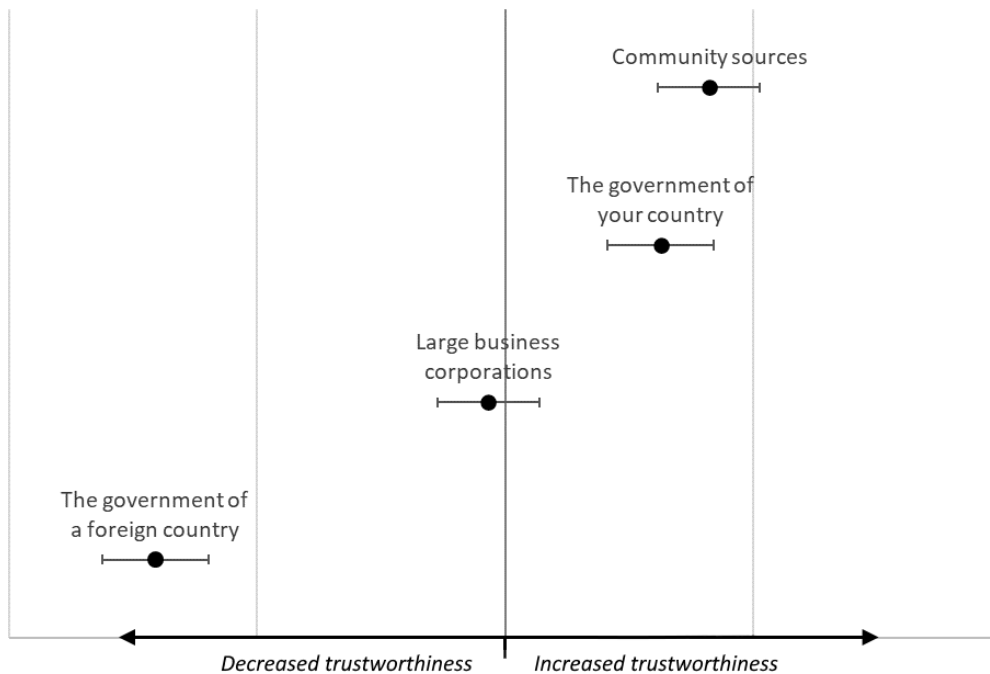
percent of a person's preference of HRO. This is followed by an HRO's mission statement (16 percent) and years established (11 percent).

2. Providing direct aid and services increased the trustworthiness of HROs, while meeting with officials to inform policy and raising awareness through public demonstrations decreased trustworthiness.
3. Funding by foreign governments greatly decreased trustworthiness, while funding from community sources and the Indonesian government increased trustworthiness. Most of the Indonesian respondents think that HROs with which they interact are funded through community sources, while few think they are funded internationally.
4. Eradicating poverty is the mission statement with the highest likelihood of being chosen in head-to-head matchups by Indonesian respondents.
5. Older HROs were seen as more trustworthy than younger HROs.

## Ranked attributes that affect the perception of trustworthiness of HROs

### 1. Funding

Among the attributes examined in the survey, funding was the second-most prominent driver of trustworthiness. The survey varied funding across four levels: community sources, large business corporations, the Indonesian government, and foreign governments.

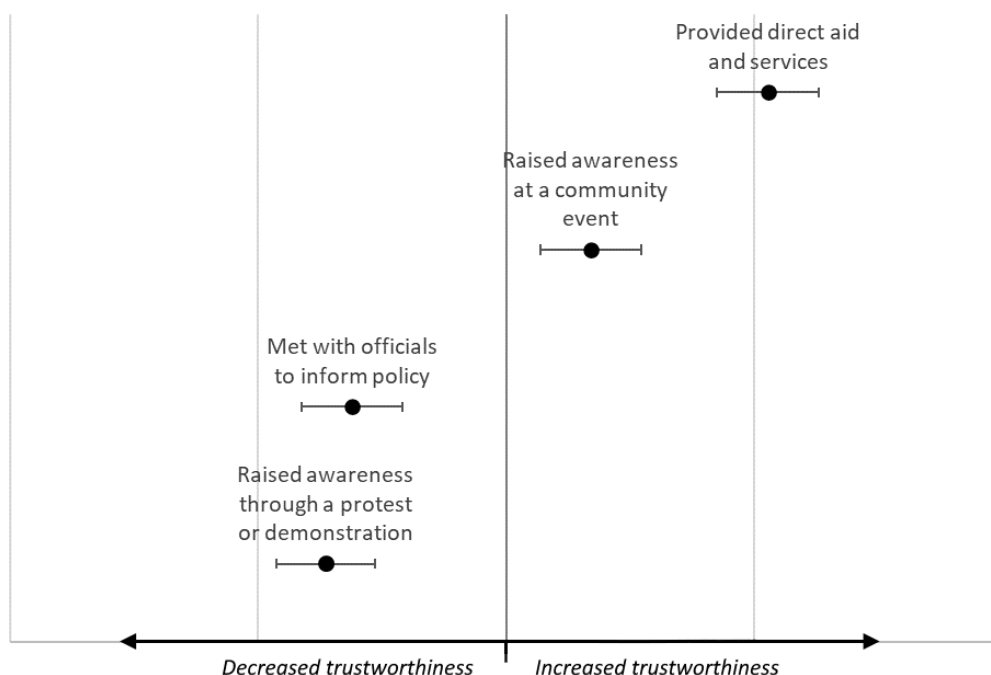


When choosing the more trustworthy of two comparable HROs, HROs funded by foreign governments were the least likely to be chosen compared with HROs funded through different means, while those funded by community sources and the Indonesian government were seen as the most trustworthy. Compared with HROs funded by foreign governments, Indonesians were 13 percent, 20 percent, and 22 percent more likely to choose HROs funded by large business corporations, the Indonesian government, and community sources, respectively.

To provide additional context, the survey asked Indonesians how they think HROs they interacted with are usually funded, and most thought that HROs are funded through community sources, while few thought they are funded by international sources. The survey also asked about their perceptions of government and civil society institutions, and a majority of respondents thought that at least some of them were corrupt.

## 2. Recent activity

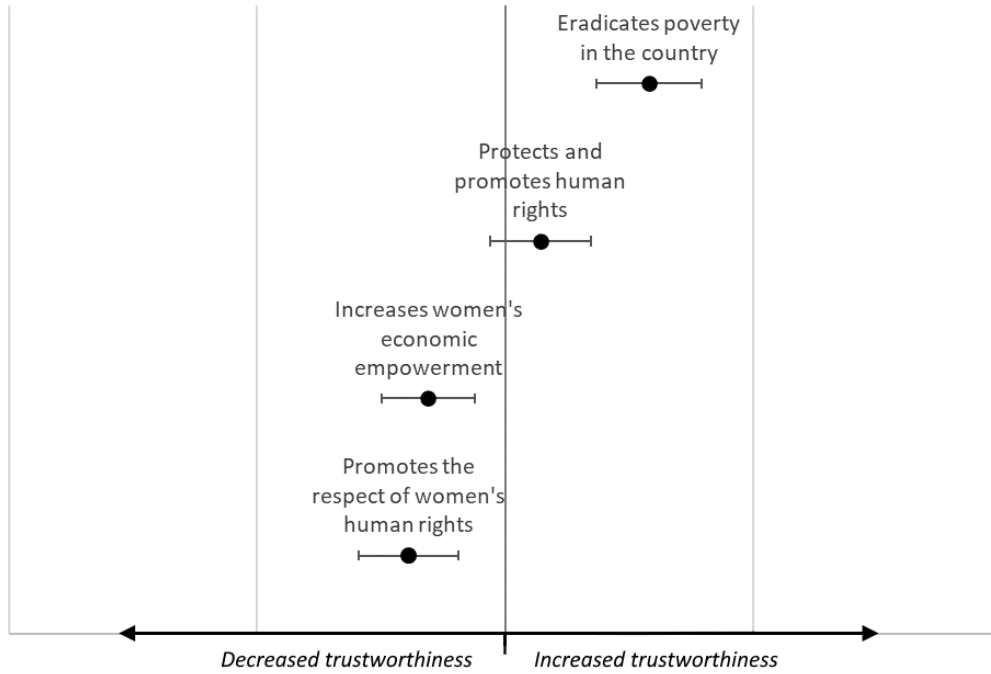
Among the attributes examined, recent activity of HROs was the most important attribute driving decisions on trustworthiness. Along this dimension, the HROs shown to respondents provided direct aid and services, raised awareness at community events, raised awareness through hosting peaceful protests or public demonstrations, or met with government officials to inform policy.



## 3. Mission statement

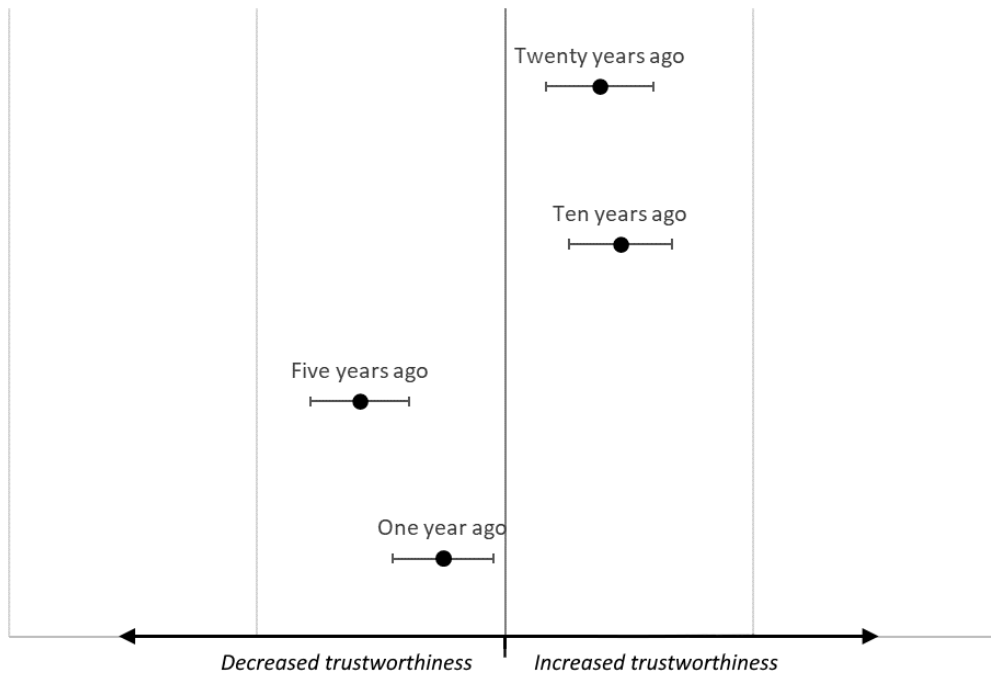
Mission statement was the third-most important attribute influencing perceptions of trustworthiness. The survey varied mission statement across four levels: promotes the respect of women’s human rights, protects and promotes human rights, increases women’s economic empowerment, and eradicates poverty in the country.

Eradicating poverty is seen as the most trustworthy mission statement by Indonesian respondents. Compared with this mission statement, Indonesians were 5 percent, 9 percent, and 10 percent less likely to choose HROs promoting human rights, increasing women’s economic empowerment, and promoting respect of women’s human rights as the more trustworthy HRO, respectively.



#### 4. Years established

Age of HRO was the least important factor for Indonesian respondents in deciding the trustworthiness of HROs. The survey varied how many years the HRO has been established: one year, five years, ten years, and twenty years.



Regarding HROs' age, Indonesians were more likely to choose older HROs in head-to-head matchups than younger HROs.

## Methodology

This survey was executed under the Human Rights Support Mechanism (HRSM), a USAID-funded and Freedom House-led Leader with Associates cooperative agreement. HRSM is implemented by the PROGRESS Consortium, a group of five organizations that support and implement human rights programming. To study perceptions of HROs, Freedom House worked with survey vendor Pollfish to conduct an online survey in nine countries, including Indonesia. Freedom House developed this brief as a resource for the consortium; other democracy, human rights, and governance implementers; and USAID Missions.

The survey employed a conjoint experimental design to best understand the attribute-level determinants of public opinion on HROs. A conjoint experiment is a research method used to understand how individuals make choices by presenting them with hypothetical scenarios featuring multiple attributes or features. Participants are asked to select their preferred option from two alternatives, each varying in specific attributes. By analyzing the choices made, researchers can deduce the relative importance of these attributes and how they influence decision-making. In this case, individual survey respondents were asked to judge the profiles of two hypothetical HROs and select the organization that they think is most trustworthy and best reflects the opinions of people like them. Based on conversations with human rights practitioners, the HRSM learning specialist identified several attributes to study in the conjoint experiment: nascency of the organization, funding sources, mission statement, and style of recent activities. By asking people to choose the more trustworthy alternative in head-to-head matchups, HRSM can infer the importance of certain attributes, both alone and in context with one another.

The sample included one thousand Indonesian respondents, but the sample used in the study is not representative of the Indonesian population. Pollfish collects survey responses through partnership with mobile applications that offer in-app incentives, such as a token in a game or a free yoga class in a fitness application, to respondents in exchange for their participation. While this sample avoids using so-called career survey takers, the sample typically skews younger and urban, as only mobile phone users can participate and surveys should be fewer than 10 questions. Because of these factors, the results may have limited applicability for rural and older populations. Pollfish is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation and is based in California.