

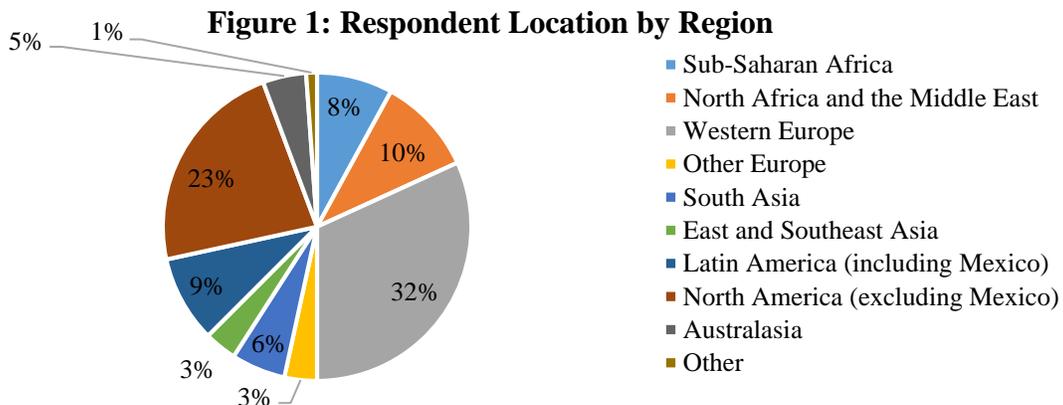
**Reader Survey Findings – Summary Report
October 2016**

[openGlobalRights \(oGR\)](#) launched in June 2013 with the goal of creating a multilingual space for critical thinking and exchanges on human rights policy and strategy, through the publication of short, op-ed style articles by a diverse range of stakeholders from the global human rights community. To learn more about how we’re doing and the project’s impact, the oGR team conducted an online readership survey between July 7th and August 18th, 2016. [This survey](#) was designed to better understand who our readers are, how they engage with oGR and what they think about our content and the forum as a whole.

We launched the survey in English and Spanish, disseminated it on our social media feeds, included it as a button on our homepage and article pages, and set-up a web-browser pop-up (in English only) on the oGR section of openDemocracy. We also sent an email blast to oGR authors and added a call for participation in our weekly newsletter to readers. In total, we received 88 complete responses. The following is a brief summary of the survey findings.

Respondent Demographics

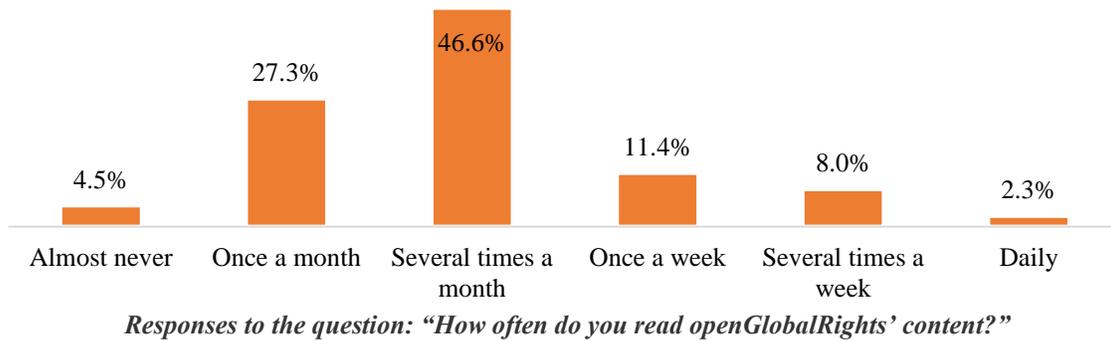
We received responses from a variety of individuals located around the world. In general, respondents were highly educated, with 75% having holding Doctorate or Master’s degrees (66/88). The age of respondents ranged from 20 to over 65, with 70% of respondents ranging between the ages of 25 and 54. Of the total, 54% of respondents had published one or more articles on oGR and about half self-identified as female (43%). As seen in Figure 1, just over half of respondents hailed from North America or Western Europe (54%). Nonetheless, we received at least two responses from each identified region of the world, spanning 29 different countries. When asked about their engagement with human rights, the majority of participants self-identified as being a human rights scholar/researcher (32%), a human rights practitioner (35%), or both (2%). Others identified most strongly as human rights activists (7.5%), students interested in human rights (37.5%), and as individuals interested in human rights (16%). Respondents were employed in the various sectors, with many involved in charities, NGOs or activism (39%), and academia (23%). Other sectors included: education or teaching (9%), government or politics (7%), and journalism (4.5%). Overall, the demographic findings reveal that oGR is read by a wide variety of individuals; many of whom are highly educated and directly involved in human rights work.



Engagement with oGR

With regards to engagement, the majority of respondents indicated that they first learned about the forum by word of mouth referral (35%), oGRs’ social media channels (28%), and general online searches (16%). Once familiarized with the forum, oGR promotion mechanisms seem to be the primary way readers access content; most respondents indicated that they connect with us by going directly to our homepage (24%), our Twitter account (19%), our Facebook page (15%), or clicking through to articles from our weekly newsletter (16%). About 16% of respondents primarily access content through other sections of the openDemocracy website. As seen in Figure 2, the majority of respondents read oGR several times per month or more frequently, indicating a fairly active engagement with the site. Only 44% of respondents claimed that they read content in languages other than English, however. Of our 22 translation languages, Spanish (51%) and French (41%) were most commonly read.

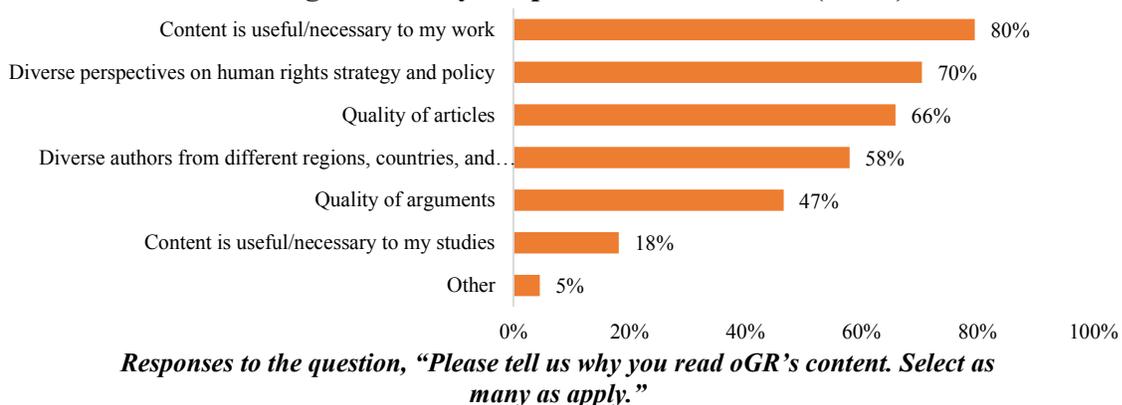
Figure 2: The Majority of Respondents Access oGR Several Times Each Month (N=88)



Perspectives on oGR’s Content and Overall Approach

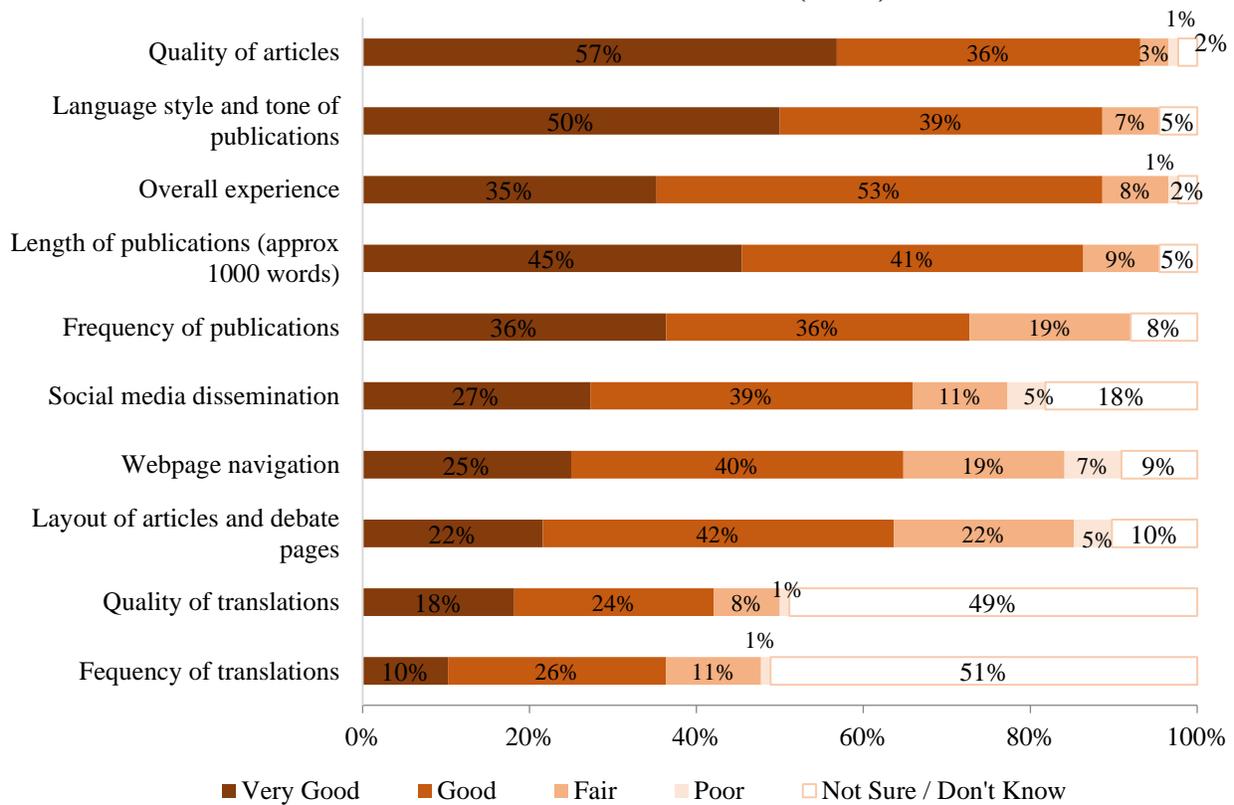
As Figure 3 illustrates, our content has been useful and/or necessary to the work done by the vast majority of respondents (80%). Well over half of all respondents also claimed to read our content because of the diverse perspectives and authors we publish, the quality of our articles.

Figure 3: Why Respondents Read oGR (N=88)



As Figure 4 shows, various aspects of oGR’s content and web presence received overwhelmingly positive ratings from respondents. Worth noting is that 88% of respondents felt that their overall experience of engaging with oGR was “Good” or “Very Good”. Moreover, considering 44% of respondents had read non-English versions of articles, the ratings for quality and frequency of translations are also quite positive. The only areas in which respondents had somewhat less positive ratings were on web page navigation and the layout of oGR articles and debates. Indeed, as one respondent stated: *“I would be more inclined to spend more time on the oGR page if it were visually cleaner and crisper. I don’t think the quality of the web design reflects the quality of the content and editing.”*

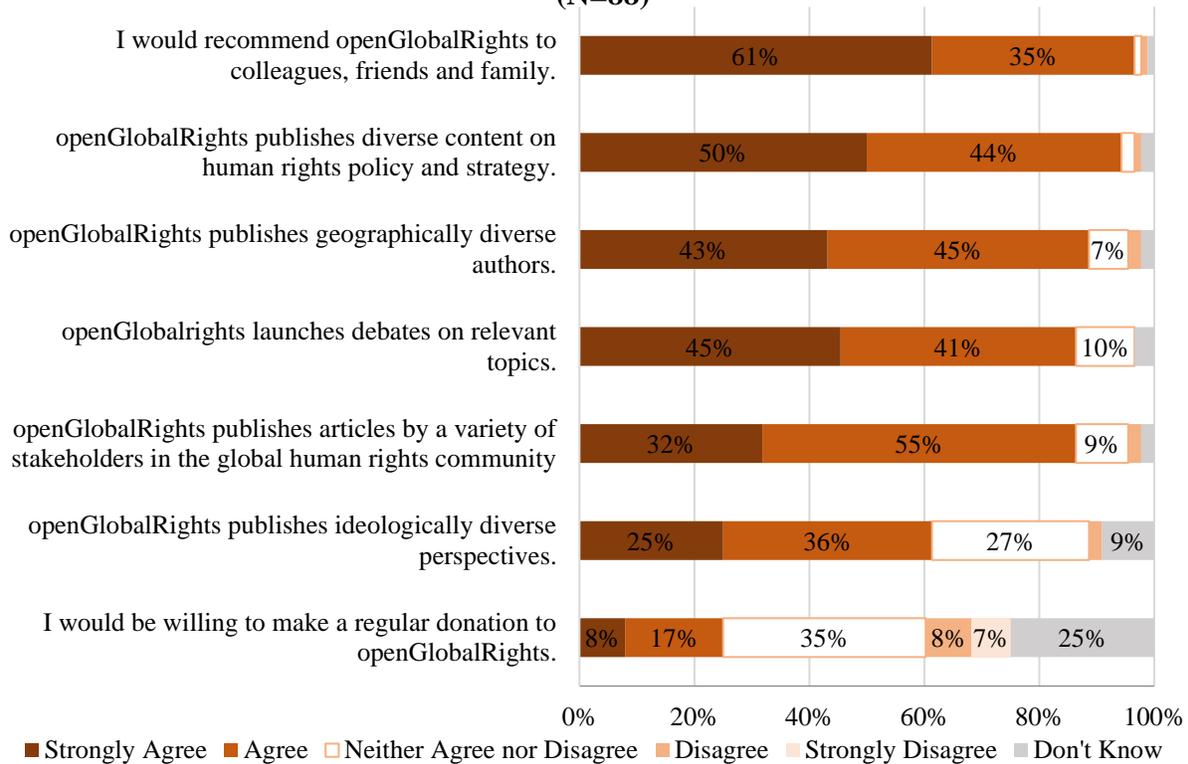
Figure 4: Respondents Rated oGR Positively on Many Aspects of its Content and Web Presence (N=88)



Responses to the question, "How would you rate oGR on the following?"

To obtain some more in-depth understanding of what readers thought about oGR, we asked them to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with a variety of statements pertaining to oGR’s content as well as their willingness to support oGR (see Figure 5). Almost all respondents said they would recommend oGR to others in their networks, and most “Agreed” or “Strongly Agreed” that oGR publishes diverse content, publishes geographically diverse authors, launches relevant debate topics, and publishes a variety of stakeholders from the human rights community. More than half of all respondents agreed that oGR publishes ideologically diverse perspectives. Most, however, would not or were unsure whether they would be willing to make a regular donation to oGR.

Figure 5: Perspectives on oGR Content and Funding
(N=88)



Responses to the question, “Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements”

Usage of oGR Content

The survey provided an opportunity for respondents to share stories/examples of how they have used our content—whether among colleagues, peers, or within their respective organizations. We received 11 written responses to this optional question. Among these responses, several respondents stated they have discussed issues raised by the closing space debate and articles covering foreign versus local funding for human rights. Additional topics that respondents found useful were: the relevance of international human rights organizations to local work, ICC deterrence, and religion and human rights. In addition, one respondent wrote, “An article made us realize that some of the work we are doing is not very well-known and so we have adjusted our outreach activities.” Moreover, an educator who uses our material in class said that oGR debates have “led to great conversations among students.”

oGR’s Strengths & Services

The reader survey also provided respondents with the opportunity to tell us what they felt oGR’s strengths were and what services they thought oGR provided to the global human rights community. A total of 38 individuals responded to this optional and open-ended question.

Many respondents note the variety and diversity of authors, topics and perspectives on oGR as well as the quality and accessibility of publications as being some of its key strengths. In terms of the service oGR provides, respondents felt that the platform provides a space that connects human rights actors from around the world and allows them to critically reflect on and discuss their practices. As one respondent wrote, oGR is “a platform for a multitude of voices; sharing ideas across the world.” Another elaborated that oGR “bring[s] together global human rights actors, even those who would not traditionally write about their work.” Yet another respondent stated that we have helped “create a platform for more professional, systematic and strategic thinking, with genuine content.” Finally as another couple of respondents summed up, oGR publishes “relevant and timely pieces on global human rights issues”, it “connects different authors and facilitates linkages and relevant synergies” and is a “global resource for human rights activists and practitioners.”

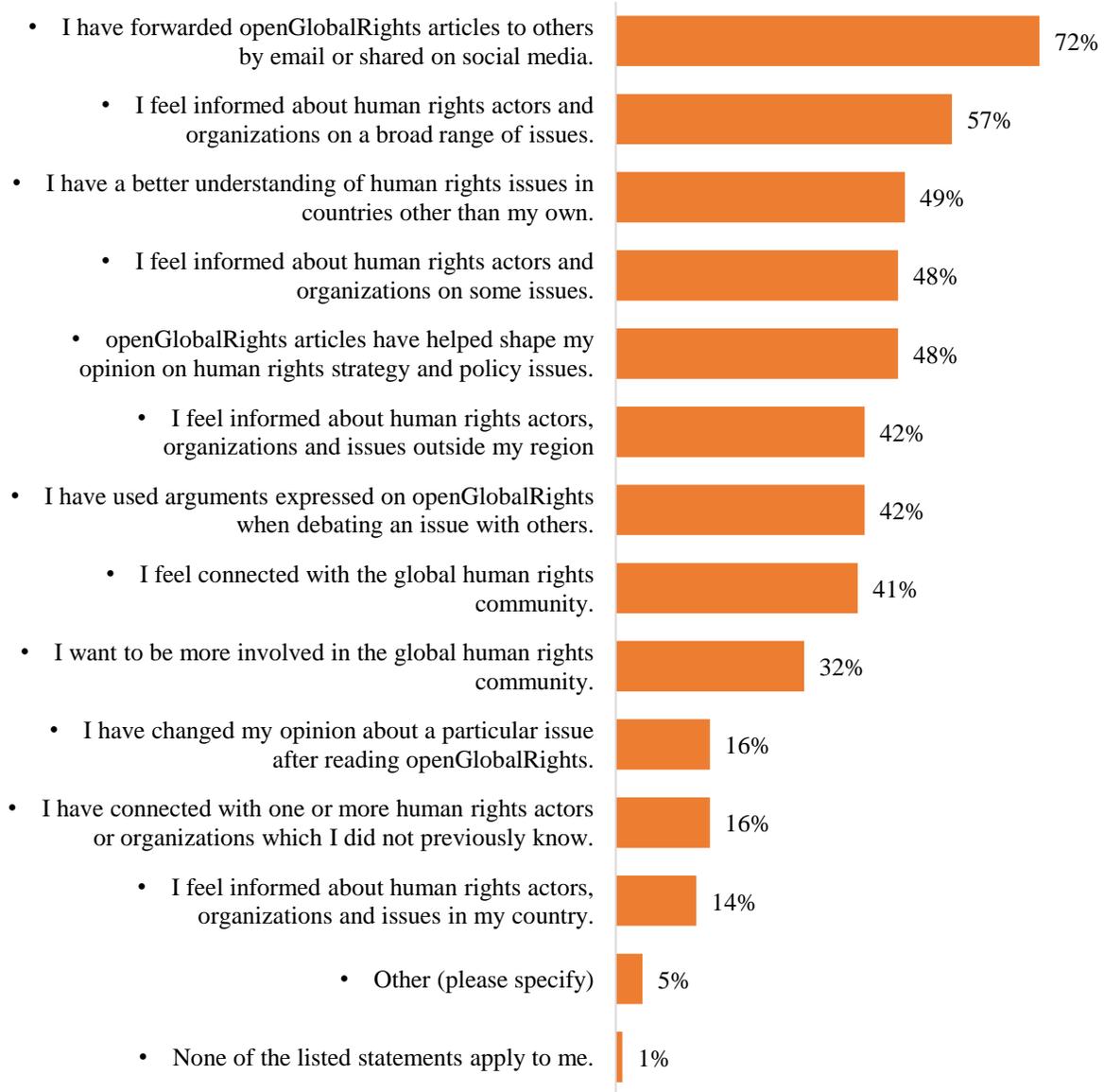
How Could oGR Do Better?

Along with our strengths, we also asked respondent to tell us what they thought we could do better or differently. A total of 32 respondents made suggestions for what we might change or how we might do better. Overall, their suggestions were primarily related to improving the visual appearance and navigation across the site, trying new article styles, trying new content formats and dissemination strategies, and publishing more grassroots perspectives on oGR. For example, as one respondent outlined, a “better and more user-friendly design of the website” would help bring in and maintain readers along with “better promotion of its newsletter”. Moreover, some respondents thought we should do more to “engage with readers who may be less versed in the subject matter”, as a way of broadening and growing our readership. Another respondent outlined that, while the information and data is useful, adjusting the formulaic, “newsletter” quality and tone may help to appeal to a more diverse audience. Others suggested varying lengths and content mediums (such as podcasts) as new ways in which oGR might expand its reach and following. Some hoped to see more interactive social media, more outreach to networks/partners, fluidity in the “conversation” between articles through more response pieces, and more open discussions, possibly through debates on social media or in other new formats. Finally, some respondents also cited the need for oGR to provide more content from local, “on the ground” activists, suggesting that such local links may help produce articles with greater relevancy to the issues and discussions occurring within countries

Moving Forward

Overall, the largely positive survey findings summarized here are very promising and encouraging. While we are pleased with the number of responses we received, the findings are unfortunately far from generalizable to our overall readership: oGR has published articles in 22 different languages and been accessed by over 400,000 unique readers since its launch in June 2013. Although a wide variety of individuals provided feedback through this survey, there are likely many readers that may not be represented by these overall findings. Nonetheless, these survey findings helpfully highlight some of oGR’s strengths and weaknesses along with helpful suggestions for how we can try to improve and continue to grow. As such, we are very thankful

Figure 6: Impact of oGR Content (N=88)



Responses to the question, “In thinking about your experience reading/engaging with oGR content, please select each statement that applies to you”

to all those who participated and provided feedback through this survey and thrilled to learn about the progress we have made in building a diverse, critical, and useful space and resource for dialogue and learning among the global human rights community.

In the coming months, we plan to continue publishing articles while also experimenting with new formats, strategies and partnerships with the aim of addressing some of the issues highlighted in these survey findings and also increasing our reach, utility and support of the global human rights community.