

JULY 2024

# Perceptions Hub

Health perceptions research findings:  
Japan

# Health Perceptions Research

## Project objectives

This research project is designed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the most salient topics in donor countries and Global South countries? What issues do people care about? And what's the current mood?
2. How does health feature in the current issue landscape? How are specific health issues perceived?
3. How are current efforts to address health issues globally perceived?
4. How can we best make the case for investing to tackle health issues globally? What messages are most effective?

About this research:

- The project is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
- It is intended as a public good for use by the broader global health and development community to support improved messaging and campaigning.
- A comprehensive methodology was used (see next slide), covering both donor and Global South countries.
- This is an iterative process: this is the first round of multiple rounds of research. The focus of the work will evolve over future waves of research.

# Research Inputs

This report combines opinion research with news media and social media analysis

## News media analysis

- News dates: Nov 1, 2023 – Jan 31, 2024
- Global health complex keyword query
- Donor countries: UK, US, France, Germany
- Global South: Kenya, Nigeria, India, Senegal

## Social media analysis

- Analysis period: Dec 1, 2023 – Feb 1, 2024
- Global health complex keyword query
- Geography: Global
- Language: English
- Target country analysis: US, UK, Nigeria, Kenya

## Opinion research: Focus groups

- Fieldwork: w/c March 4, 2024
- 16 focus groups with 'opinion leaders' (highly engaged segment of the public)
- Markets: UK, US, France, Germany, Japan, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal

## Opinion research: Survey

- Fieldwork: April 23 – May 13, 2024
- Online general public
- Markets: UK, US, France, Germany, Japan, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal

***This report focuses on findings specific to Japan.***

# Methodology: Opinion Research

	Phase 1: Qualitative research	Phase 2: Quantitative research
Audience	<p><b>Opinion Leaders</b> Highly engaged members of the public who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ University educated</li> <li>▪ Civically active</li> <li>▪ Media attentive</li> <li>▪ Personally/professionally follow news about global issues</li> <li>▪ Voted in their country's most recent national election</li> </ul>	<p><b>General Public</b> Members of the public who have internet access, aged 18+.</p> <p>Data was weighted by their respective country's census data to ensure a representative sample of the population.</p>
Method	2 online focus groups per market with 6-8 participants in each session (16 focus groups total)	1 online survey of per market (8,123 respondents total)
Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ UK: London</li> <li>▪ US: Washington, DC</li> <li>▪ France: Paris</li> <li>▪ Germany: Munich/Berlin</li> <li>▪ <b>Japan: Tokyo</b></li> <li>▪ Kenya: Nairobi</li> <li>▪ Nigeria: Lagos</li> <li>▪ Senegal: Dakar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ UK: 1,016</li> <li>▪ US: 1,029</li> <li>▪ France: 1,031</li> <li>▪ Germany: 1,022</li> <li>▪ <b>Japan: 1,027</b></li> <li>▪ Kenya: 1,020</li> <li>▪ Nigeria: 1,014</li> <li>▪ Senegal: 964</li> </ul>
Dates	Week of March 4, 2024	April 23 – May 13, 2024

# Key Findings (All Markets)

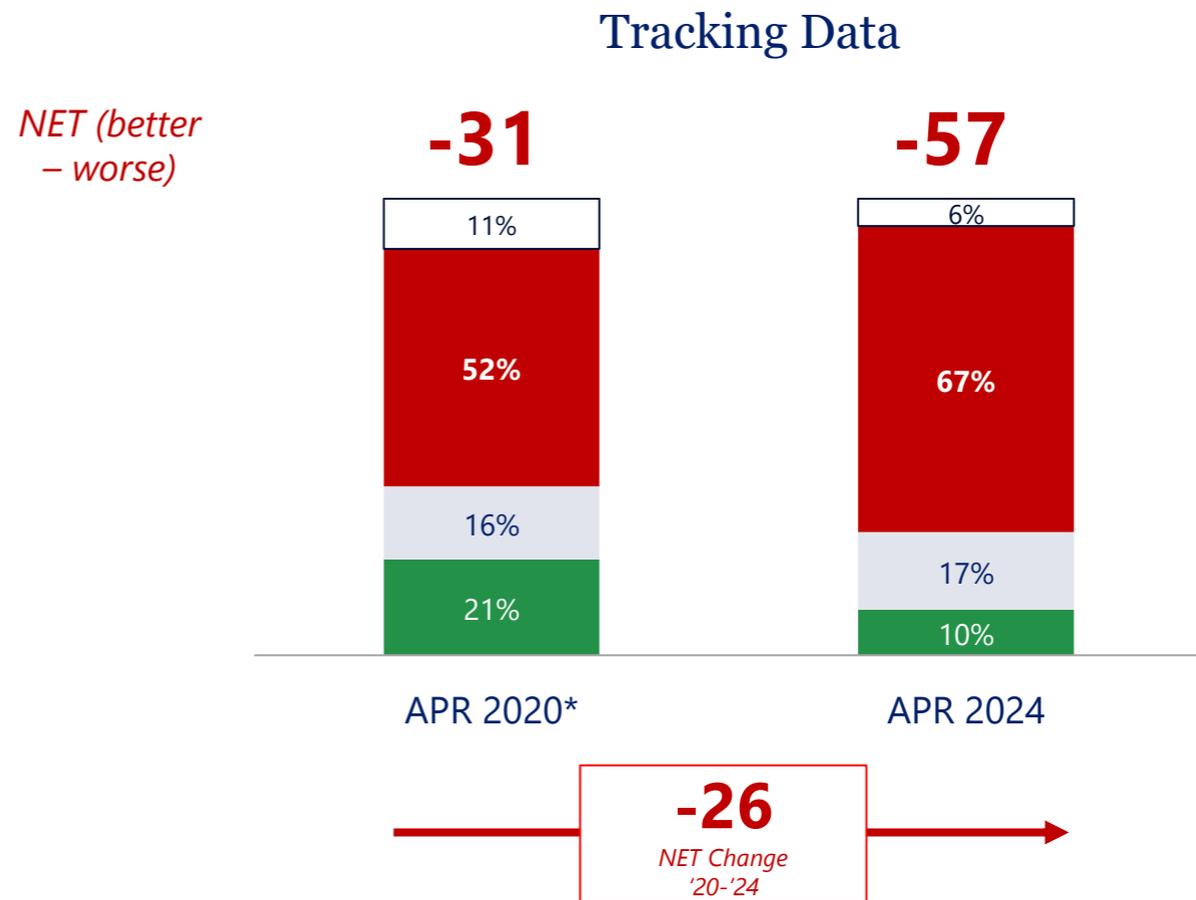
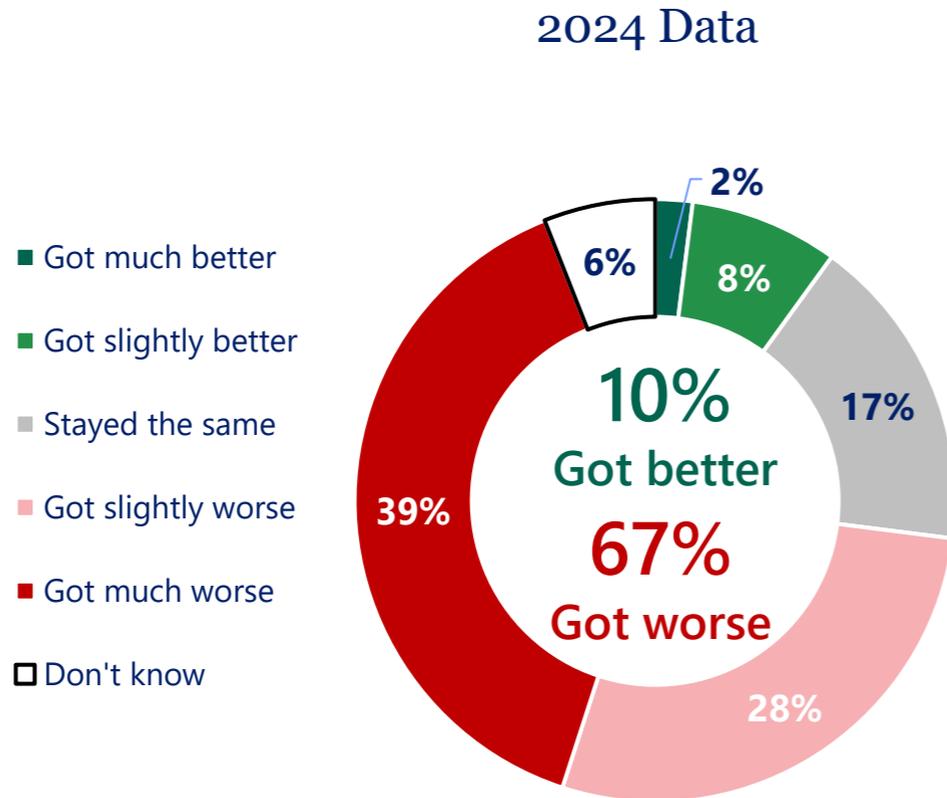
1	<p><b>The crisis of the moment is a shared global negativity and pessimism.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ There is a general mood of anxiety and a lack of confidence that things will get better. Global issues of concern include war and security, as well as economic and employment issues.</li></ul>
2	<p><b>In this context of negativity, pessimism, and hopelessness, there are signs health is a source of greater hope.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Opinion research shows greater positivity/optimism about progress on health (vs. general global progress), with Global South countries most optimistic.</li><li>▪ However, news media tends to focus on health risks, particularly compounded risks to health (e.g. from conflict). On social, digital activity linked to Global Health was predominantly constructive in Nigeria and Kenya; in English-speaking donor countries it was mainly negative.</li></ul>
3	<p><b>The connection between climate and health is starting to resonate, though climate change messaging is not yet cutting through.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Climate issues are a growing sub-topic in global health news media coverage, and focus groups suggested the link between climate change and (some aspects of) health is starting to resonate. However, this link is not as prominent in social media content.</li></ul>
4	<p><b>There is a disconnect between the news media coverage and social media conversation about global health, and people's concerns – specifically on Covid-19.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ A significant proportion of news media coverage, and social media conversation relates to Covid-19. However, the focus groups and survey suggest this does not reflect people's concerns – which are more focused on other health issues.</li></ul>
5	<p><b>There is evidence showing the value of using voices from Global South countries in donor country communications.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Testing shows no preference for donor voices in donor countries + combined with higher levels of optimism in Global South countries.</li></ul>
6	<p><b>The strongest messaging for funding to tackle health issues globally meets people where they are: tapping into issues they care about right now, like the economy and jobs. Global Health Security messaging also still resonates.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The strongest messaging includes "economic self-sufficiency" messaging at a micro/human level.</li><li>▪ Global Health Security is a strong messaging frame, connecting both to desires for safety, security, and protection and desire for "mutual benefit" or "win-win" arguments when it comes to spending overseas development aid.</li></ul>

# Detailed Findings: Japan

# Global Progress: Last 20 Years

Over the last four years, the Japanese have become increasingly negative about global progress, Two in three now think that the world has got worse in the last 20 years.

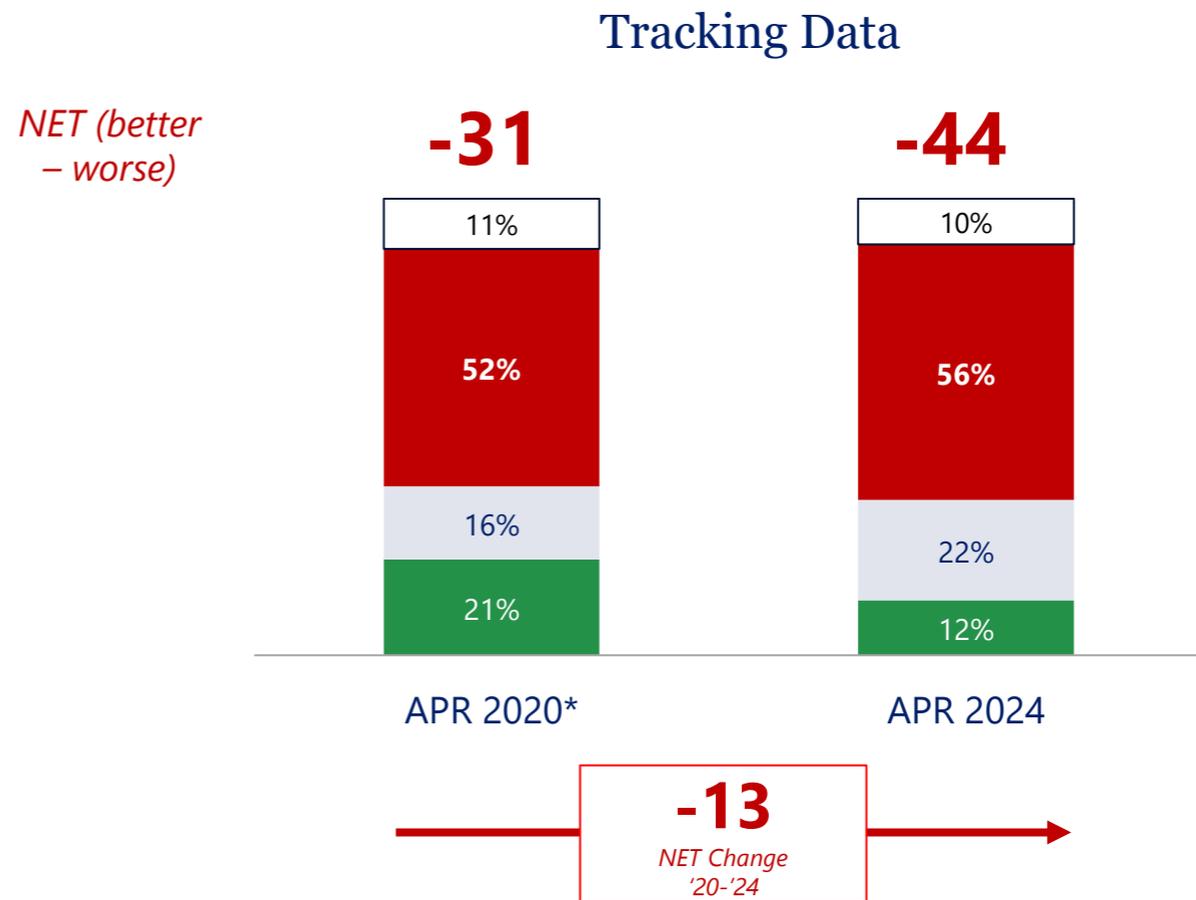
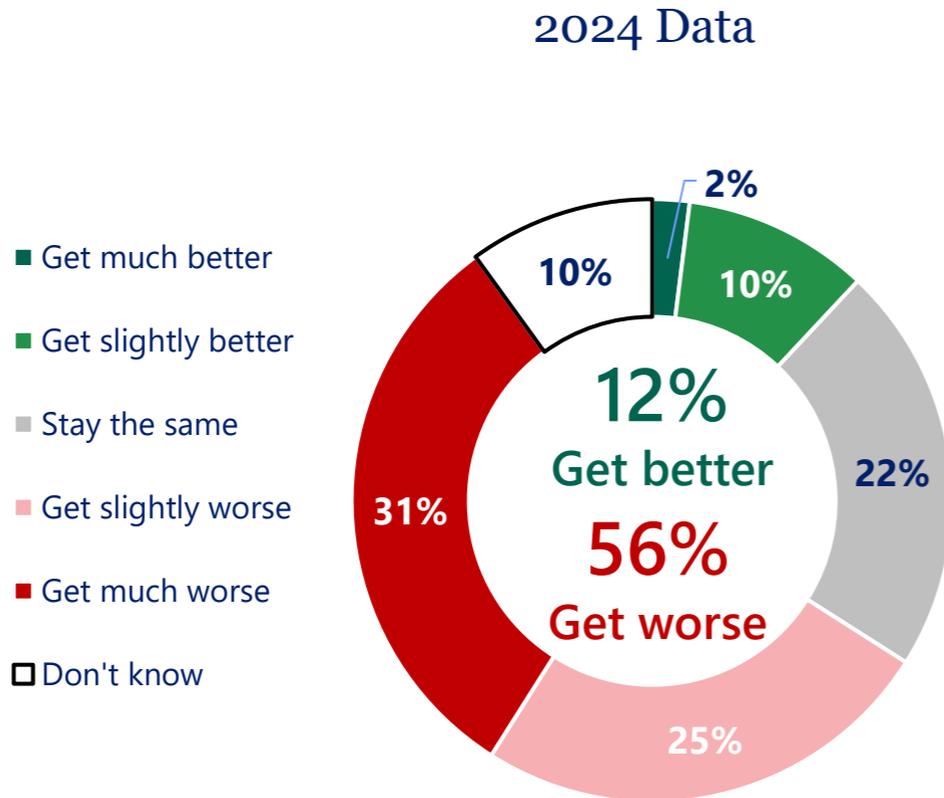
Over the **last 20 years**, has the world got better, worse, or stayed about the same?



# Global Progress: Next 20 Years

The Japanese are also increasingly pessimistic about the prospects of global progress in the next 20 years. More than half (56%) expect the world to get worse.

*Over the **next 20 years**, will the world get better, worse, or stay about the same?*



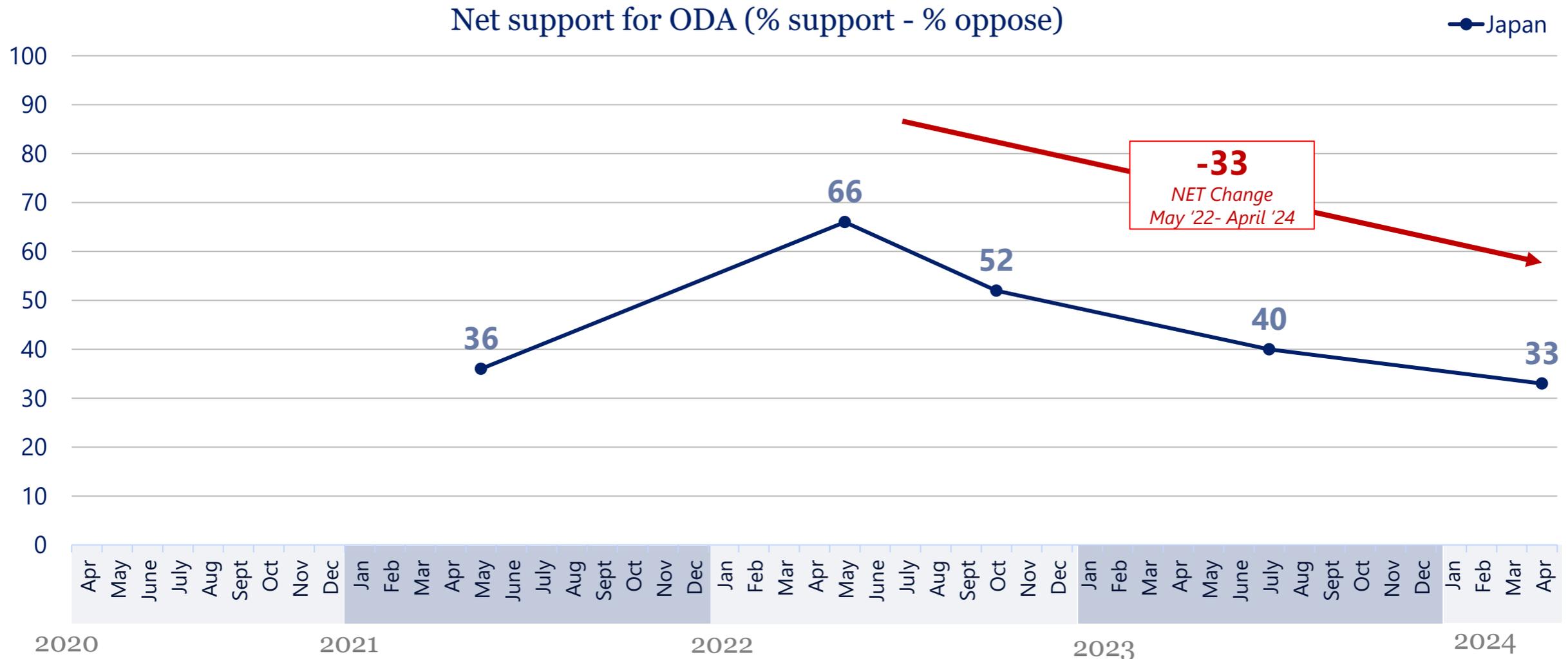
# Key Concerns for the Japanese

Economic concerns and the growing impact of low birth rates are top national concerns in Japan. At a global level, there are concerns about war and conflict, as well as the international impact of the US elections.

National	Economic	Economic inequality	Stagnating incomes
	Infrastructure & institutions	Low birth rates	
	Other	Relationship between politics & religion	Tokyo election
Global		Conflict (Russia/Ukraine, Middle East)	Climate change
		US Elections	Economic disparities between richer and poorer countries
		China/Taiwan Geopolitical Tensions	

# Support for ODA: April 2020 – April 2024

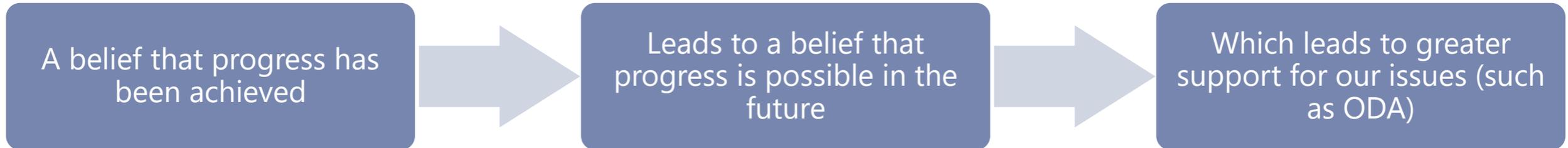
In Japan, support for ODA has significantly declined over the past two years, dropping by 33 percentage points.



# The Relationship Between ODA Support and Views of Progress

Decline in ODA support correlates with the mood of greater negativity and pessimism.

**Past research** (Brunswick & Gates Foundation) has consistently shown that belief in past progress fosters future optimism which enhances support:

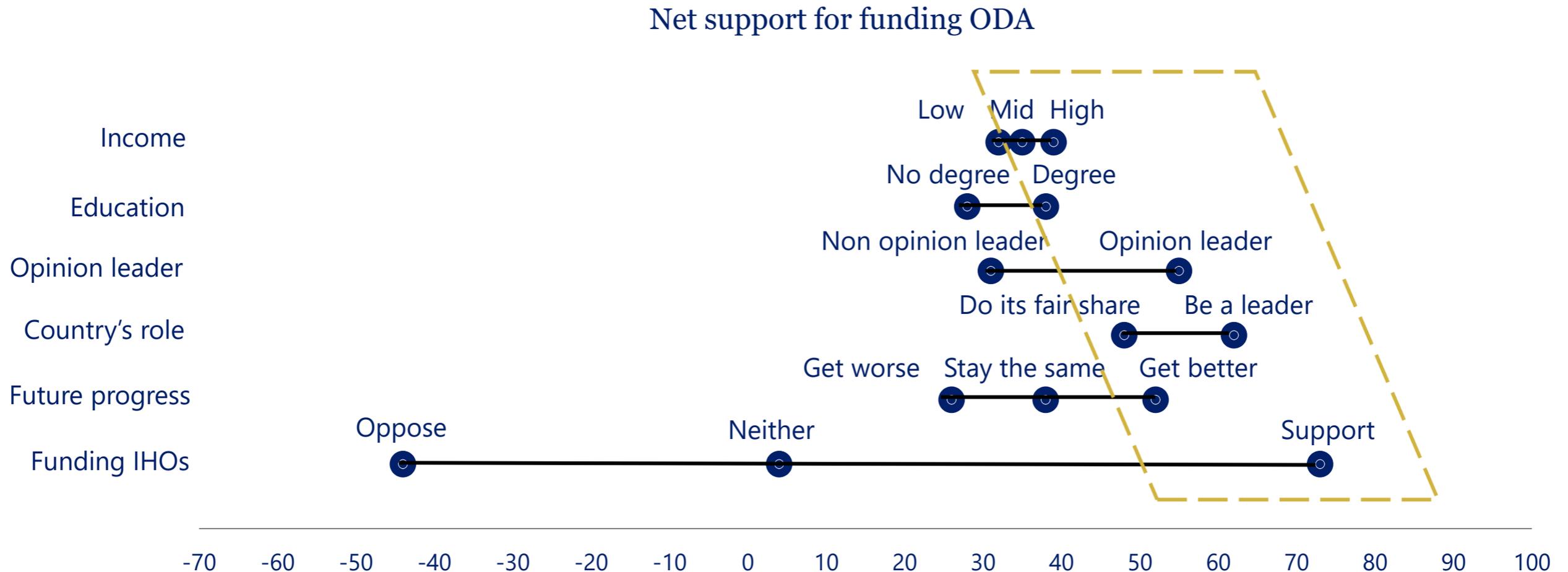


**This research** highlights the negative aspect of this correlation between mood and support for ODA:



# Funding ODA: Net Support Among Subgroups

Japanese ODA supporters tend to be higher income, degree educated, and opinion leaders. They also tend to be optimists on global progress.



# Top of Mind Associations with Global Health

Respondents categorized health issues as those that impact wealthier vs. poorer countries; they also connected broader global issues with global health (e.g., war, climate).

## Chronic health conditions impact wealthier countries

- **Wealthier countries** are seen as **most affected** by **chronic conditions** (e.g., obesity, diabetes, mental health).
- **Men** were cited as suffering more from specific diseases like **gout** and **mental health**.
- Japanese focus group participants felt the world has **gone backwards** on **chronic health conditions**.

## Poor health indicators impact poorer countries

- **Lower income countries** are seen as **most affected** by **poor health indicators** (e.g., lower quality of life, higher child and maternal mortality).
- **Mothers and children** were specifically cited as the **primary victims of inequality**.
- **More progress** is seen to have been made globally **on conditions that impact poorer countries**.

Respondents see a **clear connection between global health and other global issues** (e.g., war, climate change). **Inequalities** in global health **prompted feelings of sadness**, calling to mind specific inequalities in Japan vs. poorer countries' access to care and access to Covid-19 vaccines.

# Fair Share vs. Being a Leader

Half of the Japanese public feel their country should do their fair share but there are concerns about Japan's declining 'national power'.

## There is general support for ODA spending but concerns about Japan's declining 'national power'

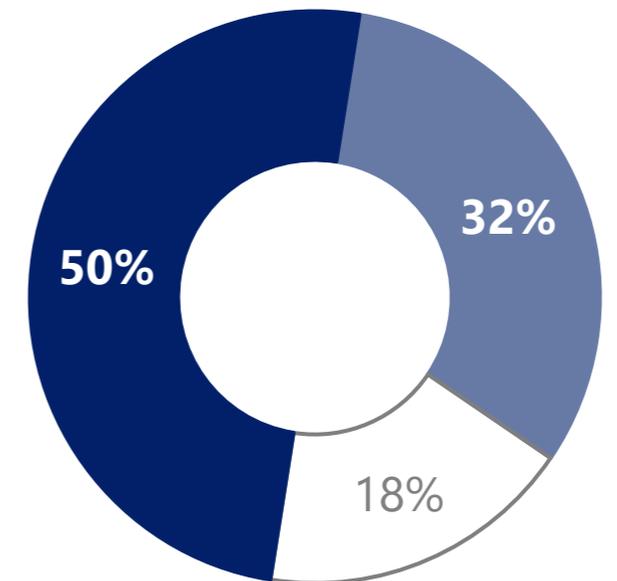
- There is low knowledge of how exactly the government supports global health, but the assumption is that it is through funding rather than direct support.
- There is hesitancy for Japan to do more as respondents feel there is greater need for the government to focus on domestic issues, as some argue that Japan now has less economic and national power.

“ Many people in Japan are struggling. They should help their own citizens first, and then, if there's anything left over, they can look at other countries.

– Japan, opinion leader

Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

My country should do its **fair share** to help tackle health issues in developing countries

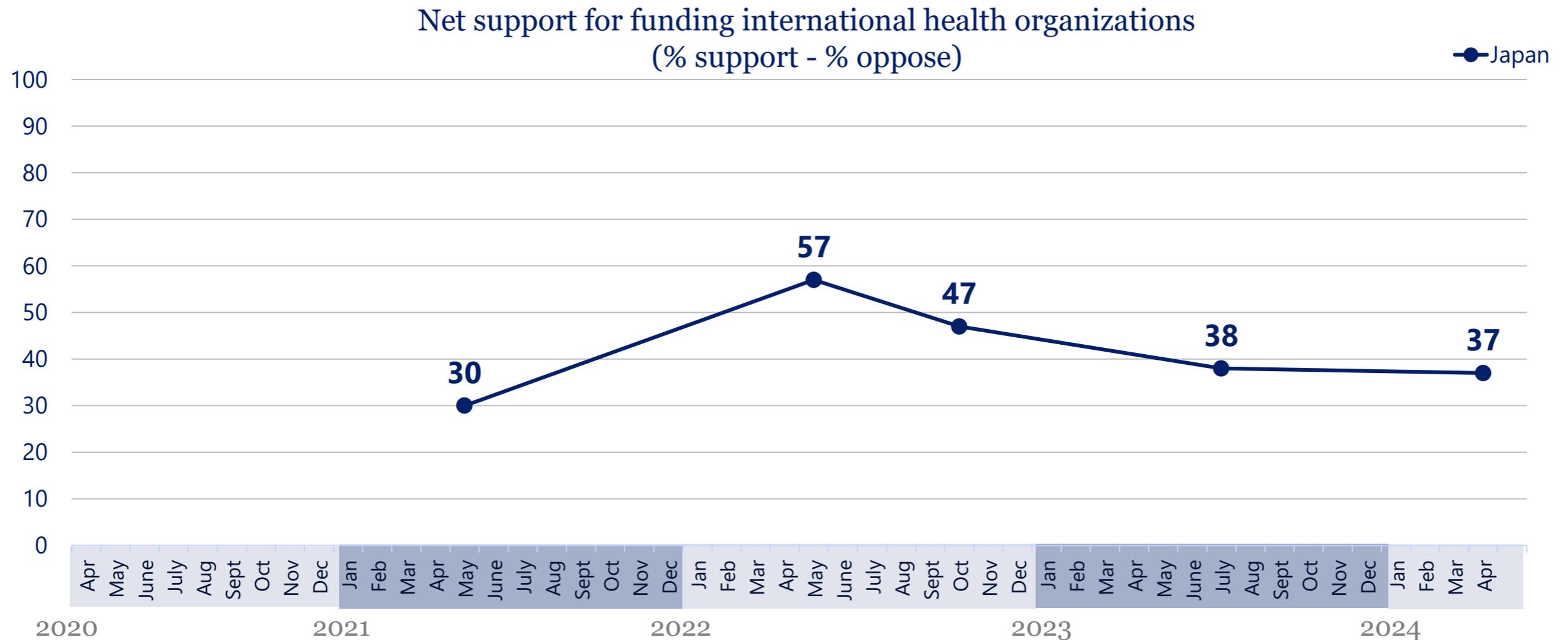


My country should **be a leader** in tackling health issues in developing countries

Don't know

# Support for funding IHOs: April 2020 – April 2024

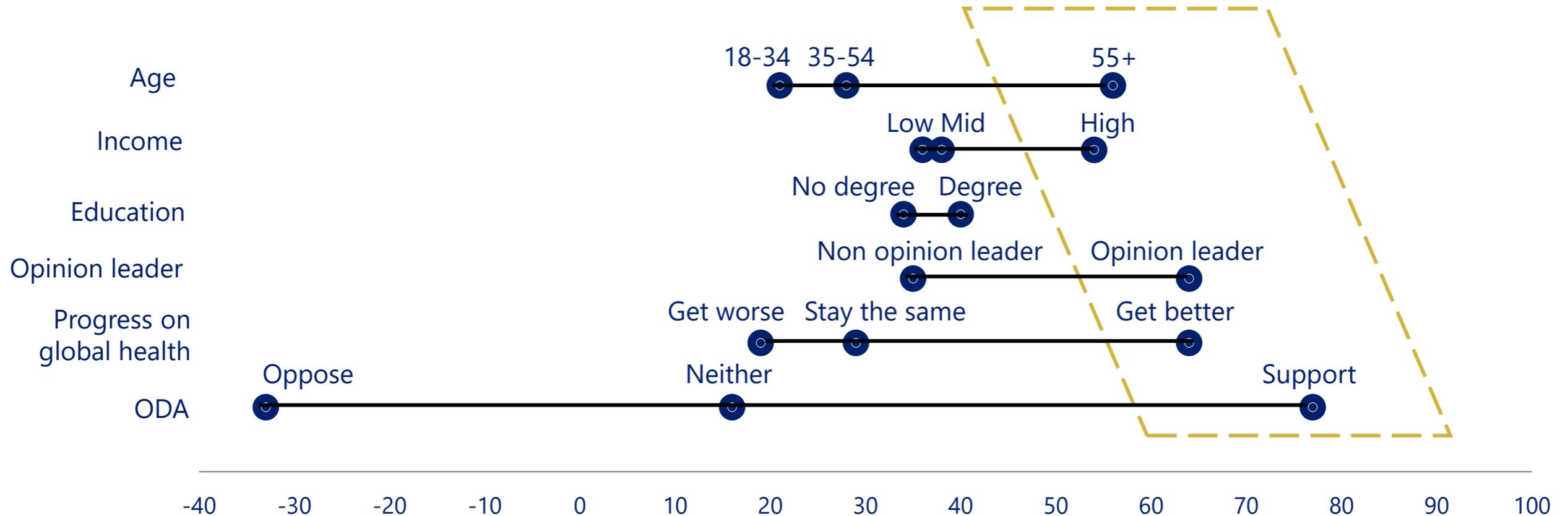
Support for funding IHOs is higher than support for ODA more broadly and does not show the same level of fluctuation as is seen in ODA support.



# Funding IHOs: Net Support Among Subgroups

Attributes of those who support funding IHOs are broadly aligned with ODA supporters: higher income, opinion leaders, optimists on global progress.

Net support for funding international health organizations  
(% support - % oppose)



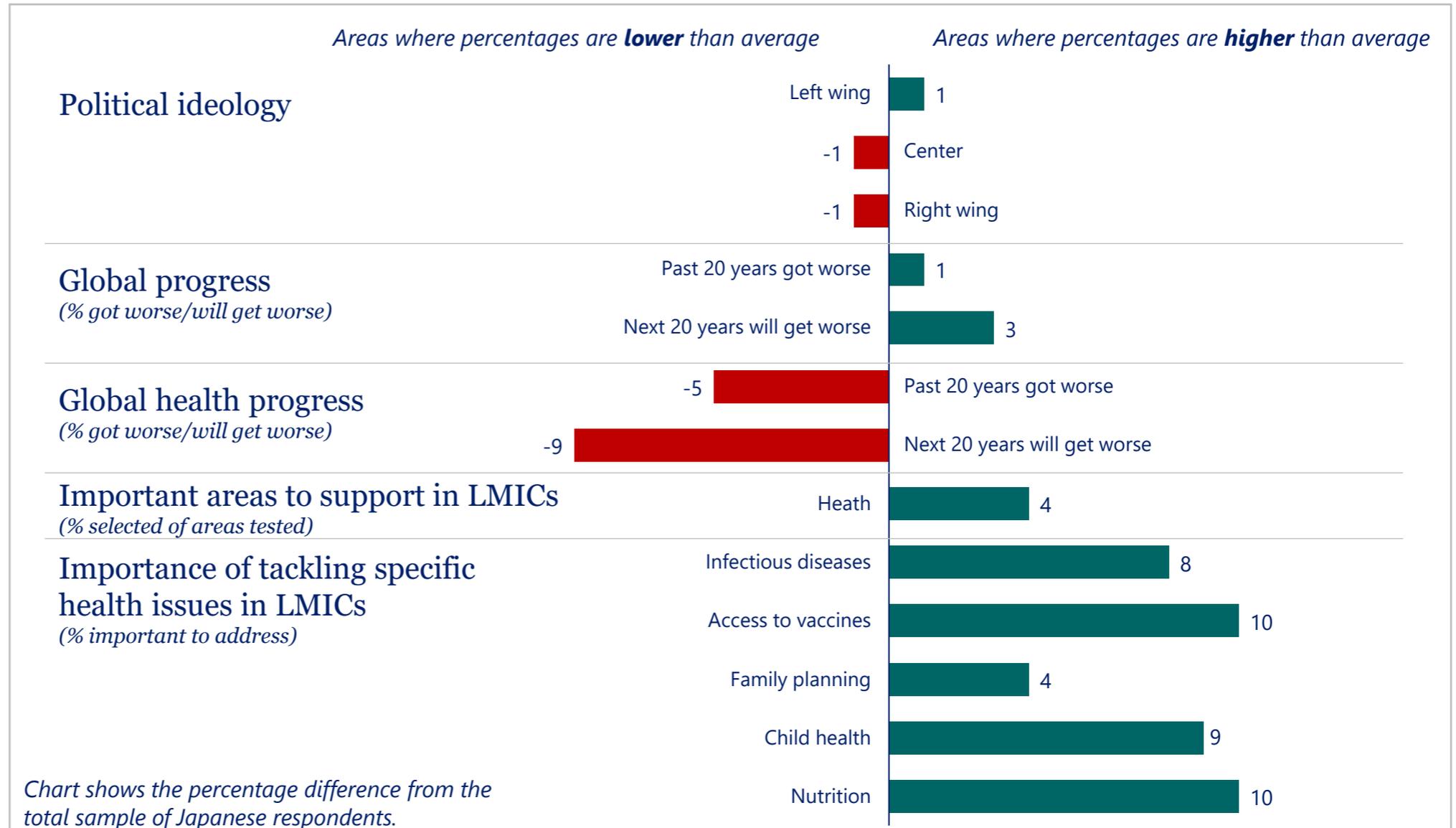
# Who are those who support funding IHOs but not ODA?

They **do not differ from an ideological perspective** compared to the average Japanese respondent.

They have **similar negativity/pessimism regarding global progress.**

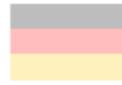
But **they are less negative and pessimistic when thinking of global health progress.**

And they are **more likely to say health is an important area to support and place higher importance on addressing each of the specific health areas tested.**



# Message Testing Summary Results

The economic self sufficiency (micro) and global health security messages are the most convincing.

								
Economic self-sufficiency (Micro)	59%	63%	49%	59%	37%	88%	87%	78%
Global health security	57%	60%	47%	50%	36%	87%	83%	73%
Health equity	50%	60%	48%	58%	35%	83%	84%	77%
*Health as a basic need	51%	59%	47%	54%	32%	86%	84%	75%
*Emotion (Anger)	54%	59%	52%	54%	35%	79%	79%	72%
*Solidarity / collaboration	47%	54%	49%	50%	29%	85%	82%	72%
Health as a unifier	39%	52%	49%	44%	34%	83%	84%	75%
Economic self-sufficiency (Macro)	47%	49%	41%	49%	31%	79%	79%	64%
*Climate change	47%	52%	43%	49%	36%	73%	72%	62%
*Emotion (Anxiety)	41%	52%	43%	41%	29%	79%	78%	64%
*Moral (More radical)	37%	47%	40%	38%	26%	79%	78%	66%
*Health as a sure thing	40%	52%	41%	43%	28%	73%	72%	63%
Stability / migration	43%	51%	39%	42%	29%	64%	70%	52%
Partnership / progressive	37%	40%	42%	39%	30%	42%	43%	63%

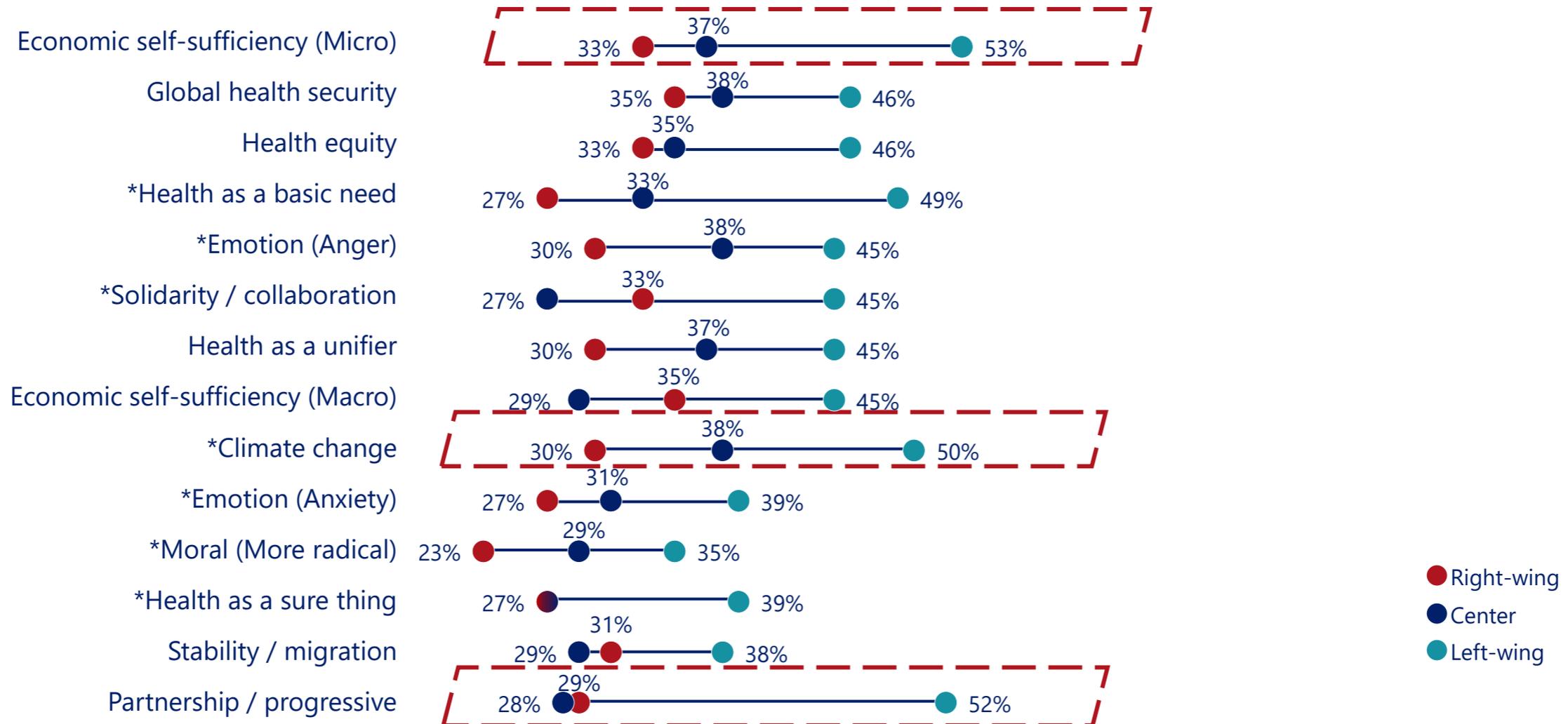
Quartiles*
4 <sup>th</sup>
3 <sup>rd</sup>
2 <sup>nd</sup>
1 <sup>st</sup>

Q. How convincing, or not, do you find this statement in favor of investing in tackling health issues globally? [showing very convincing (8-10)] Donor (N=5,125); UK (N=1,016); US (N=1,029); France (N=1,031); Germany (N=1,022); Japan (N=1,027); Global South (N=2998); Kenya (N=1,020); Nigeria (N=1,014); Senegal (N=964)

\*Quartiles are scaled within each country; Japan scores are lower due to a tendency for Japanese respondents to answer survey questions in the middle of a scale when giving a positive score.

# Message Testing: Political Ideology

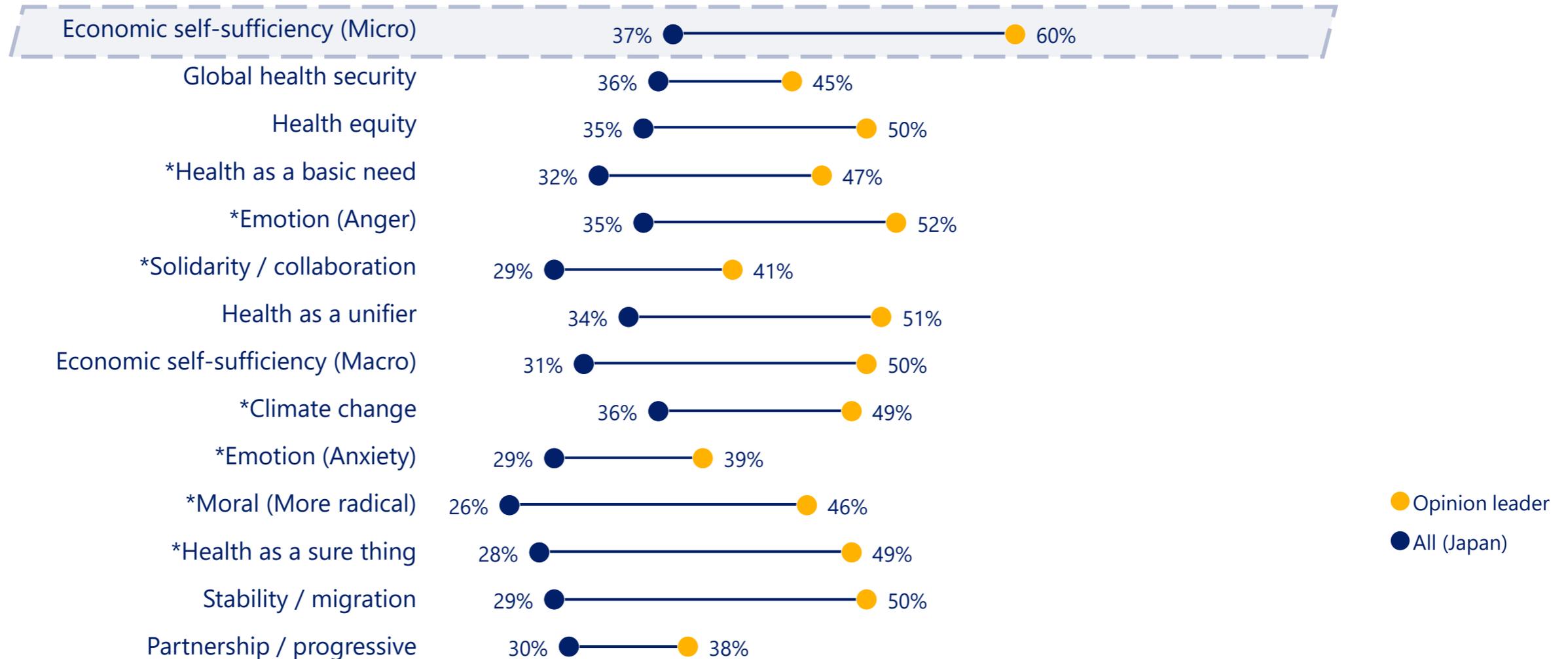
The left are more likely to find all messages more convincing; the economic self-sufficiency (micro), climate change, and partnership/progressive messages work especially well with the left.



Q. How convincing, or not, do you find this statement in favor of investing in tackling health issues globally? [showing very convincing (8-10)] Each respondent saw seven messages – c. N=70 of those on the left, c. N=290 of those in the center and c. N=120 of those on the right saw each message \*Asterisk indicates a message that is new and had not been tested before

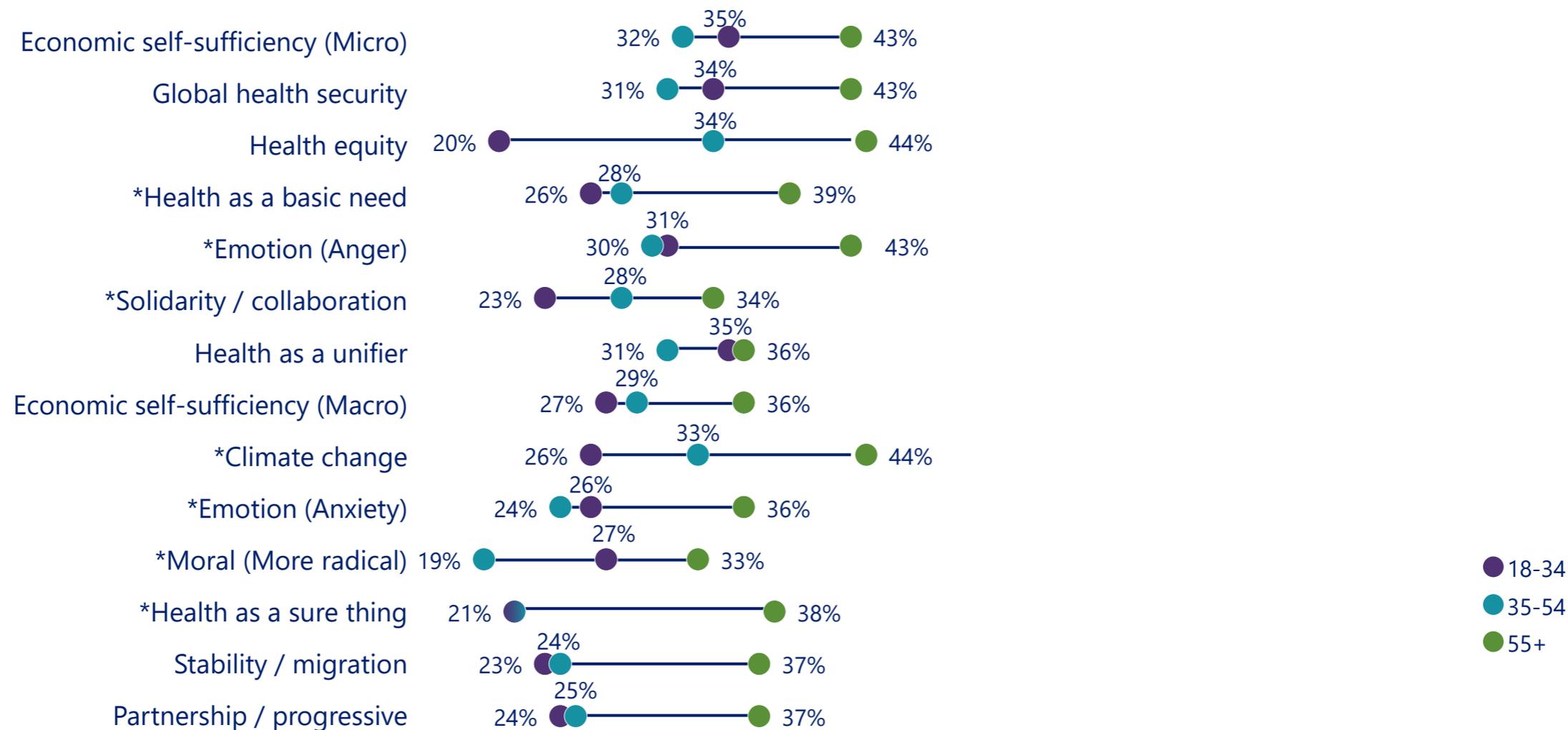
# Message Testing: Opinion Leaders

The messages resonate more with Japanese opinion leaders than the general public, particularly the economic self-sufficiency (micro) message.



# Message Testing: Age

Older respondents are more likely to find all messages convincing; the health equity message is a potential watch out as it does not work as well with younger groups.



# Appendix

# We tested a total of 14 messages (1/2)

Developed based on past messaging, focus group learnings, and new messages.

Frame	Message
<b>Global health security</b>	Investing in better health internationally is not just about charity, it's about making the world a safer place for everyone. As Covid-19 has shown, a health crisis somewhere can become a health crisis everywhere.
<b>Moral (Radical)*</b>	Humanity is on trial. Our generation will be judged on whether we are saving lives and improving the lives of people around the world. If we don't act, we will be failing our duty to future generations.
<b>Economic self-sufficiency (Macro)</b>	Only countries with healthy populations can lift themselves out of poverty. Healthy adults can contribute to the economy and lead productive working lives. Investing in health is one of the smartest economic decisions we can make.
<b>Economic self-sufficiency (Micro)</b>	Good health is vital for people to stand on their own feet. Healthy children can go to school, healthy parents can go to work and support their families. Investing in health is one of the smartest economic decisions we can make.
<b>Health as a unifier</b>	Good health allows us to experience life's moments, both big and small. No one should be deprived of these moments: by tackling health issues globally, we can help ensure no one misses out.
<b>Health as a sure thing*</b>	To solve health issues globally, we need to develop innovations and get them to the people who need them. That's a challenge we know how to solve. Many of the solutions we need to save and improve millions of lives are ready now or will be soon.
<b>Health as a basic need*</b>	We all need good health, wherever we live, it is a basic human need. By investing to tackle health issues globally, we can help ensure everyone has access to basic healthcare services, and essential medicines and vaccines.

\*Asterisk indicates a message that is new and had not been tested before

# We tested a total of 14 messages (2/2)

Developed based on past messaging, focus group learnings, and new messages.

Frame	Message
<b>Solidarity / collaboration*</b>	Investing to tackle health issues globally is an act of solidarity, transcending borders and differences. By working together, across countries, we can ensure that everyone has access to the healthcare they need, regardless of geography or circumstance.
<b>Emotion (Anger)*</b>	It is an outrage that in 2024 millions of people are still dying from health issues we know how to treat. We cannot, and must not, stand by while this happens.
<b>Emotion (Anxiety)*</b>	At this time of global crises and instability, investing in global health is vital to building a more stable world, offering a pathway towards a safer and more secure future for all.
<b>Climate change*</b>	Changing weather patterns are increasing the risk from many infectious diseases. For example, mosquitoes are spreading to new areas and different countries, spreading deadly disease to more people.
<b>Partnership / progressive</b>	Ideas of poorer countries in need of charity are outdated and wrong. Investment to tackle health problems should focus on two-way partnerships between richer countries and developing countries, not providing 'charity' to poorer countries.
<b>Stability / migration</b>	Poor health is a major cause of forced migration in developing countries. Investing in health globally means that people can live healthier and more prosperous lives in their native countries.
<b>Health equity</b>	Everyone in the world deserves the chance to lead a healthy life. By tackling health issues globally, we can provide access to basic medicines and vaccines which protect people from life-threatening and life-changing diseases.

\*Asterisk indicates a message that is new and had not been tested before

 <http://www.perceptionshub.com>