

# Situational Assessment of Labor Migrants in Asia: Needs and Knowledge During Covid-19

## Research Brief 2: BANGLADESH

July 2020

Province	Respondents
Jessore	75
Cox's Bazar	75
Dhaka	2
Sylhet	1
Khulna	1
Chittagong	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>



Respondents

**155**

Returned migrants  
participated in  
interviews between  
May 15 – June 4

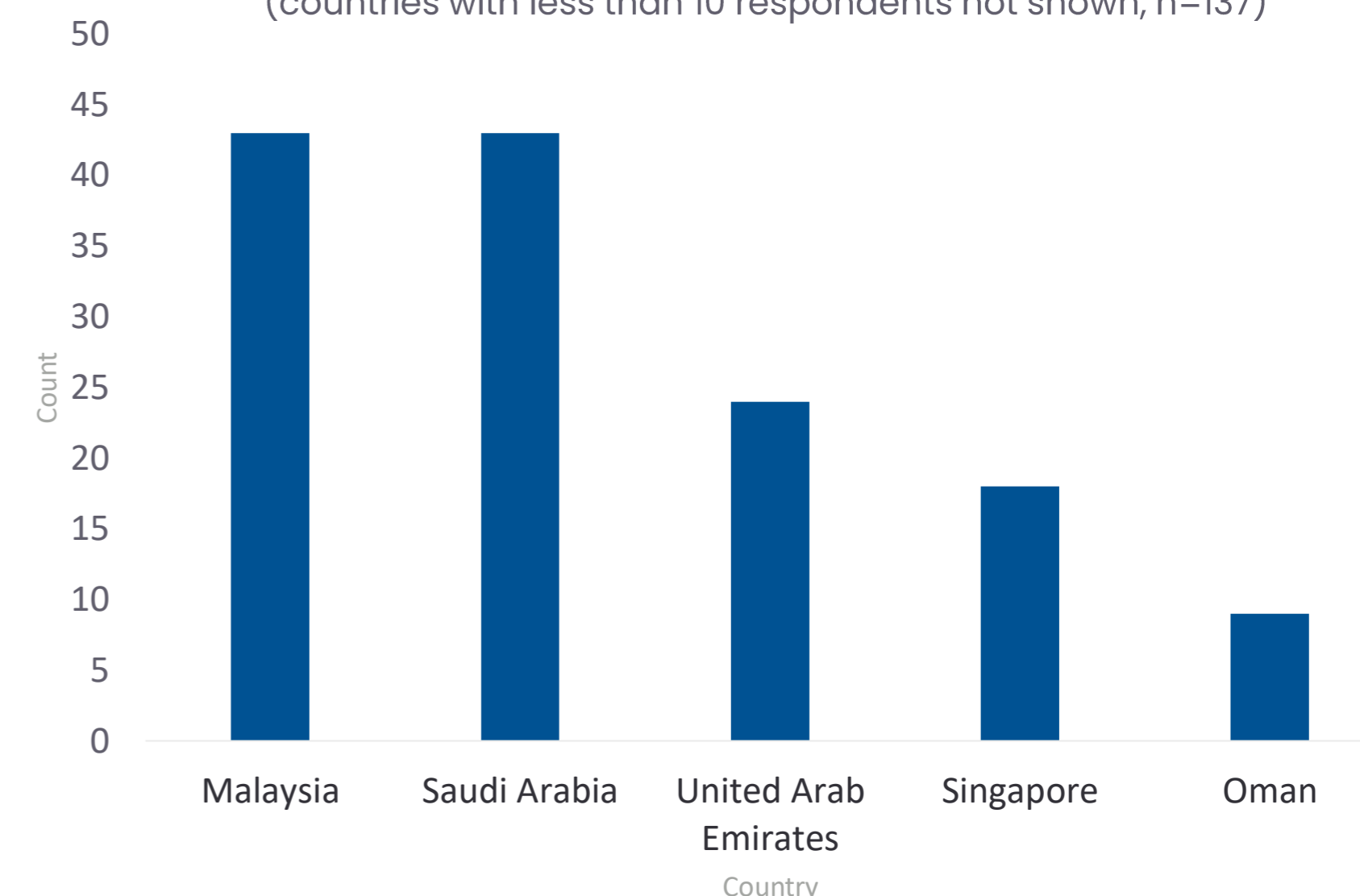
**95%**

Of respondents are  
male

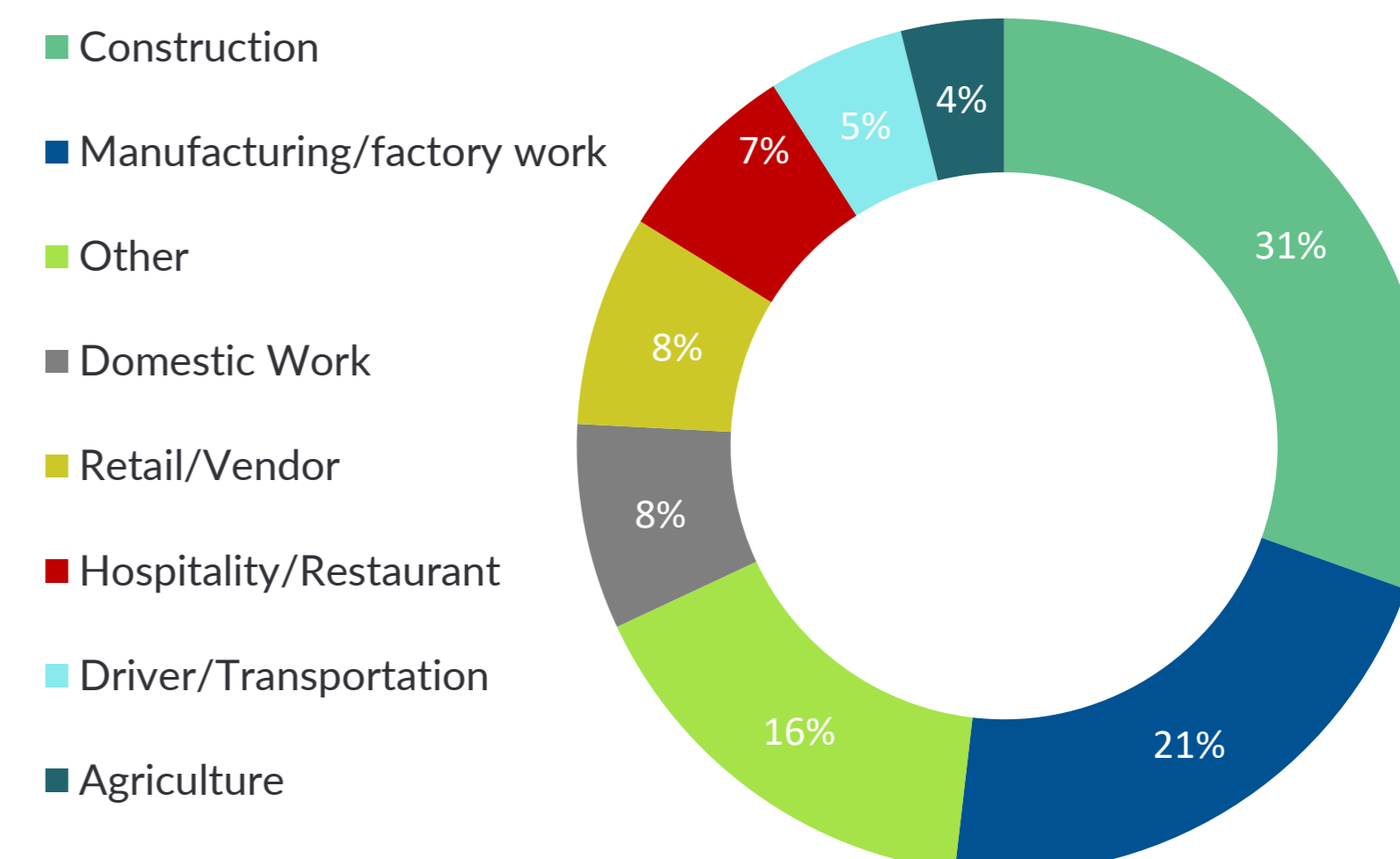
**63%**

Of respondents are  
between the ages of  
25 –38

Primary Countries of Return, by Respondents  
(countries with less than 10 respondents not shown, n=137)



Type of Job in Destination Country



60%

Of respondents **do not** have enough food to eat every day

93%

Of respondents **do not** have enough income to support themselves

86%

Have **not** received any support since returning to Bangladesh

92%

Of respondents **had not** been sick since returning to Bangladesh

Confidence in accessing medical care if respondents became sick (n=133)



Low

8%



Moderate

56%



Very

22%

## Risks and Vulnerabilities

10 out of 13

Respondents who had been sick were able to access medical care.

49%

Said returned migrants are being treated **worse or much worse** since returning.

66%

Of those who said returnees are being treated worse or much worse are being treated that way by more than one group.

Who is treating returnees worse or much worse? (multi-response, n=75)

COUNT 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80

Community members

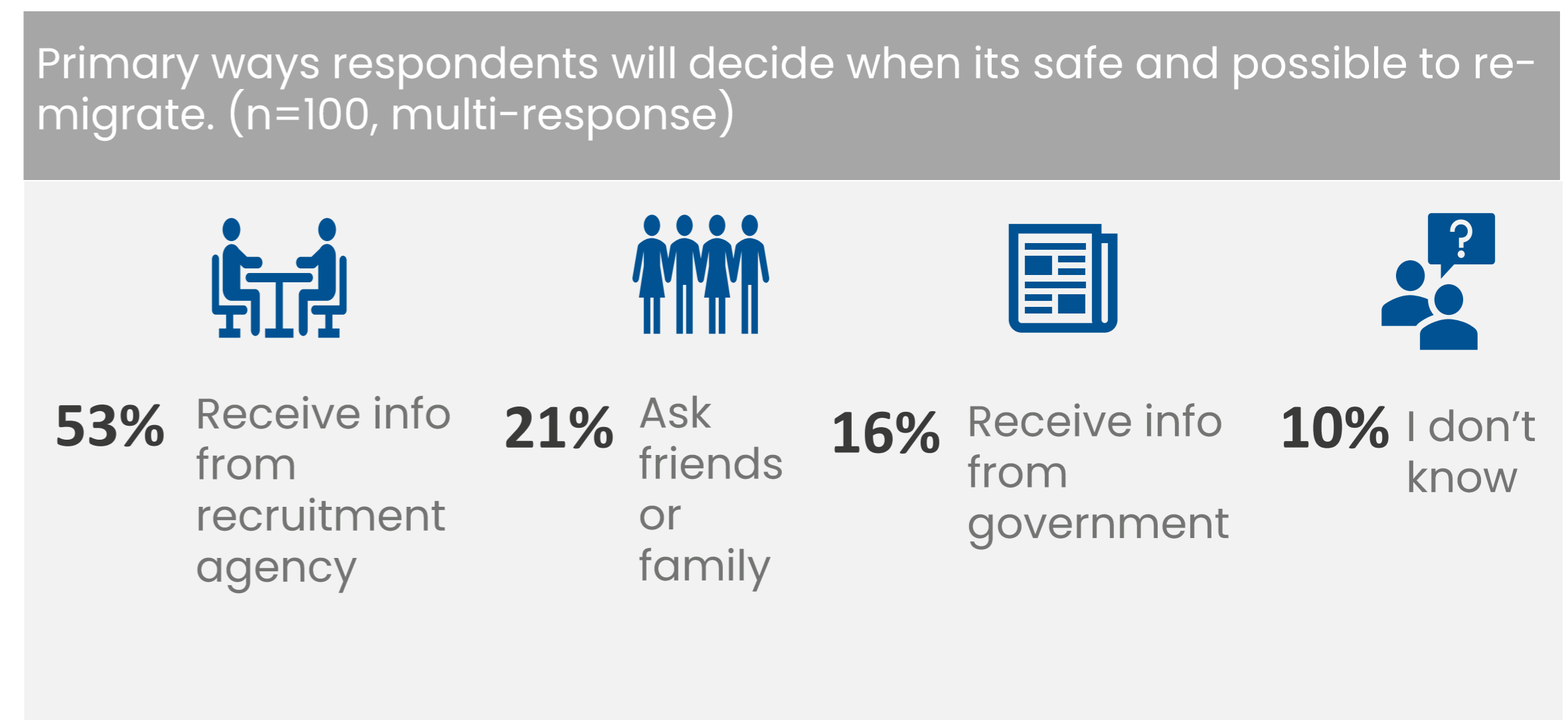
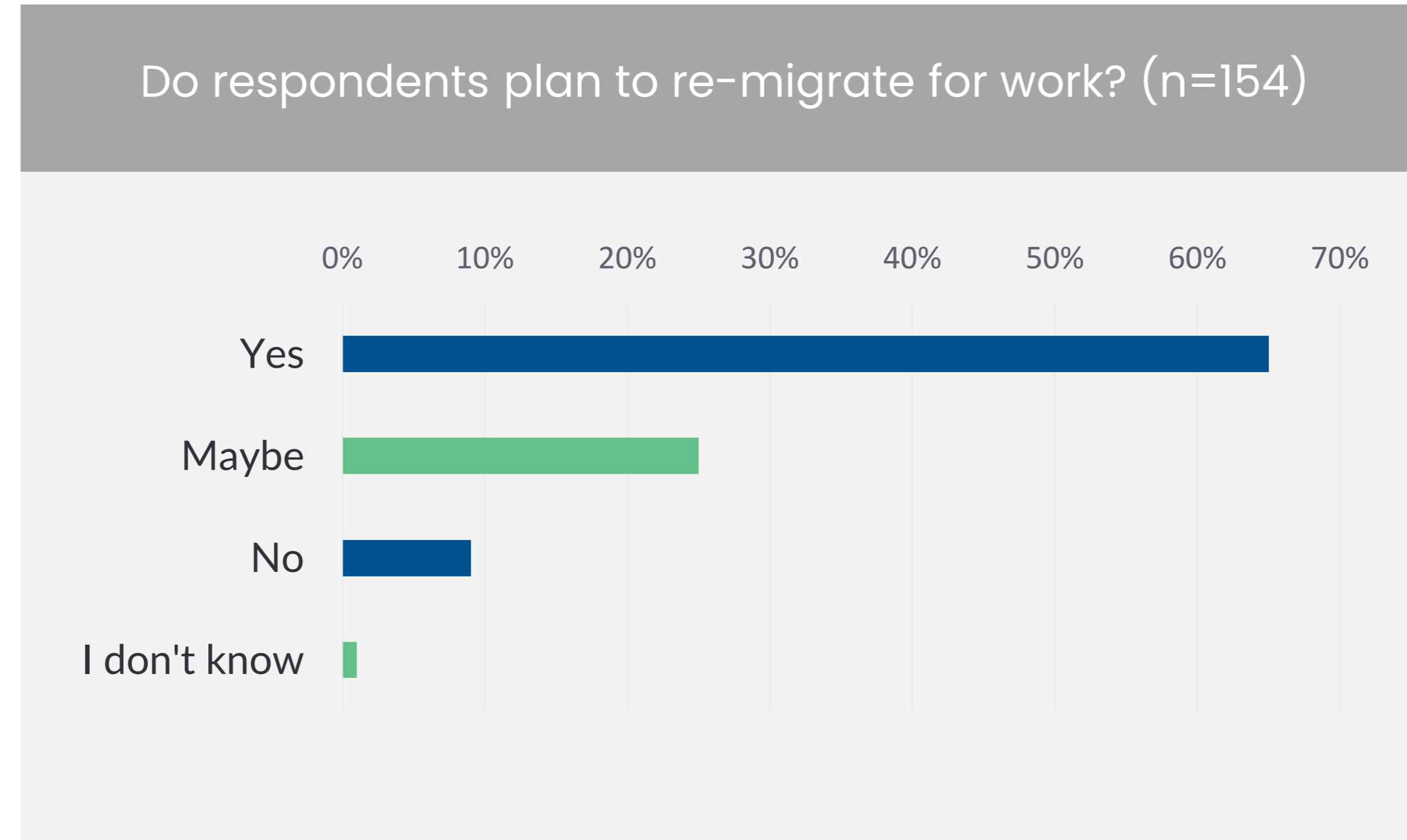
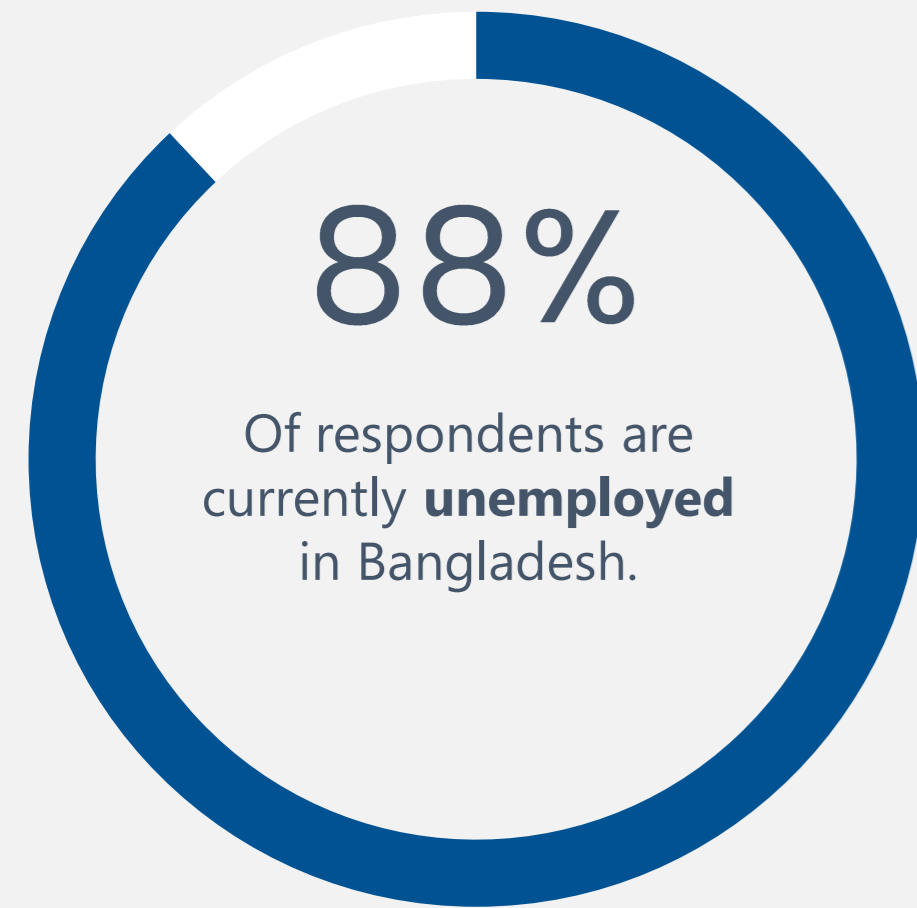
Community leaders

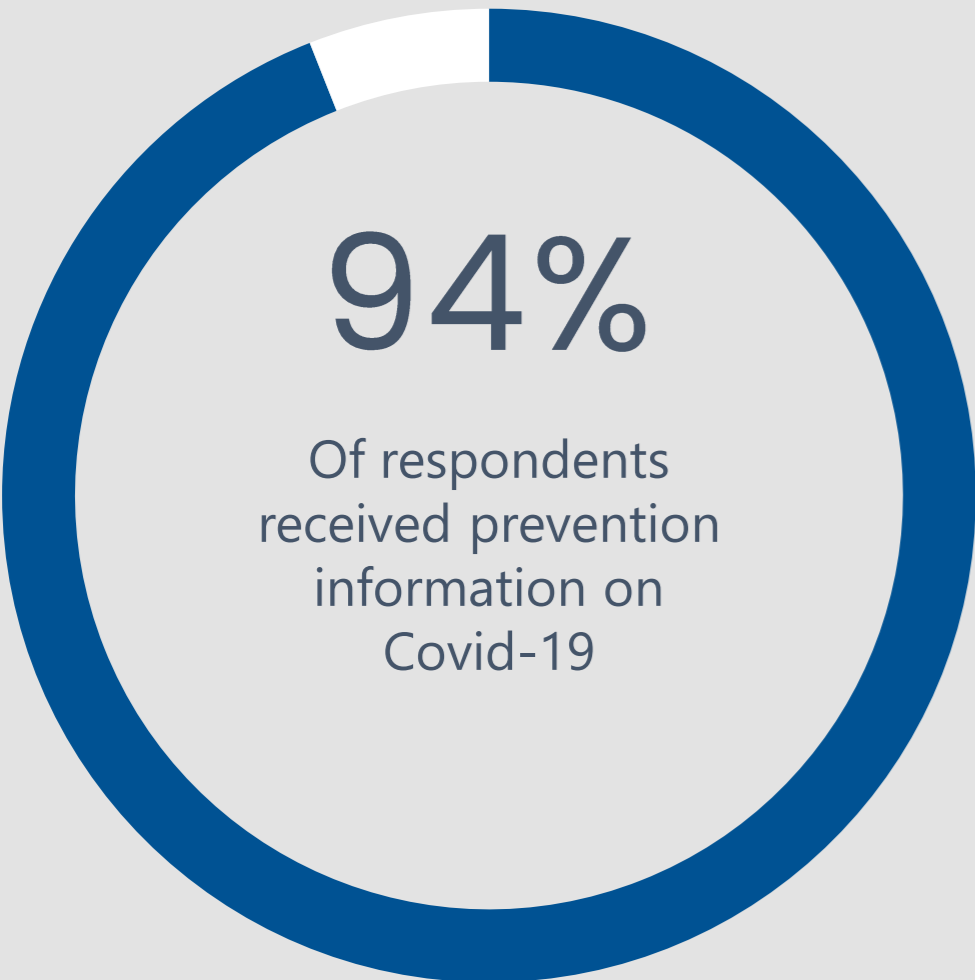
Family or friends

Government

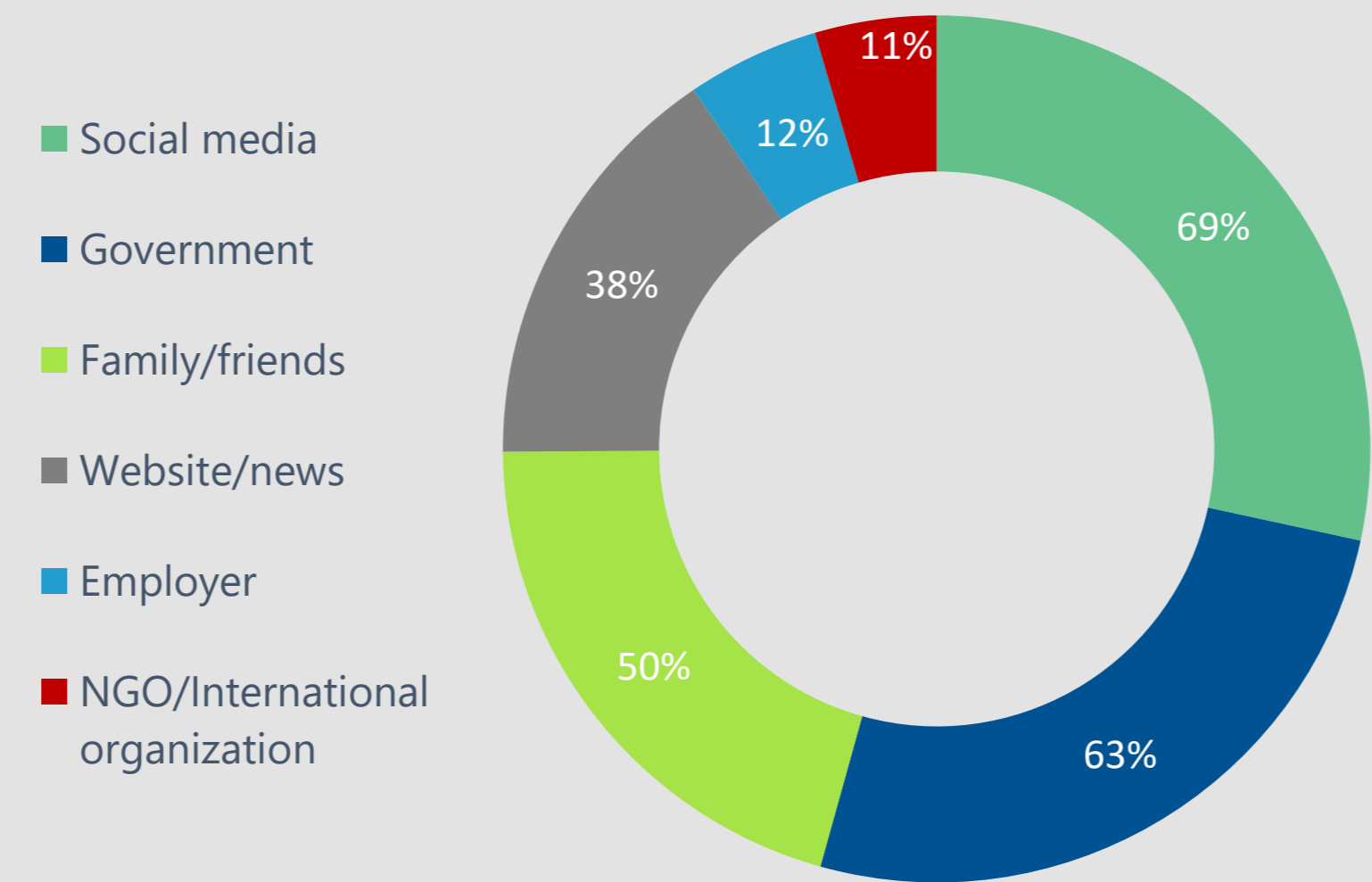
I don't want to answer

I don't know



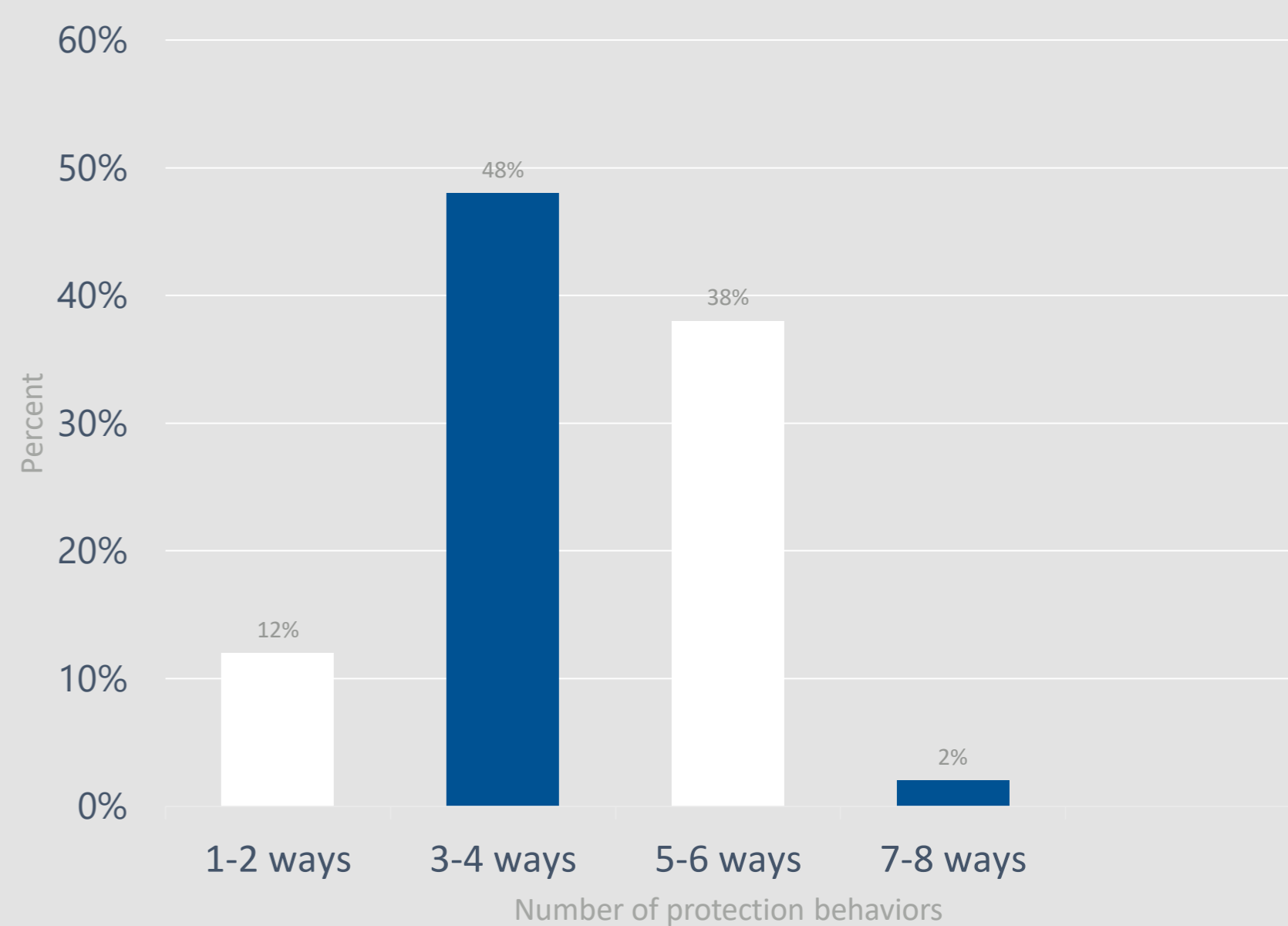


Where did respondents receive prevention information on Covid-19? (n=146)

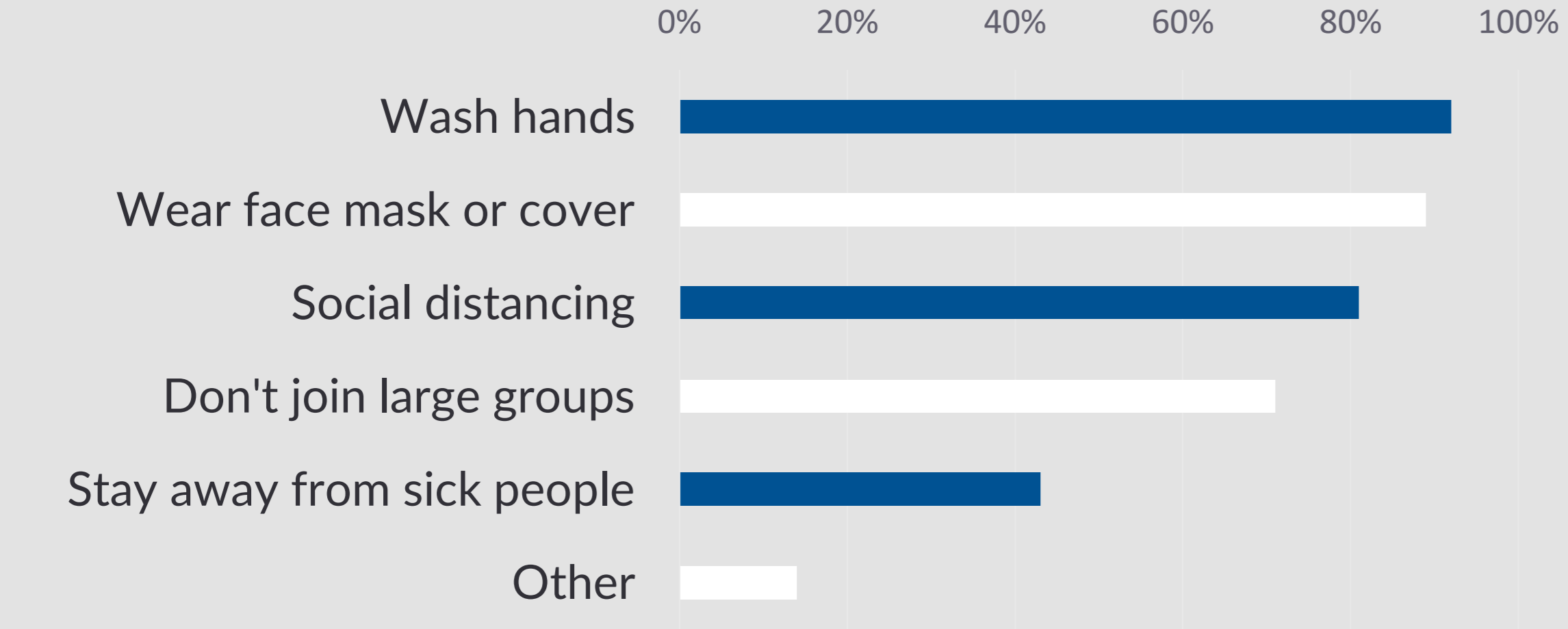


\*Multiple responses could be given. Government includes health centers.

Number of ways respondents knew how to protect themselves against Covid-19



Ways respondents listed to protect themselves against Covid-19 (multi-response)



84%

Need more information on Covid-19. This is where they would go for trusted information



Source (multi-response)	Responses
Government/health center	99
Facebook	86
Television news	65
Friends or family	45
Online news/website	38
NGO/International organization	34
Village chief/community leader	17

# RECOMMENDATIONS



Nearly half (48%) of respondents said returnees are being treated worse or much worse. Returned migrants who have less access to support services and who are experiencing verbal - and even physical violence - are more vulnerable to exploitation. They may also consider riskier migration options to return abroad and avoid further mistreatment. Awareness campaigns targeting attitudes towards returned migrants should be developed by those working at community level to curb the mistreatment returned migrants are facing.



A staggering 86% of returned migrants interviewed reported receiving no support services since returning to Bangladesh. Most respondents (93%) reported not having enough income to support themselves, and two-thirds said they didn't have enough food to eat every day. Cash assistance programs and immediate need packages such as food and hygiene items should be prioritized as ways to assist this population.



Most respondents (65%) plan to re-migrate for work and about half of those said they would ask for information from a recruitment agency when deciding whether it's safe and possible to re-migrate. Migrant assistance organizations and the Bangladesh Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment should work closely with recruitment agencies to ensure correct information will be provided to migrant workers. Information such as up-to-date travel restrictions and clear guidelines on what fees migrant workers should and should not be responsible for when migrating for work is recommended to provide recruitment agencies.



Seventy-two percent of those planning to re-migrate said they would return to their previous job. Similar to the previous recommendation, migrant assistance organizations and worker rights groups in both Bangladesh and destination countries could use this opportunity to reach employers of returned migrants via recruitment agencies to advocate for safe and hygienic conditions once workers return. Guidelines on fees employers are legally responsible to pay when workers make the return journey to their jobsites should also be given to employers.



Nearly all respondents (94%) had received prevention information on Covid-19 and could list several ways to protect themselves, but 84% said they needed more information. Most would look to government sources - including health centers, for trusted information, as well as Facebook and television news programs. Targeted messaging campaigns that provide protection information, Covid-19 hotline number(s), and up-to-date travel restrictions should continue to be a priority for humanitarian organizations and the Bangladesh Ministry of Health.