



RAPID ASSESSMENT ROUND 3: COVID-19 RELATED VULNERABILITIES AND PERCEPTIONS OF NON-THAI POPULATIONS IN THAILAND

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM)
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BACKGROUND

In light of the outbreak of COVID-19 in Thailand, migrants and non-Thai populations, irrespective of their legal status, face a new set of challenges and vulnerabilities. The stringent movement restrictions and temporary disruption of many income-generating activities pose a significant burden on migrants and non-Thai populations employed in both the formal and informal sectors. With limited or no access to technology, limited capacity to cope and adapt, little or no savings, inadequate access to social services, and uncertainty about their legal status and potential to access healthcare services, tens of thousands of migrants and non-nationals left Thailand in the first weeks of the pandemic. However, the extent to which these challenges and vulnerabilities were affecting migrant communities and non-Thai nationals who opted to remain in Thailand, or had no choice but to remain in Thailand, was unknown. It was also unclear whether migrant communities and non-nationals were receiving sufficient information about COVID-19 or had access to the resources which would allow them to maintain the hygiene and sanitation standards required for effective protection. To fill this data gap and inform possible responses, IOM initiated a data collection exercise to collect information on the COVID-19 knowledge and related vulnerabilities of non-Thai populations in Thailand.

METHODOLOGY

The Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) is a set of tools and methodologies which enable systematic and regular primary data collection, analysis and dissemination of population movements, human mobility and forced migration (both internal and cross-border). Originally designed to serve the humanitarian community during crises, DTM has been implemented to respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

By using a snowball sampling method, IOM used its extensive network to identify 75 key informants who were able to provide informed answers on the situation and vulnerabilities of different migrant communities and non-Thai populations across Thailand. These key informants were representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), migrant communities, government or local administrations, educational institutes, health institutes or religious entities. Key informants provided information about the non-Thai populations in their communities and/or about non-Thai populations who are their direct beneficiaries.

The information presented in this report represents estimates and perceptions provided by key informants. Due to the sampling method being non-randomized, external validity of the study is limited, and generalizations should be avoided. Nonetheless, the results of this assessment can be used to develop a better understanding of vulnerabilities and gaps, and can serve as a basis to guide more comprehensive data collection efforts.

Data was collected through phone surveys administered by 13 IOM staff between 2 and 12 October 2020. Seventy-seven per cent of enumerators were female and 23 per cent were male.

DEFINITIONS

Non-Thai nationals: All persons resident in Thailand who do not hold Thai citizenship regardless of country of birth, usual residence, citizenship or legal status. This includes migrants, stateless individuals, refugees, and other non-Thai populations.

STATISTICAL NOTE

General note: As the survey was administered with key informants rather than with non-Thai populations directly, please note that infographics in this report present the percentage of key informants who identify a particular attribute or characteristic in non-Thai populations or in a proportion of non-Thai populations.

Multiple answer: When the label "multiple answers" is found next to a graph or a question it indicates that a single respondent was allowed to provide more than one answer. For this reason, totals do not add up to 100%.

KEY INFORMANTS

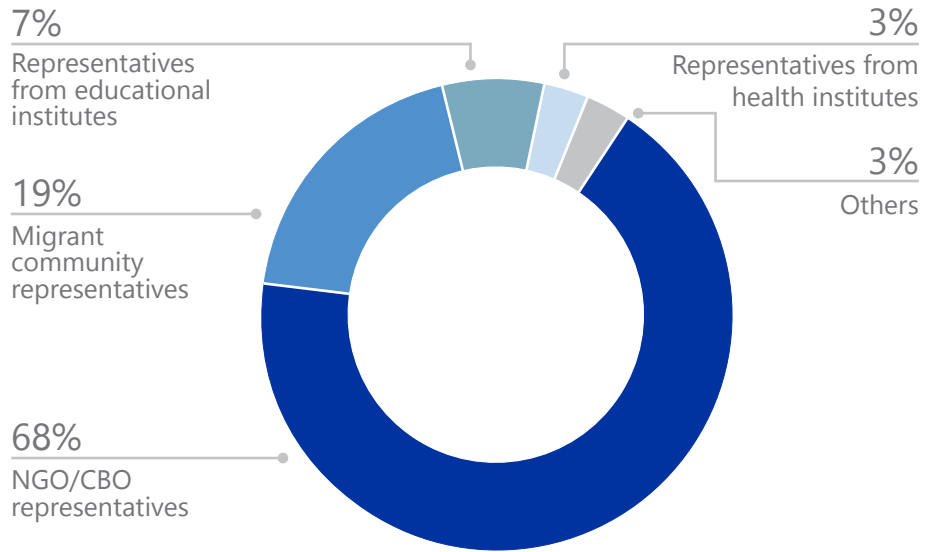
75
KIs SURVEYED

42 (56%)
FEMALE

33 (44%)
MALE

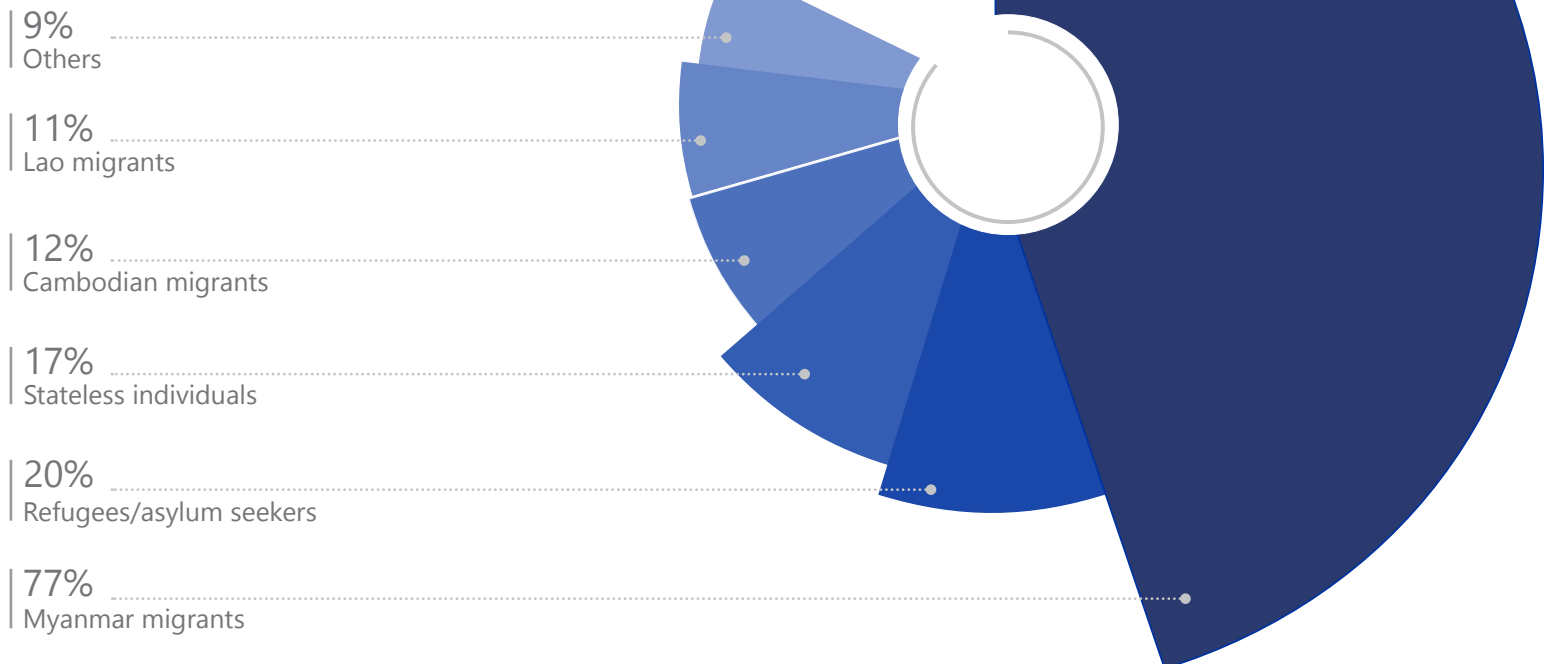
In total, 75 key informants (KIs) were interviewed for this assessment. Out of the total sample, 68 per cent of the KIs were representatives from NGOs/CBOs; 19 per cent were migrant community leaders and 10 per cent were representatives from educational (7%) and health institutes (3%).

Type of key informants



Target populations of key informants (Multiple answers)

Around 77 per cent of the KIs' organizations were working with Myanmar migrants, 20 per cent with refugees or asylum seekers, and 17 per cent with stateless individuals. In addition, 23 per cent were working with other non-Thai groups, including Cambodian migrants (12%), Lao migrants (11%), and others (9%).



Geographical area in Thailand where the KIs' organizations are working (Multiple answers)



	Northern Thailand			Central Thailand	
	Tak:	28		Bangkok:	10
	Chiang Mai:	5		Nakhon Pathom:	2
	Chiang Rai:	4		Nonthaburi:	1
	Mae Hong Son:	2		Pathum Thani:	1
				Samut Prakan:	1
				Nakhon Sawan:	1
	Southern Thailand			Eastern Thailand	
	Ranong:	23		Khon Kaen:	3
	Phang Nga:	2		Trat:	3
	Surat Thani:	2		Chonburi:	2
	Trang:	1		Nakhon Phanom:	2
	Phuket:	1		Roi Et:	1
	Songkhla:	1		Rayong:	1
	Prachuap Khiri Khan:	1		Sa Kaeo:	1
	Nakhon Si Thammarat:	1		Nong Khai:	1
				Nakhon Ratchasima:	1

All KIs were working with migrant groups and/or non-Thai populations across Thailand at the time of data collection. The three geographical areas best covered by the KI sample population were Tak province (28), Ranong province (23), and Bangkok municipality (10).



NON-THAI NATIONALS

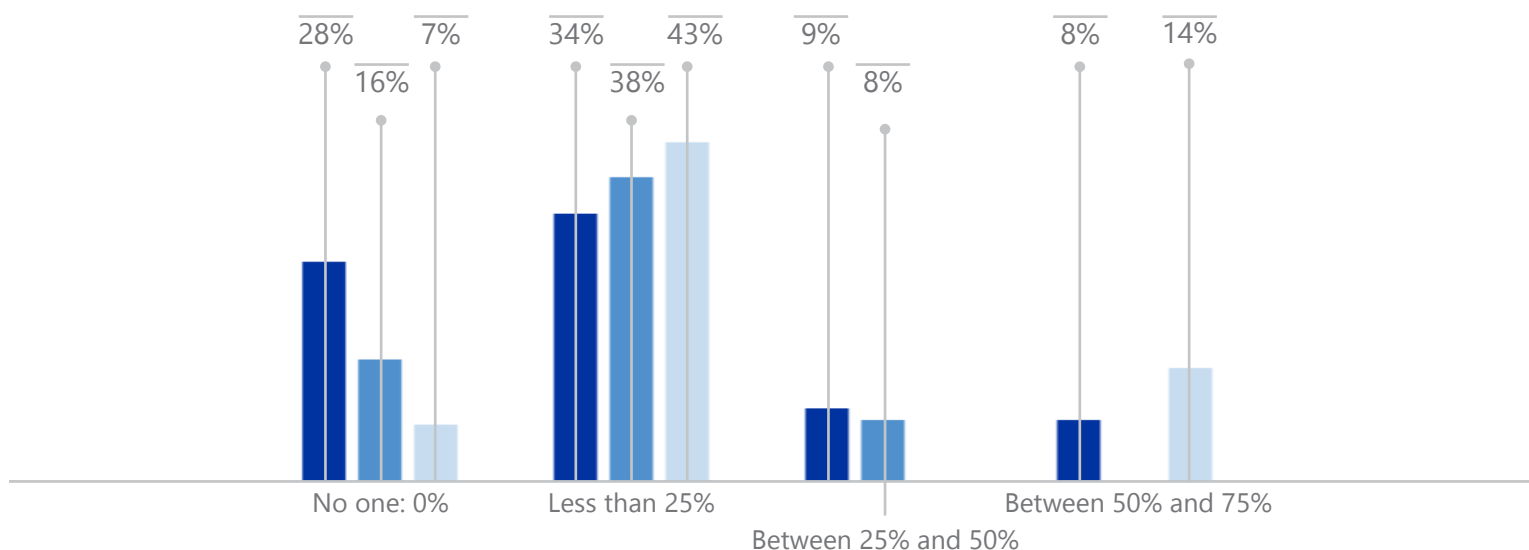
To better understand the travel intentions of the non-Thai populations and learn about the situation of stranded migrants in Thailand, KIs were asked about the proportion of the non-Thai population that they are working with who are still in Thailand but wish to leave.

In total, 51 per cent of respondents indicated that at least some proportion of the non-Thai nationals in their communities wished to leave but were unable to do so.

KIs were also asked about the proportion of the non-Thai population in their communities who are employed in the agricultural sector/ food preparation services. Overall, 45 per cent of the KIs reported that over half of the non-Thai nationals in their target communities work in these sectors of employment.

Non-Thai nationals who are still in the country but wish to leave Thailand

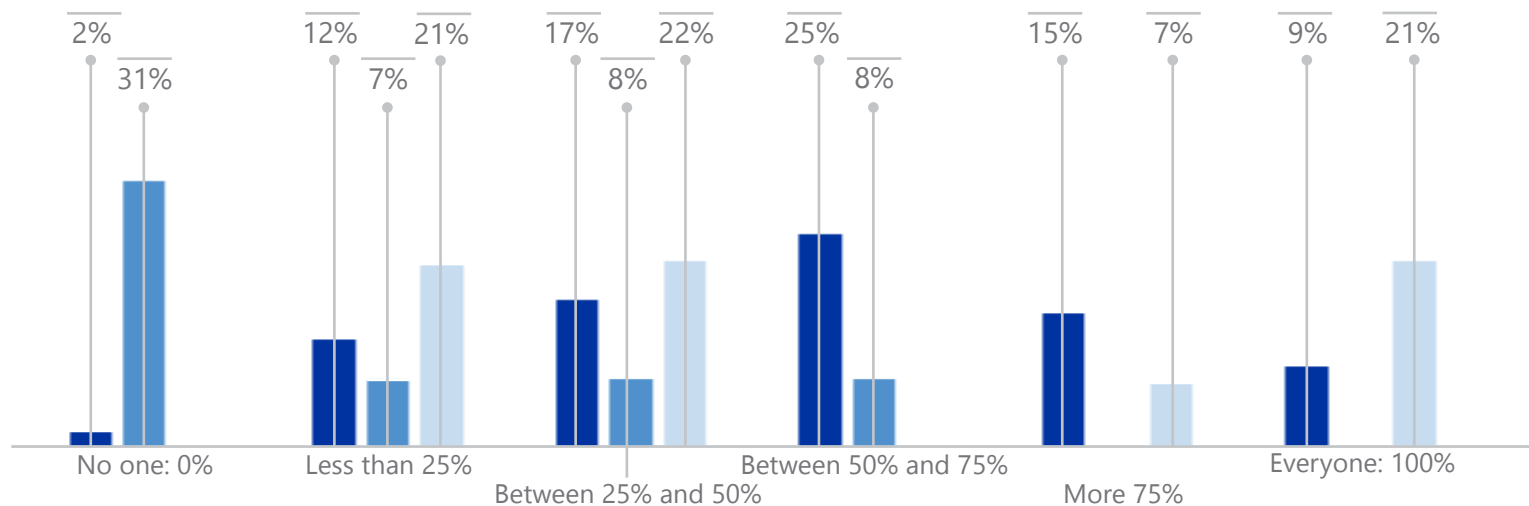
● Migrants ● Refugees/ asylum seekers ● Stateless individuals



Note: Totals do not add up to 100% because KIs responded "I do not know" for refugees/asylum seekers (38%), stateless individuals (36%), and migrants (21%).

Non-Thai nationals who work in the agricultural sector/food preparation services

● Migrants ● Refugees/ asylum seekers ● Stateless individuals

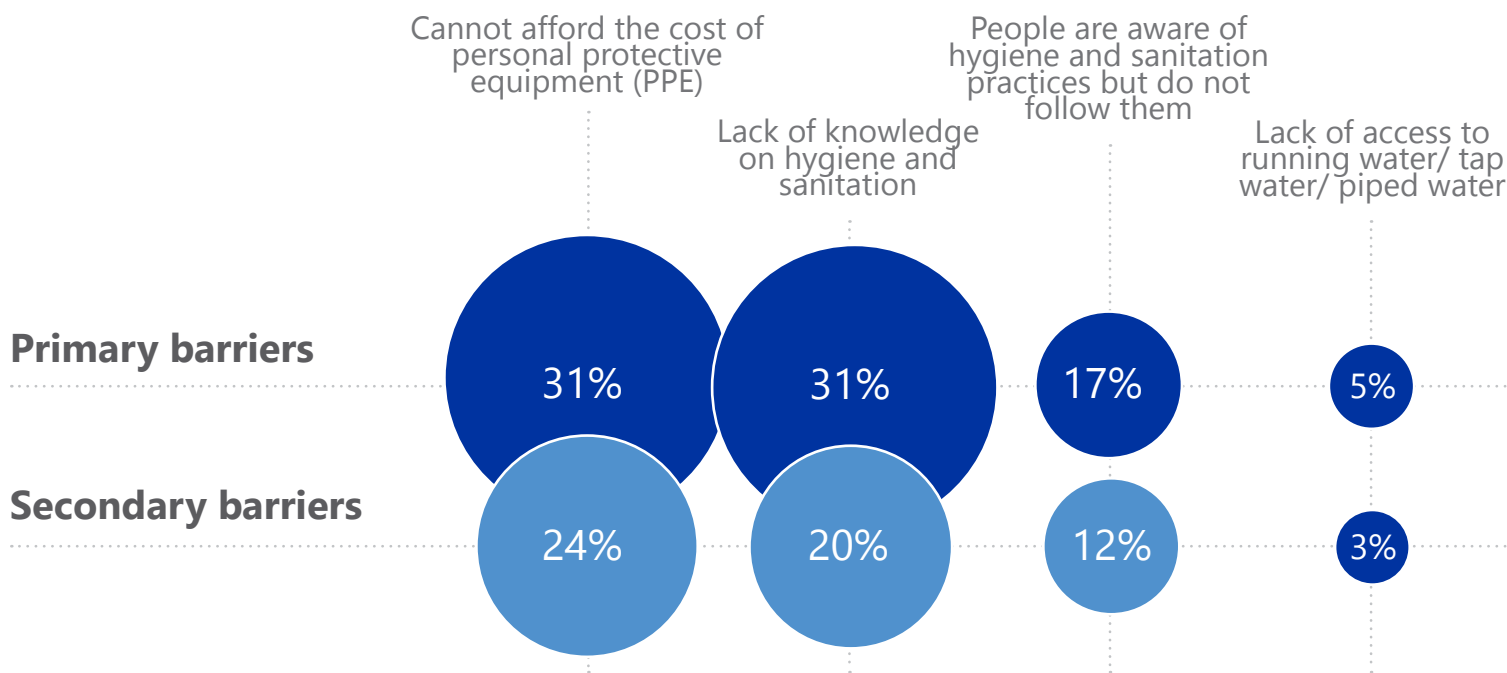


Note: Totals do not add up to 100% because KIs responded "I do not know" for refugees/asylum seekers (46%), stateless individuals (29%), and migrants (20%).

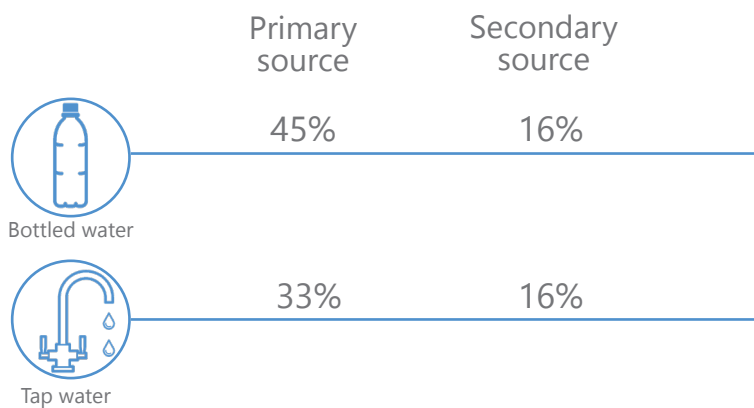
VULNERABILITIES TO COVID-19

Main barriers to COVID-19 specific hygiene and sanitation for non-Thai populations

(Top 4 answers only)



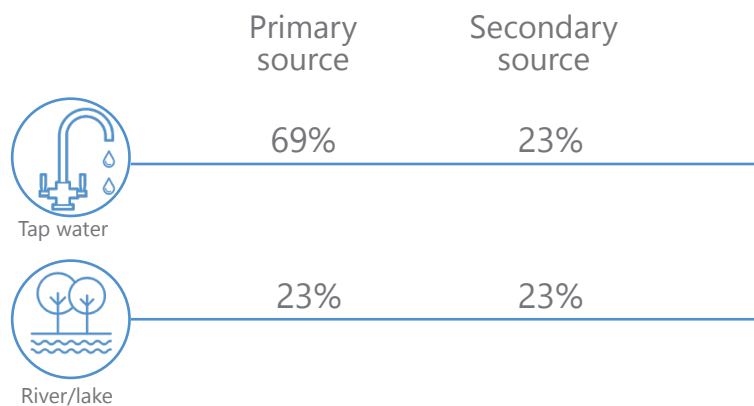
Two main sources of drinking water



KIs were asked to rank, in order of importance, the two main barriers to COVID-19 specific hygiene and sanitation in the communities that they are working with.

The data indicates that the cost of personal protective equipment (PPE) (31%), lack of knowledge on hygiene and sanitation (31%), and lack of adherence to hygiene and sanitation measures (17%) were the most commonly reported primary barriers.

Two main sources of water for domestic uses

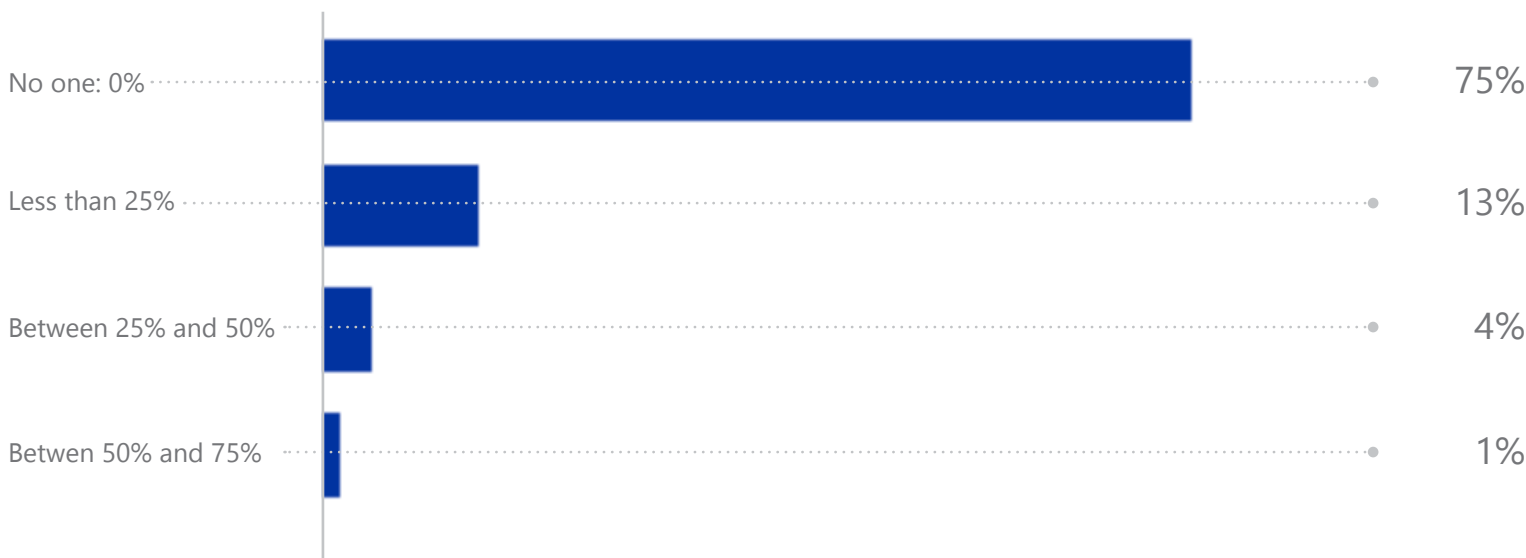


The most commonly reported sources of drinking water in the KIs' target communities were bottled water (45%) and tap water (33%). Tap water was also reported as the primary source of water for bathing and other domestic uses (69%), followed by rivers/lakes and other water streams (23%).

It was observed that the main sources of water for drinking differed between the different categories of non-Thai populations. Migrants were the most likely to use bottled water (51%) as a primary source for drinking water, as compared to the other non-Thai populations.

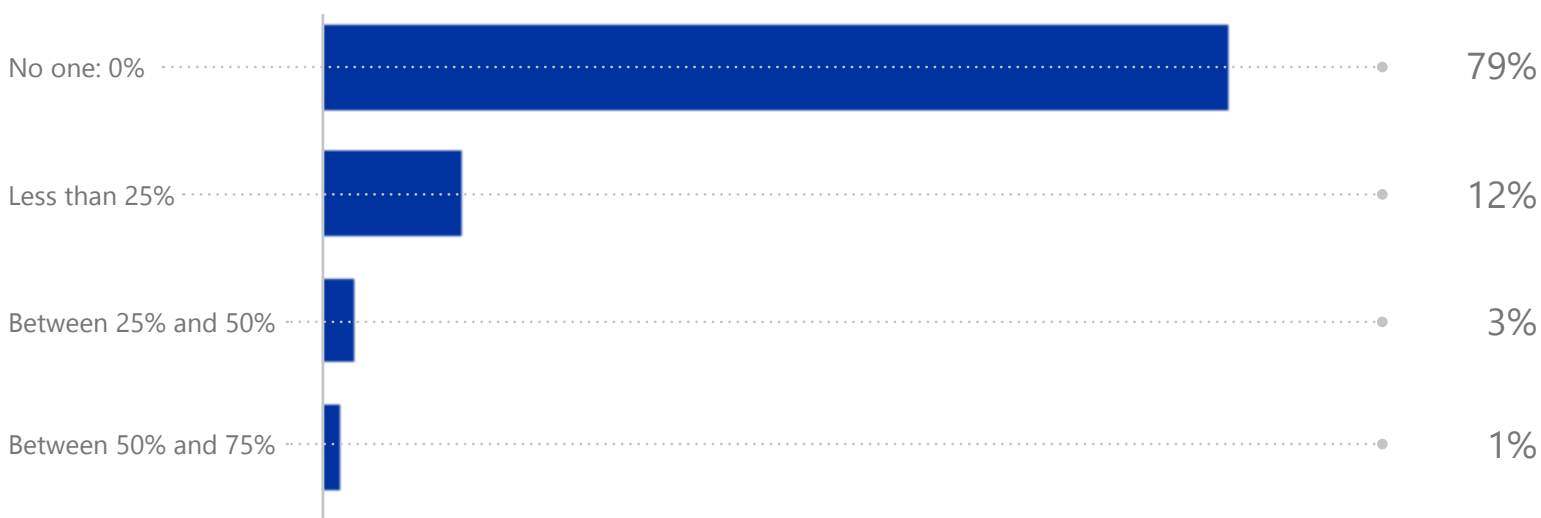
Non-Thai nationals without daily access to drinking water

Note: 7% of the KIs answered "I do not know".



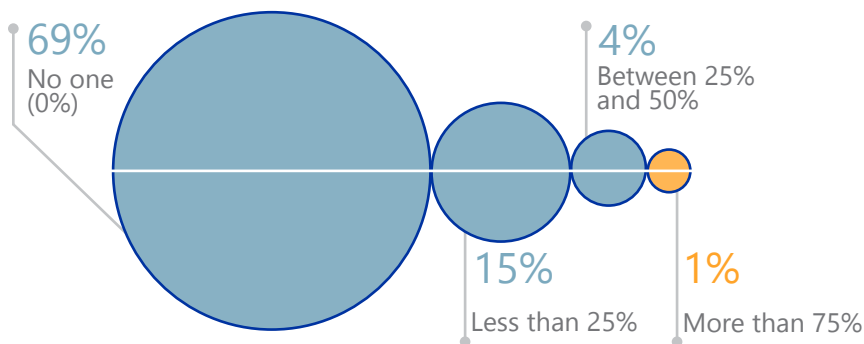
Non-Thai nationals without daily access to water for domestic uses

Note: 5% of the KIs answered "I do not know".



KIs were asked about the proportion of the non-Thai population in their target communities who do not have daily access to drinking water and water for domestic uses. In total, 75 per cent of the KIs reported that the non-Thai populations in their communities do not have challenges in accessing drinking water. However, 18 per cent of KIs indicated that some of the non-Thai populations that they work with have difficulties in accessing drinking water on a daily basis. Seventy-nine per cent of the KIs indicated that there are no challenges in access to water for bathing and other domestic uses amongst the communities they are working with. However, 16 per cent of KIs indicated that they were aware of at least some non-Thai nationals in their target communities who face difficulties in accessing water for domestic uses on a daily basis.

Non-Thai nationals without daily access to soap

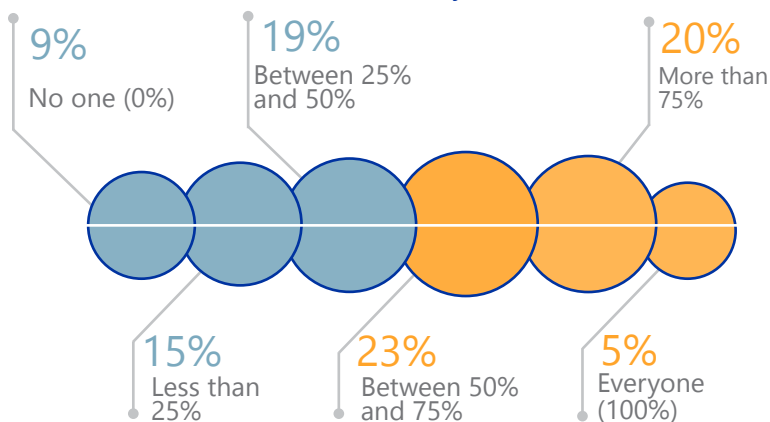


1%

of KIs reported that over three quarters of the non-Thai population in their communities do not have daily access to soap.

Note: 11% of the KIs answered "I do not know".

Non-Thai nationals without daily access to hand sanitizer

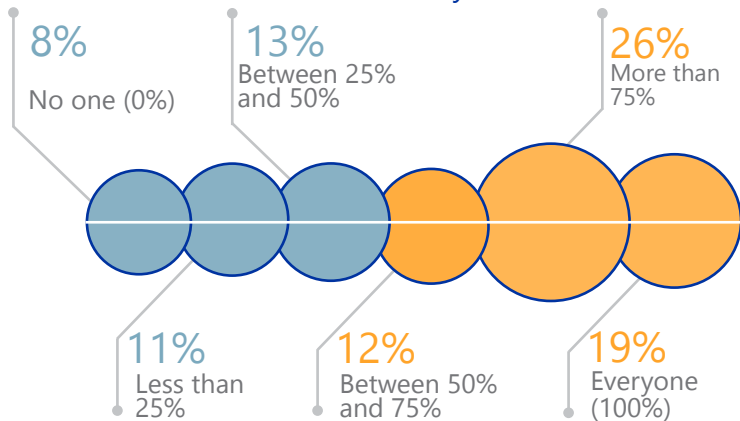


48%

of KIs reported that over half of the non-Thai population in their communities does not have daily access to hand sanitizer.

Note: 9% of the KIs answered "I do not know".

Non-Thai nationals without daily access to alcohol for sanitizer purposes

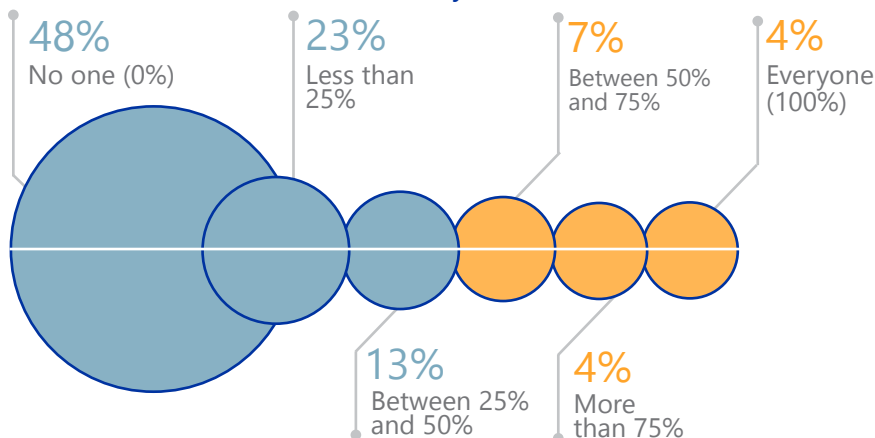


57%

of KIs reported that over half of the non-Thai population in their communities does not have daily access to alcohol for sanitizer purposes.

Note: 11% of the KIs answered "I do not know".

Non-Thai nationals without daily access to face masks



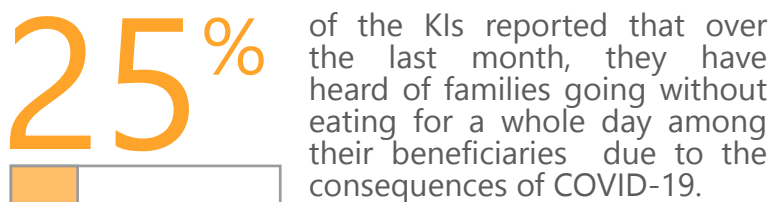
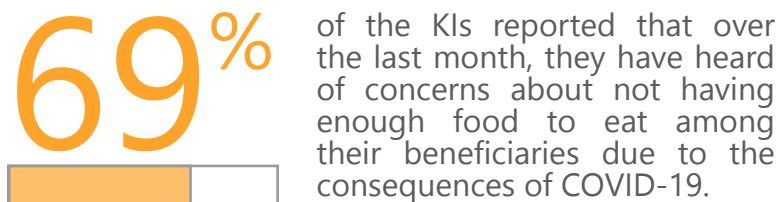
15%

of KIs reported that over half of the non-Thai population in their communities does not have daily access to face masks.

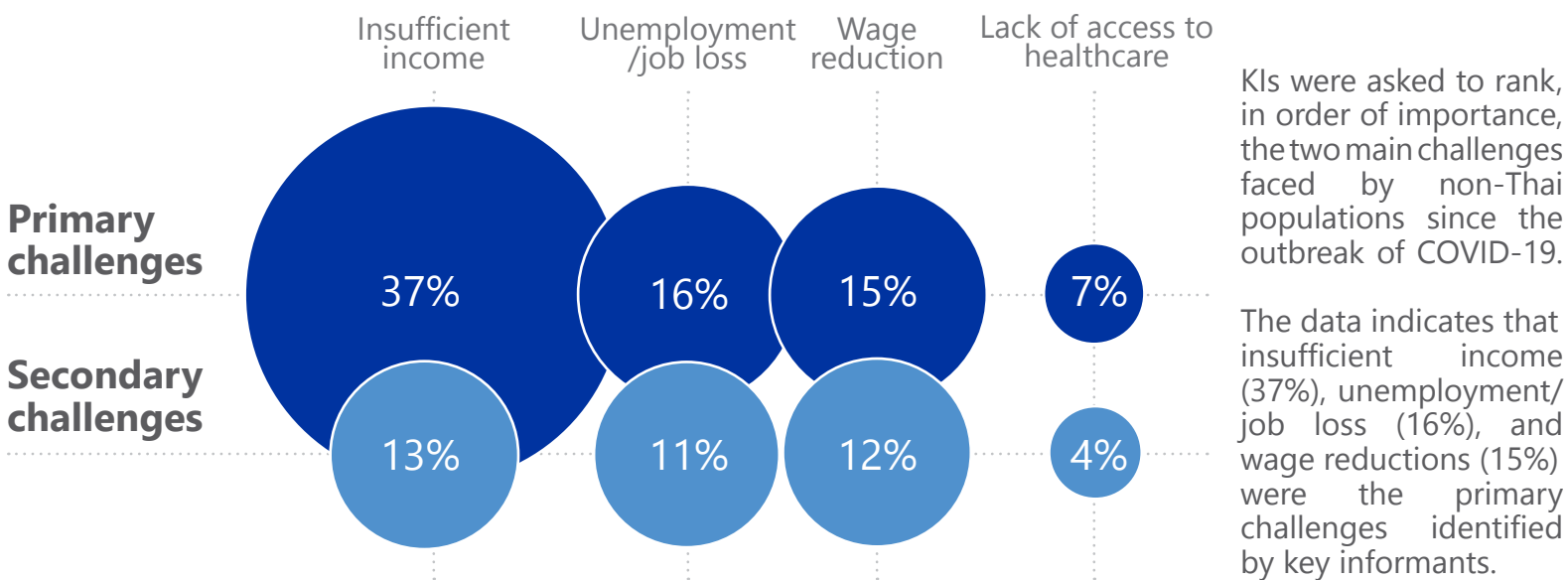
Note: 1% of the KIs answered "I do not know".

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON NON-THAI NATIONALS

Impact of COVID-19 on food consumption

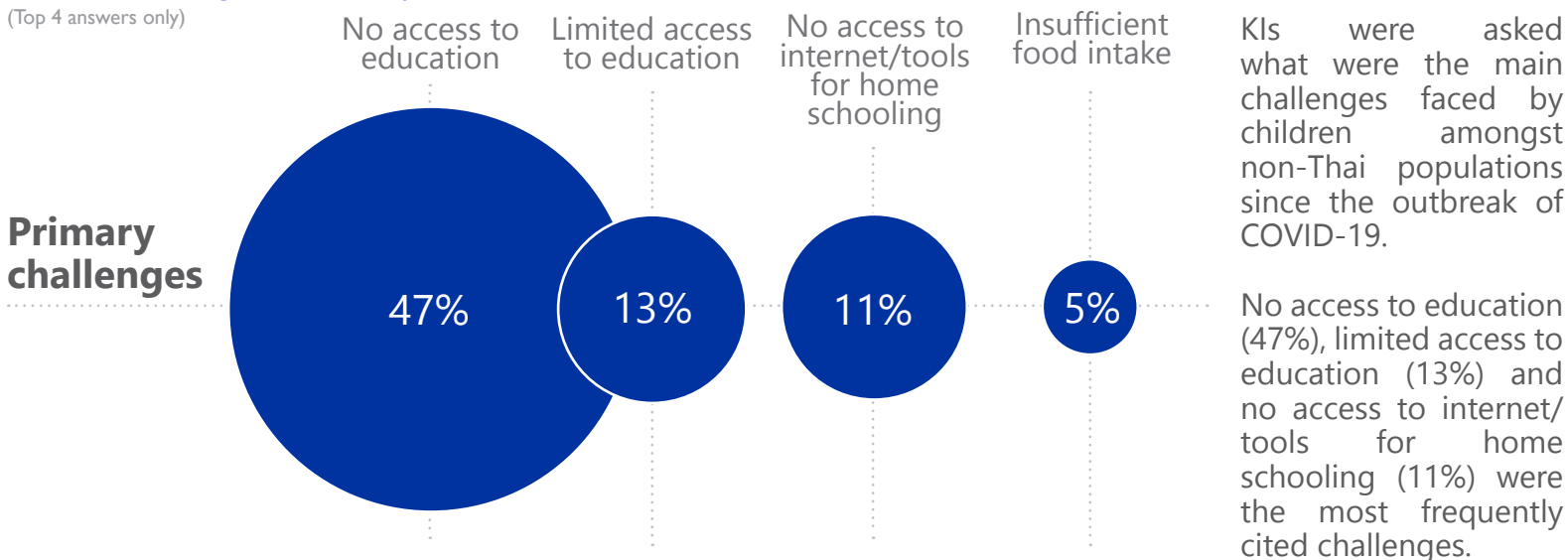


Main challenges faced by non-Thai nationals since the outbreak of COVID-19 (Top 4 answers only)

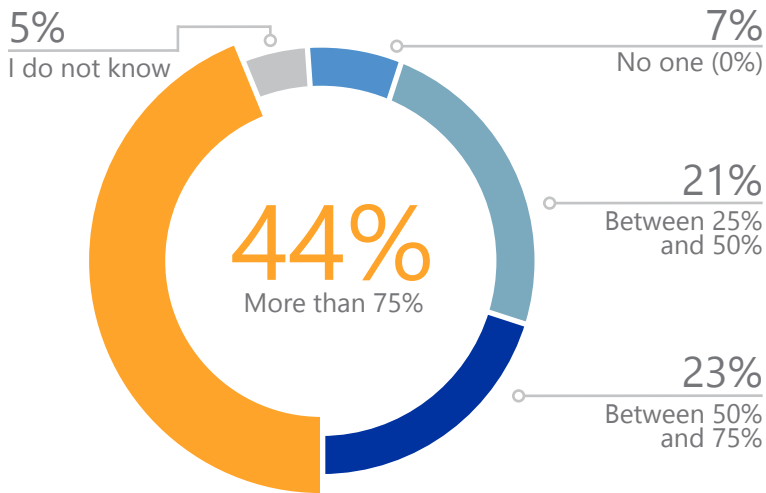


Note: Two additional primary challenges reported by the KIs were lack of hope for the future (5%) and discrimination/xenophobia because of ethnicity/country of origin/religion (3%).

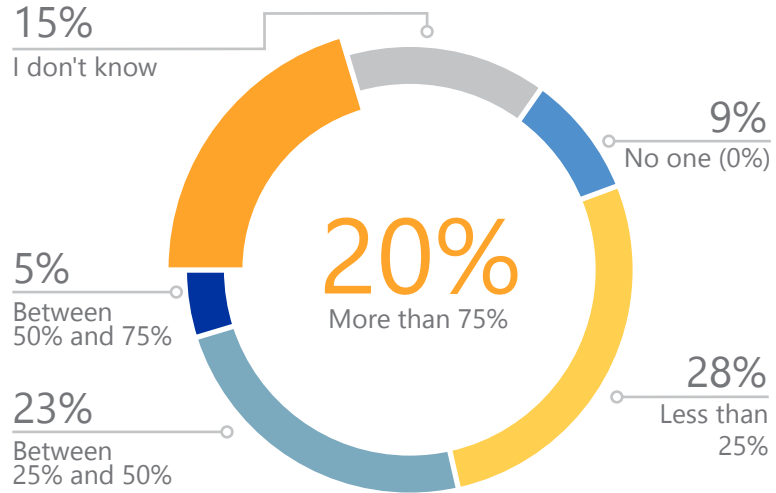
Main challenges faced by children of non-Thai nationals since the outbreak of COVID-19 (Top 4 answers only)



Non-Thai nationals who experienced a reduction in their daily income due to COVID-19



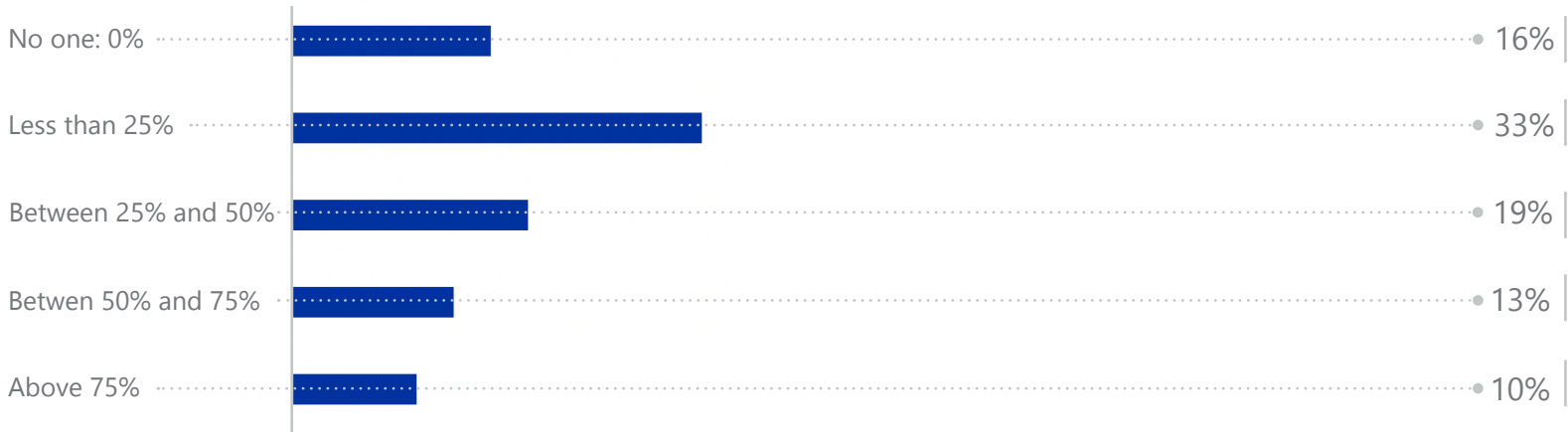
Non-Thai nationals who have lost all sources of daily income due to COVID-19



Forty-four per cent of respondents indicated that over three quarters of non-Thai nationals in their communities have experienced a reduction in their daily income due to COVID-19. Moreover, 20 per cent of respondents reported that over three quarters of non-Thai nationals in their communities have lost all sources of daily income due to COVID-19.

Non-Thai nationals who are unable to fulfill their basic needs due to COVID-19

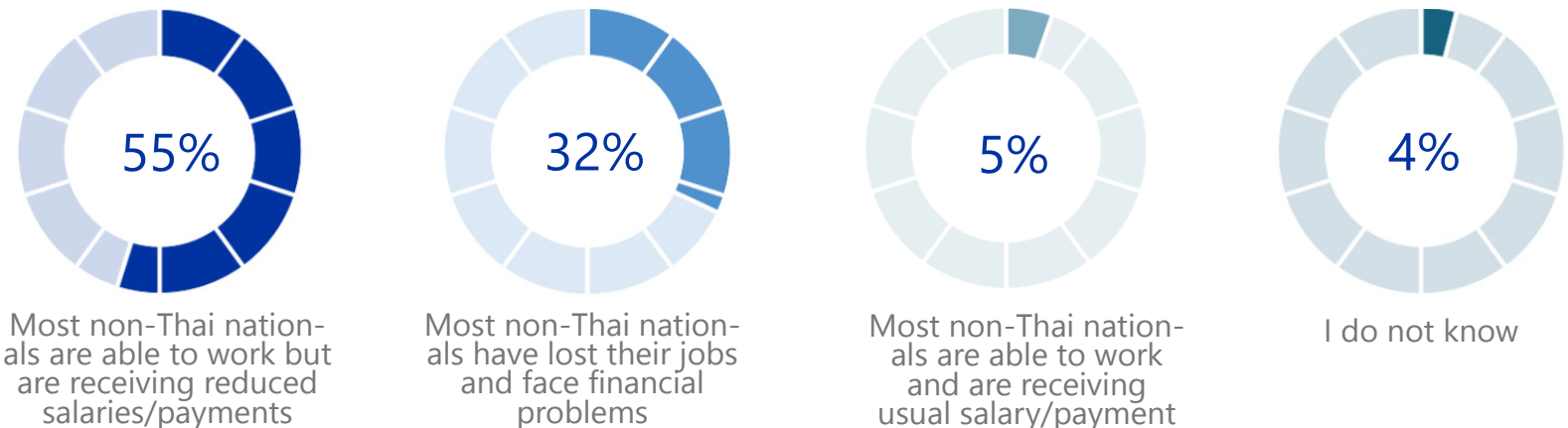
Note: 9% of the KIs answered "I do not know". Being able to fulfill basic needs is here defined as having sufficient financial resources to guarantee the daily coverage of food, water, electricity, shelter, education and medical expenses.



In total, 75 per cent of KIs indicated that some proportion of non-Thai nationals are unable to meet their basic needs.

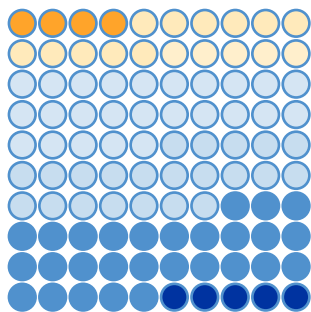
Main impact of COVID-19 on employment situation of non-Thai nationals

Note: 4% of the respondents answered "Other".



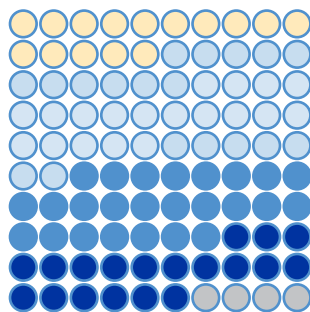
INFORMATION ON COVID-19

Overall awareness of COVID-19



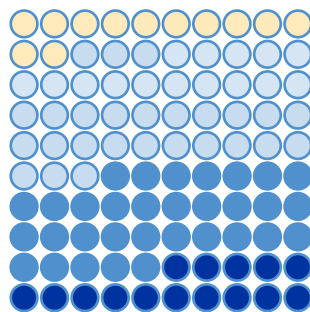
Awareness of COVID-19 symptoms

(Fever, cough, difficulties breathing)



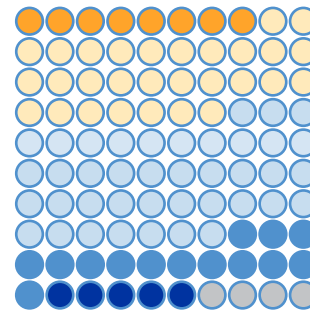
Awareness of COVID-19 preventive measures

(Washing hands, wearing masks, social distancing)



Awareness of hand-washing practices

(With soap for at least 20 seconds, following WHO step-by-step approach)

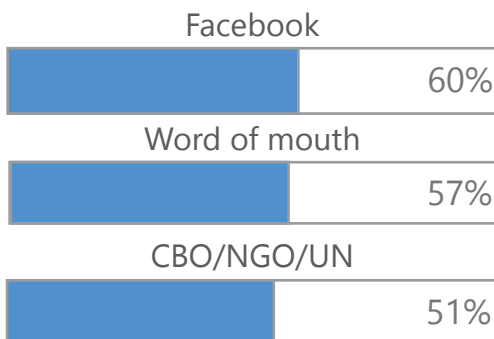


● Not aware ● Little awareness ● Average awareness ● Good awareness ● Very good awareness ● I do not know

KIs were asked to evaluate overall awareness levels of non-Thai populations on: 1) COVID-19 in general, 2) COVID-19 symptoms, 3) COVID-19 preventive measures, and 4) handwashing practices. Twenty per cent of KIs indicated that non-Thai nationals have little to no awareness of COVID-19. Forty-seven per cent of KIs rated their awareness and knowledge as "average" and 33 per cent as "good" or "very good". The highest information gap was related to handwashing practices (37% with little to no awareness) and COVID-19 symptoms (15% with little awareness).

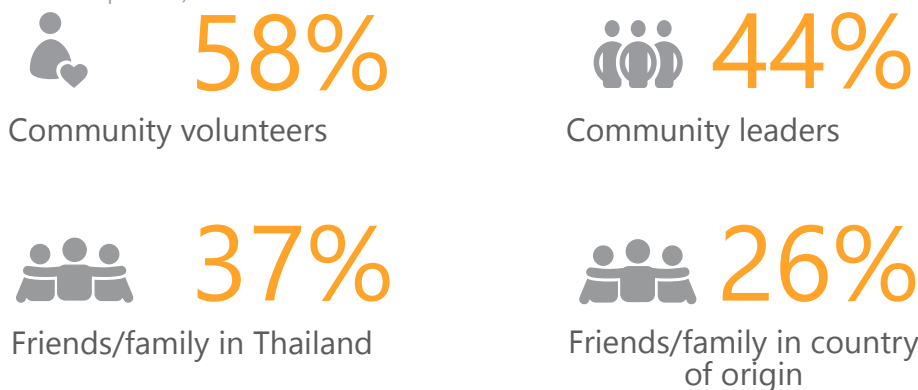
Main sources of information

(Multiple answer question)



Main sources of word of mouth

(Multiple answer question)



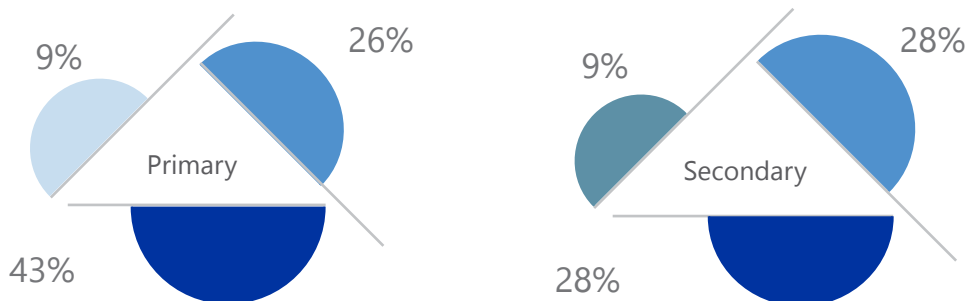
Awareness of who to contact in case of illness



of the KIs reported that the non-Thai communities with whom they are working know (48%) or partially know (44%) who to contact if they get sick.

Primary and secondary contact persons non-Thai populations would reach out to in case of illness (Top 3 answers only)

● Hospital ● Local health volunteer ● CBO/NGO representative ● Clinic



Information, education and communication materials on COVID-19



of the KIs reported that information, education and communication materials on COVID-19 are being distributed in the communities with whom they are working.

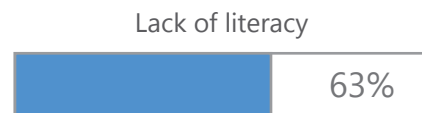
Is information on COVID-19 being understood?



of the KIs reported that information on COVID-19 is not being understood or is only partially understood in the communities with whom they are working.

Main reasons why information on COVID-19 is not being understood

(Multiple answer question; top 2 answers only)



Information is shared in a language not understood by the non-Thai population



Does this population have any misinformation about COVID-19? (Myths, misunderstandings, belief in conspiracies)

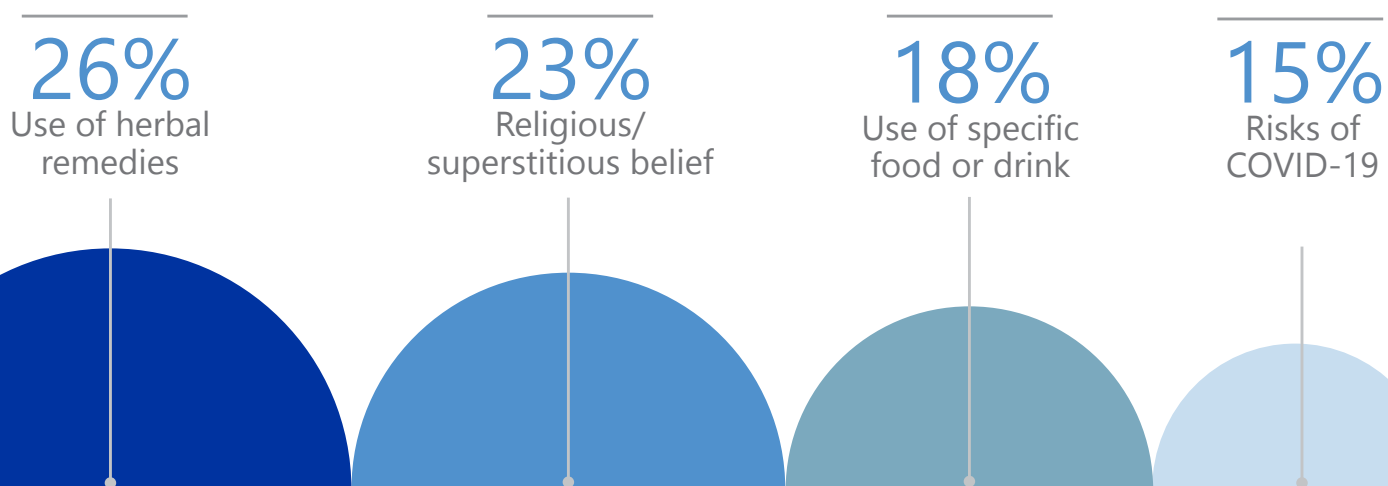
Note: 16% of the KIs answered "I do not know".



45%
Yes/partially

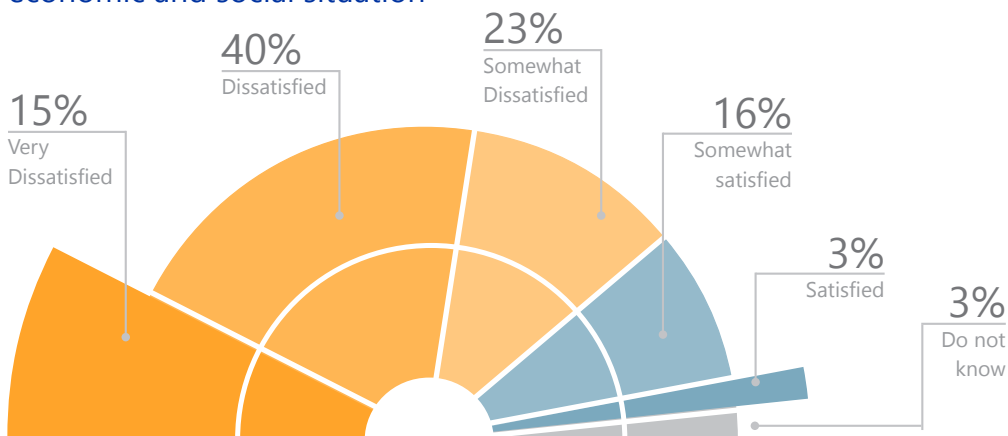
Main myths and misperceptions about COVID-19 (Open question, coded in multiple answers; top 4 answers only)

Forty-four per cent of KIs reported that non-Thai populations believe they can avoid getting COVID-19 or can cure it by taking antiviral drugs, using herbal remedies (such as bitter leaves, or other local herbs), or by drinking or eating particular food or drinks (such as eggs, ginger, hot water, and alcohol). In addition, other religious or superstitious beliefs were reported by 23 per cent of the KIs. Under or over estimation of the risks posed by COVID-19 were reported by 15 per cent of the KIs. Furthermore, KIs also flagged misunderstandings about the use of masks.



SOCIO ECONOMIC INCLUSION

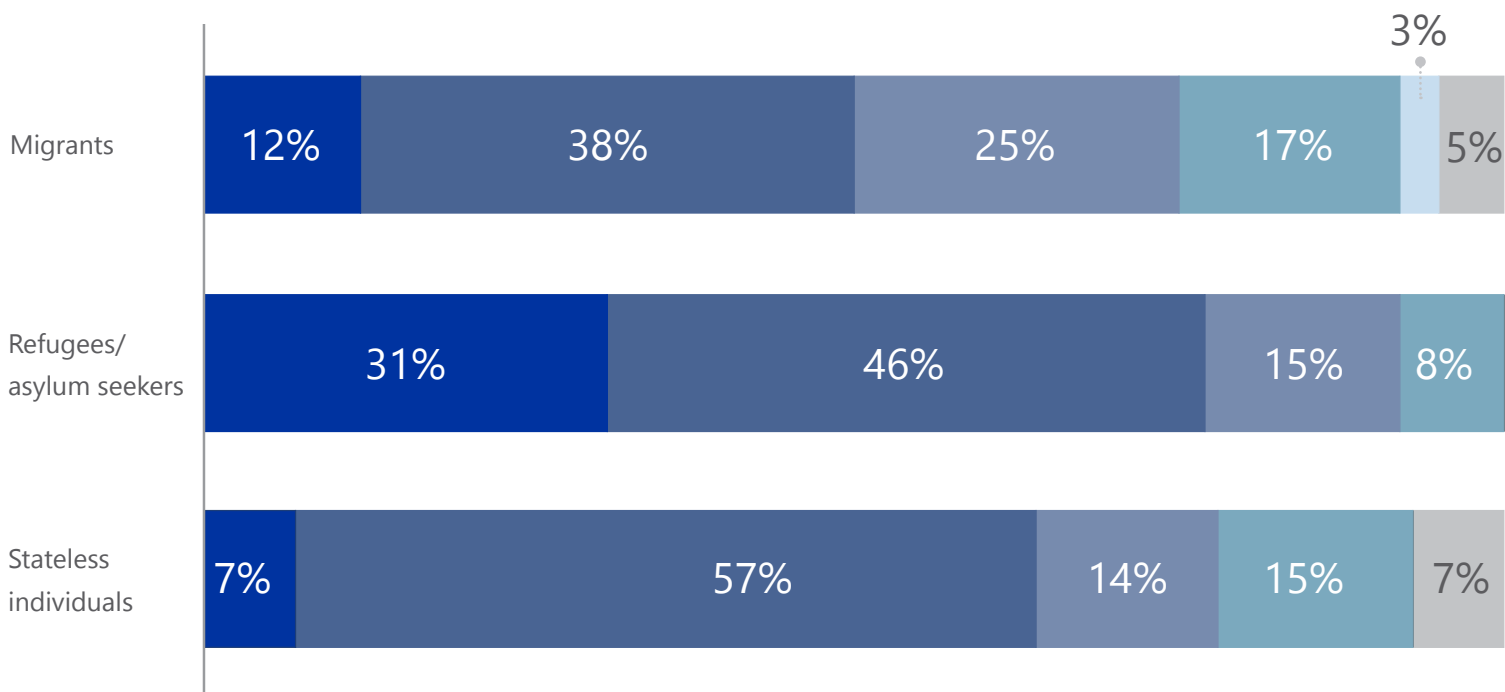
Satisfaction of non-Thai nationals with their current economic and social situation



KIs were also asked a series of questions related to the socio-economic inclusion of non-Thai nationals. When asked to evaluate the overall satisfaction of the non-Thai population with their current economic and social situation, 78 per cent of KIs reported their belief that non-Thai nationals are either somewhat dissatisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their social and economic situation. Only 19 per cent of KIs reported believing that non-Thai nationals are either somewhat satisfied (16%) or satisfied (3%). No KIs indicated a belief that non-Thai nationals are very satisfied with their current economic and social situation.

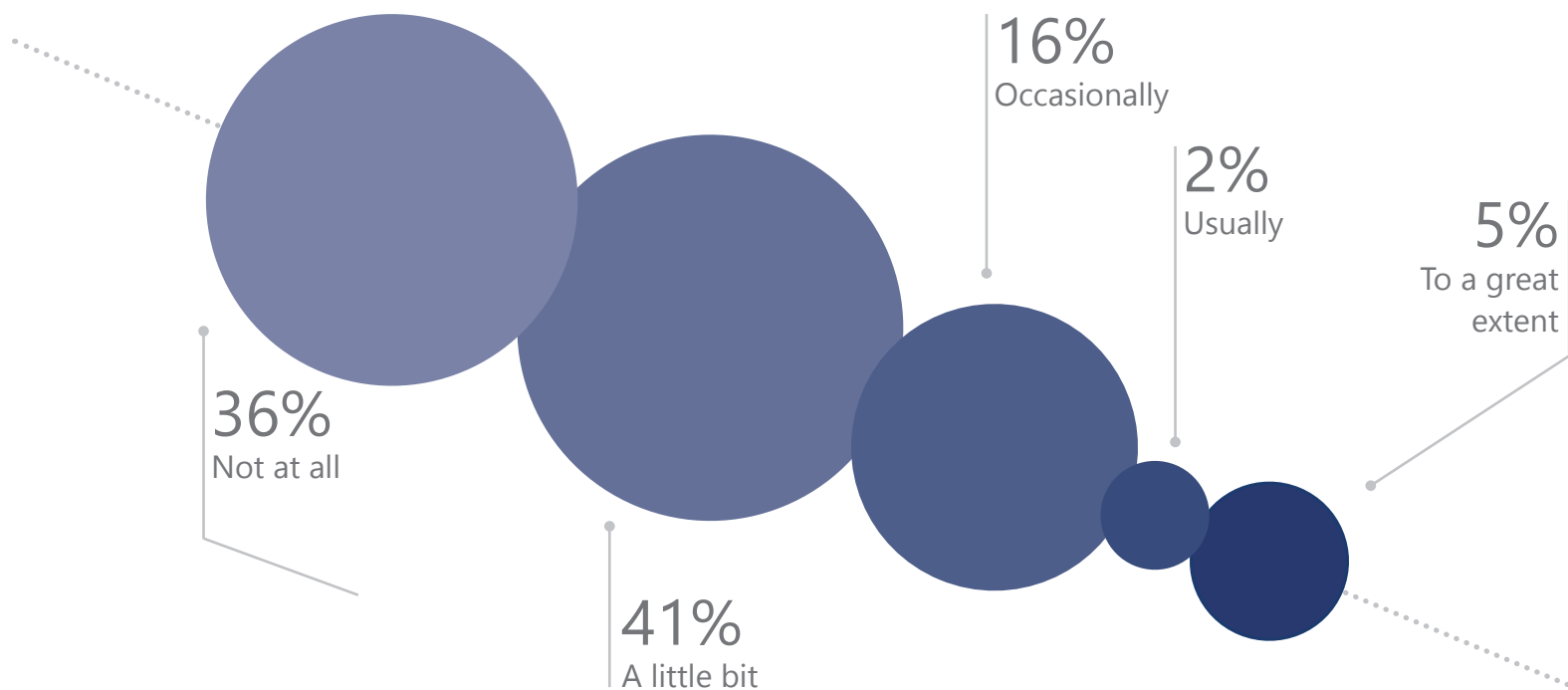
Level of satisfaction with current economic and social situation by population

● Very dissatisfied ● Dissatisfied ● Somewhat dissatisfied ● Somewhat satisfied ● Satisfied ● Do not know



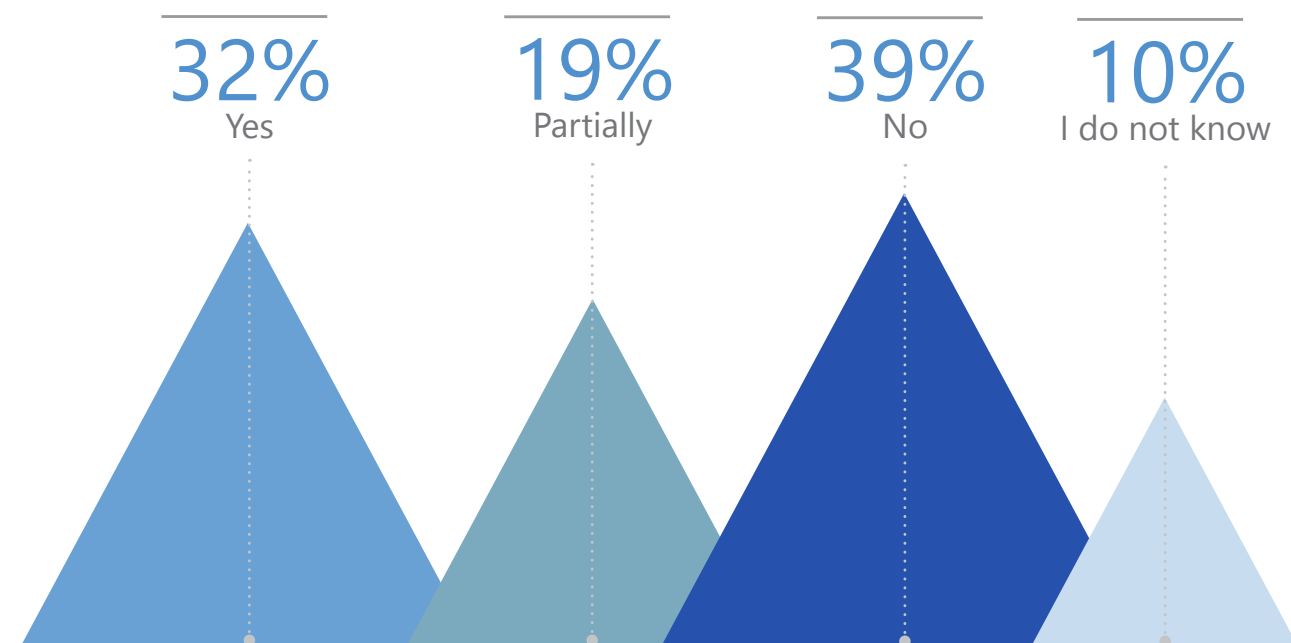
When disaggregating responses on socio-economic satisfaction by population, findings indicate that KIs for refugee and asylum-seeker populations were considerably more likely to report believing their target communities and beneficiaries to be somewhat dissatisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied (92%) than KIs working with migrants (75%) or stateless individuals (78%). KIs working with migrants were most likely to report believing their target communities or beneficiaries to be satisfied or somewhat satisfied with their current socio-economic situation (20%).

Level of inclusion of non-Thai nationals in decision making



Thirty-six per cent of KIs reported that non-Thai nationals are not at all included in decision-making processes that affect their daily lives, and 57 per cent reported that they are only a little or occasionally included. Only 7 per cent of KIs indicated that non-Thai nationals are usually included or included to a great extent. KIs working with refugees or asylum-seekers were most likely to indicate that their target beneficiaries are not at all included. When asked if KIs think Thailand is moving in a direction which provides non-Thai nationals with opportunities for the future, responses were mixed with 38 per cent of respondents saying 'no' and 32 per cent saying 'yes'.

Do you think Thailand is moving in a direction that provides opportunities for the future of non-Thai nationals?





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