DISTRICT SNAPSHOT - CUMILLA

SURVEY ON DRIVERS OF MIGRATION AND MIGRANTS' PROFILE

BANGLADESH

Regional Evidence for Migration Analysis and Policy (REMAP)
International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)

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ACRONYMS

BDT: Bangladeshi Taka

BMET: Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training. The Bangladeshi ministry that is responsible for aiding Bangladeshi international migrants.

IOM: International Organization for Migration

REMAP: Regional Evidence for Migration Analysis and Policy

USD: United States Dollar

GLOSSARY

Migrant: An umbrella term, not defined under international law, reflecting the common lay understanding of a person who moves away from their place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons.

Potential Migrant: **Potential migrant** will be defined under this study as an individual who intends to move out of Bangladesh to an international destination and has already made various preparations for his or her migration.*

Migration: The movement of persons away from their place of usual residence, either across an international border or within a State. For this report, **migration** will refer to the movement of individuals across Bangladesh's international border.

Regular Migrant: A person who moves or has moved across an international border and is authorized to enter or to stay in a State pursuant to the law of that State and to international agreements to which that State is a party.

Regular Potential Migrant: **Regular potential migrant** will be defined under this study as an individual who intends to move out of Bangladesh to an international destination and has already made various preparations for his or her migration through channels provided by the Government of Bangladesh such as registering with BMET. Since the individuals interviewed for this report had not left Bangladesh, this designation is based on their intention of choosing a specific migration channel (regular or irregular) and is not based on their actual migration status.*

Irregular Potential Migrant: For this report, **irregular potential migrant** will be defined under this study as an individual who intends to move out of Bangladesh to an international destination and has already made various preparations for his or her migration but who did not register their intention to migrate with the Bangladeshi government, and instead received assistance from a migration facilitator for their migration. It does not necessarily imply the migrant's possession of documentation that proves their identity or their right to enter or stay in a country.*

Migration facilitator: Within this study, **migration facilitator** refers to anyone that is involved in the facilitation of migration services (irregular and regular) via air, land or sea routes in exchange for money. Those services can reach from consultative services for visa application and acquiring (fraudulent) documents, to transportation arrangement, to the facilitation of border crossings. The term used does not intend to neglect the differences in services and often used terms for those persons providing the migration services.*

NOTE: When the label "Multiple answers possible" appears above a graph or when a dagger symbol (†) appears in the text, it means that a single respondent was allowed to provide more than one answer. For this reason, totals do not add up to 100 per cent. An asterisk (*) denotes when a statistic is based off a sample size less than 10.

*These are the definitions of potential migrant, regular potential migrant, irregular potential migrant and migration facilitator used in this study. They are not the official definition endorsed by the IOM. For the official definitions, please visit: *https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf*

BACKGROUND

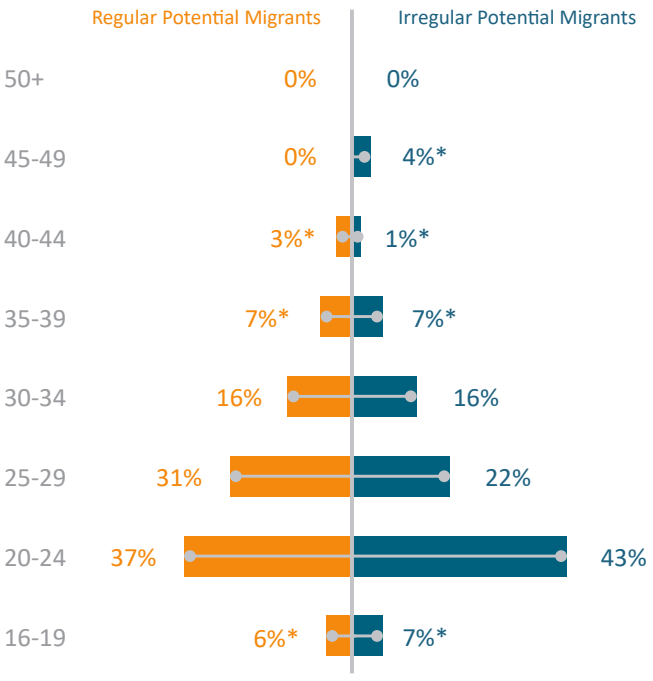
The Survey on Drivers of Migration (SDM)[1], which was published in July 2020, aims to better understand the drivers of migration in Bangladesh among regular and irregular potential migrants along different thematic areas and themes. The survey was conducted with 11,415 potential migrants that were interviewed in 64 districts.

Following the country-level assessment, data was analyzed at district level in order to gauge potential geographical differences and provide greater nuance and detail to the focus themes i.e. demographics and socioeconomic profiles, migration costs etc.

This report will take a closer look at Cumilla district, located in the Chattogram Division, southeastern Bangladesh. Cumilla is bordered by Brahmanbaria district in the north, by Noakhali and Feni districts in the south, by the Indian state of Tripura in the east and by Munshiganj and Chandpur districts in the west. With a population of 5,387,288, Cumilla has a primarily agricultural-based economy[2].

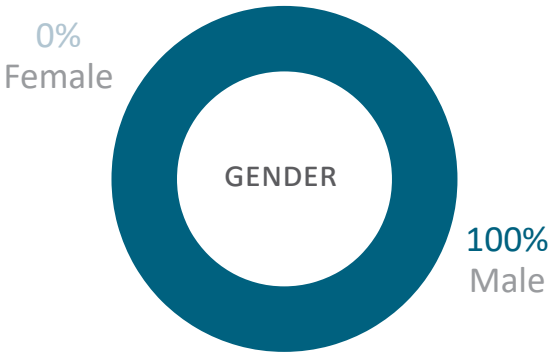
Note: The individuals' designation as regular or irregular potential migrant is based on their reported intention to choose a specific migration channel (regular or irregular) and is not based on their actual migration status. Female potential migrants were difficult for the enumerators to find, so all female potential migrants who could be found were surveyed.

AGE PYRAMID OF REGULAR AND IRREGULAR POTENTIAL MIGRANTS



CUMILLA BREAKDOWN

Total respondents	Regular potential migrants	Irregular potential migrants
200	100	100



METHODOLOGY

A quantitative approach was adopted to conduct the SDM and to analyze specific thematic areas: socio-economic profiles and migration experiences, drivers and reasons for migration, challenges and access to services in Bangladesh and migration networks and aspirations. The study focused on potential regular and irregular migrants throughout Bangladesh who were planning to migrate within the next six months. Potential migrants were categorized as regular or irregular based on whether they had registered their intention to move with the government or not.

Between November and December 2019, respondents were interviewed in person using a structured questionnaire. The survey was non-probabilistic where convenience sampling was used to sample regular potential migrants and snowball sampling was used to sample irregular potential migrants.

This report focuses on Cumilla district, where 200 individuals were surveyed. One hundred respondents were regular potential migrants and 100 respondents were irregular potential migrants.

[1] The SDM report can be accessed here: https://migration.iom.int/node/9153
[2] http://203.112.218.65:8008/WebTestApplication/userfiles/Image/District%20Statistics/Comilla.pdf

DATA ANALYSIS

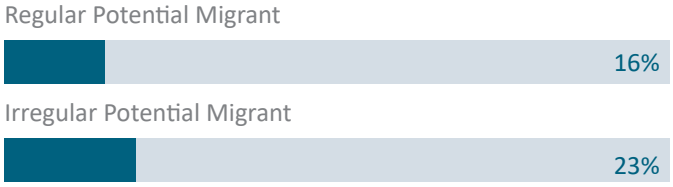
Socio-economic profile and migration experience

All of respondents had completed some level of education, with 55 per cent having finished middle school. Fifty-six per cent of irregular potential migrants reported completing middle school, while 53 per cent of regular potential migrants reported doing so.

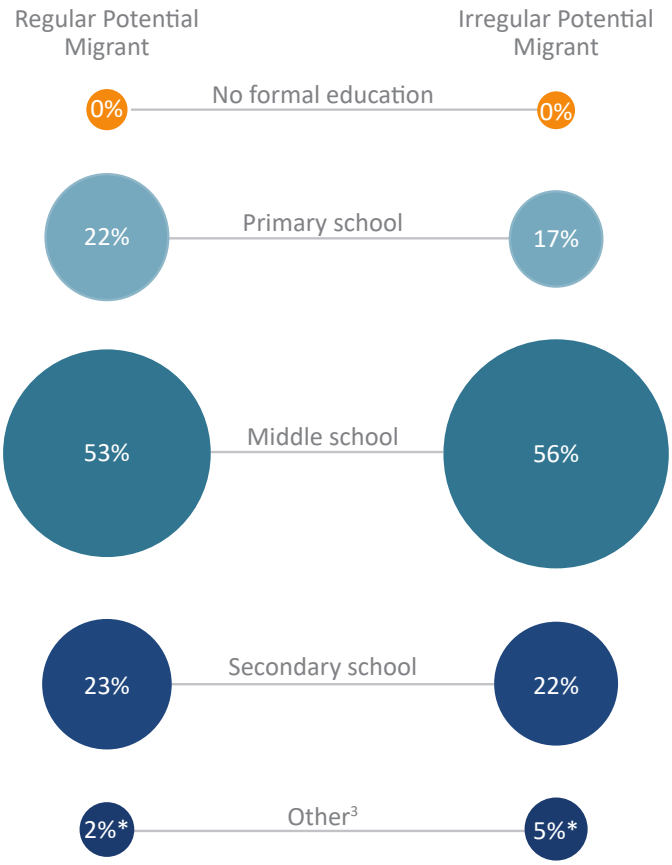
Prior to migration, 31 per cent of respondents reported being unemployed. Thirty-four per cent of regular potential migrants reported being unemployed prior to migration, and 28 per cent of irregular potential migrants reported being unemployed.

MIGRATION EXPERIENCE

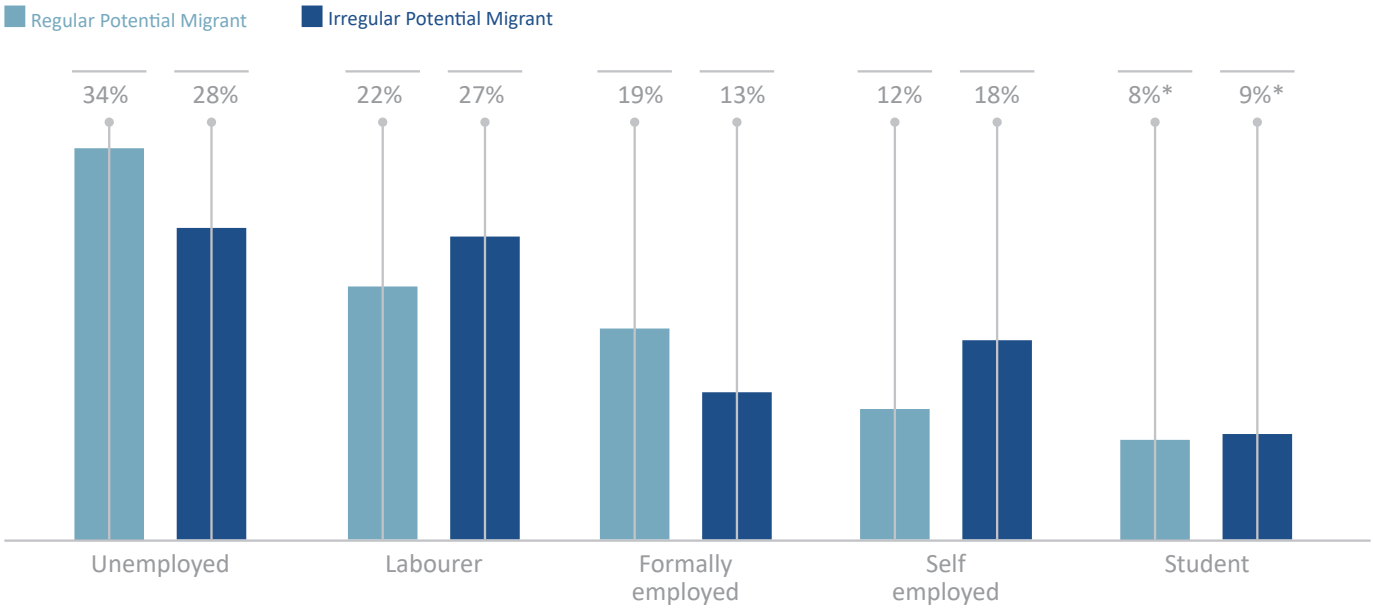
20% of respondents migrated internationally before



RESPONDENTS BY EDUCATION LEVEL



OCCUPATION DURING THE LAST SIX MONTHS (top 5 answers)



[3] Other included individuals who had completed bachelor degrees, certificate courses, medical school, engineering school, and other post secondary education

Costs of migration

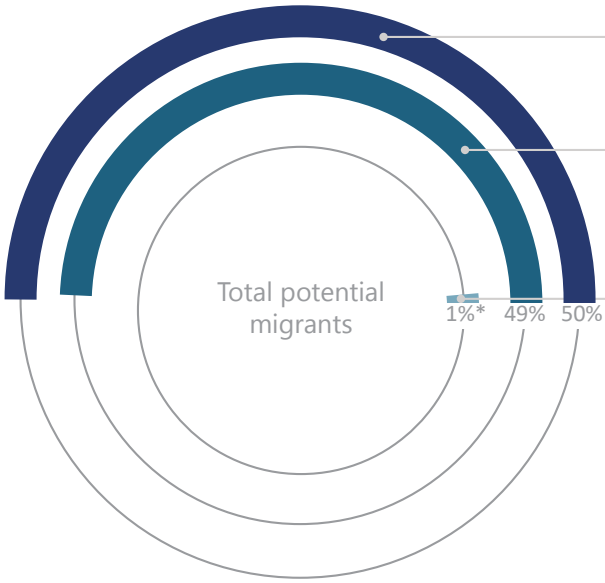
Respondents were asked if they had registered with the government and if they had paid a migration facilitator to assist them with their migration. If the potential migrant answered yes to either of these questions, they were also asked how much they had paid.

Fifty per cent of the potential migrants surveyed had registered their intention to migrate with the government or planned to do so. For the purposes of the study, these migrants were considered to be regular potential migrants.

All regular potential migrants in Cumilla paid BDT 220 (USD 2.56) to register with the government. Regular and irregular potential migrants paid similar amounts to migration facilitators to assist with their journeys. The average amount paid by both regular and irregular potential migrants was BDT 350,000 (USD 4,077).

Respondents reported paying for registration, biometric registration, training, passports, travel and visa costs.

RECIPIENTS OF COSTS PAID BY MIGRANTS



Did not register with the government and **ONLY paid a migration facilitator** for assistance with their migration

AVERAGE COSTS PAID
BDT 350,000

Registered with the government and paid **BOTH the government and a migration facilitator** for assistance with their migration

AVERAGE COSTS PAID
BDT 350,000

Registered with the government and **ONLY paid the government** for assistance with their migration

AVERAGE COSTS PAID
BDT 220

Note: Median was used for average costs paid to the government due to the high skew of outliers.

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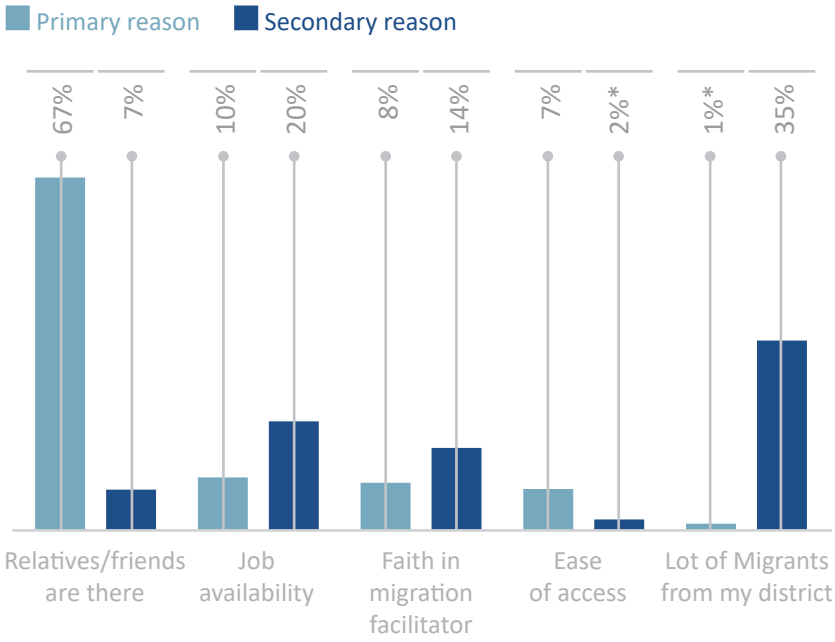
Reasons and drivers for migration

Pull factors

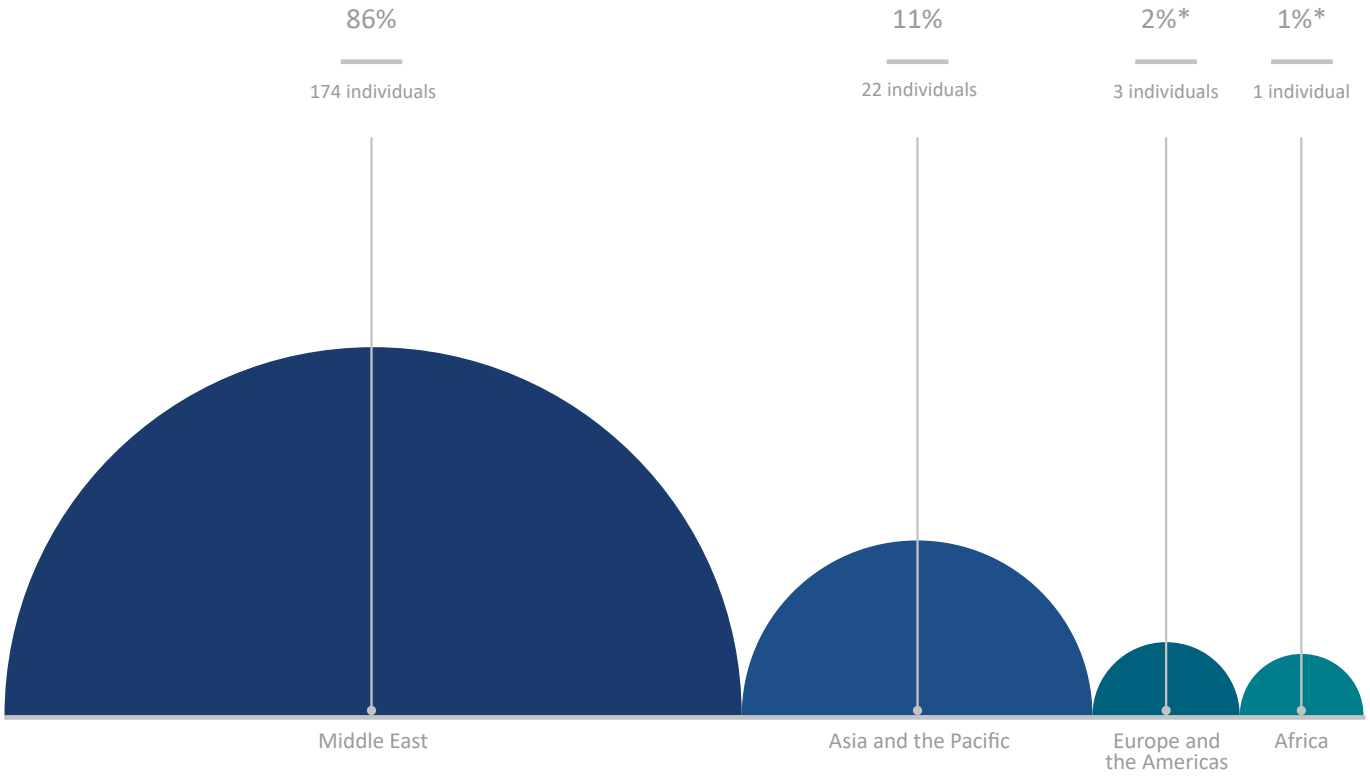
One way to understand what drives migration is through the use of pull factors, which are the features that attract migrants to a specific destination (Dorigo and Tobler, 1983)[4]. The study found that the most common reason potential migrants selected a specific destination country was the the presence of a social network in that country, specifically a network including family, friends, neighbours or the larger Bangladeshi diaspora. The second most common reason was the availability of a job in that country.

Eighty-six per cent of respondents plan to travel to the Middle East and Western Asia[5] with 70 per cent specifically planning to travel to Saudi Arabia. The Asia Pacific region was the second most cited destination by respondents of the study (11%)[6].

MAIN REASONS FOR CHOOSING INTENDED DESTINATION
(top 5 answers)



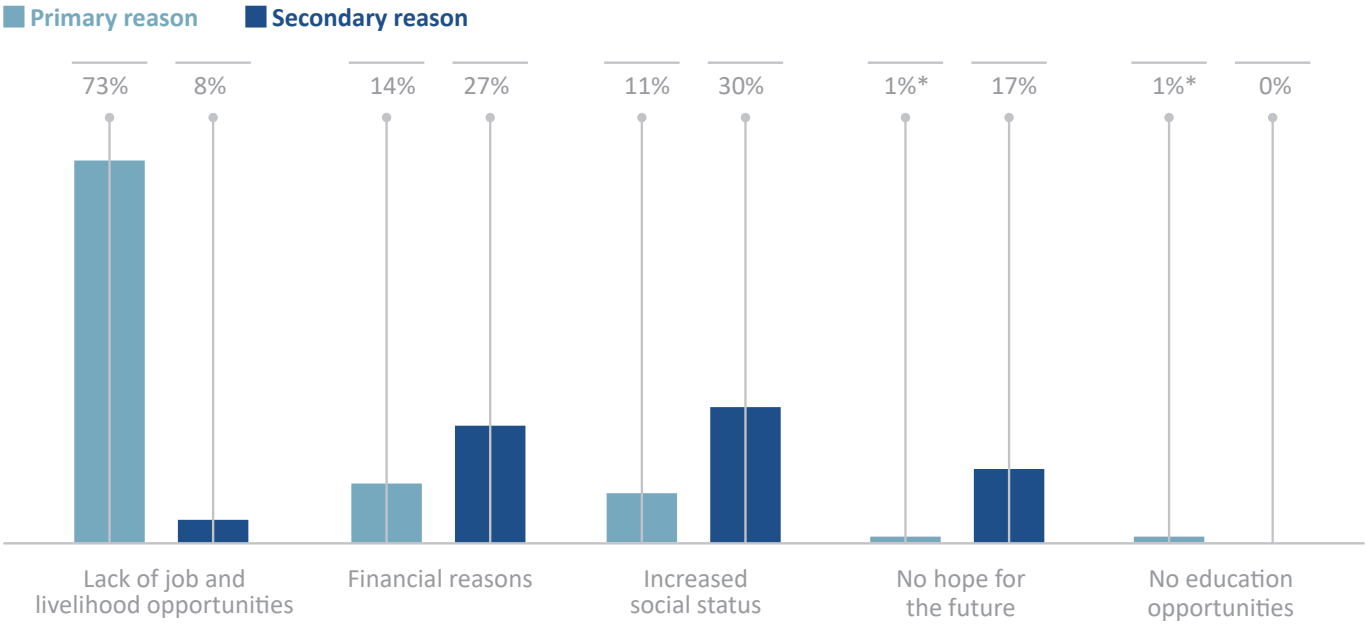
DESTINATION REGIONS



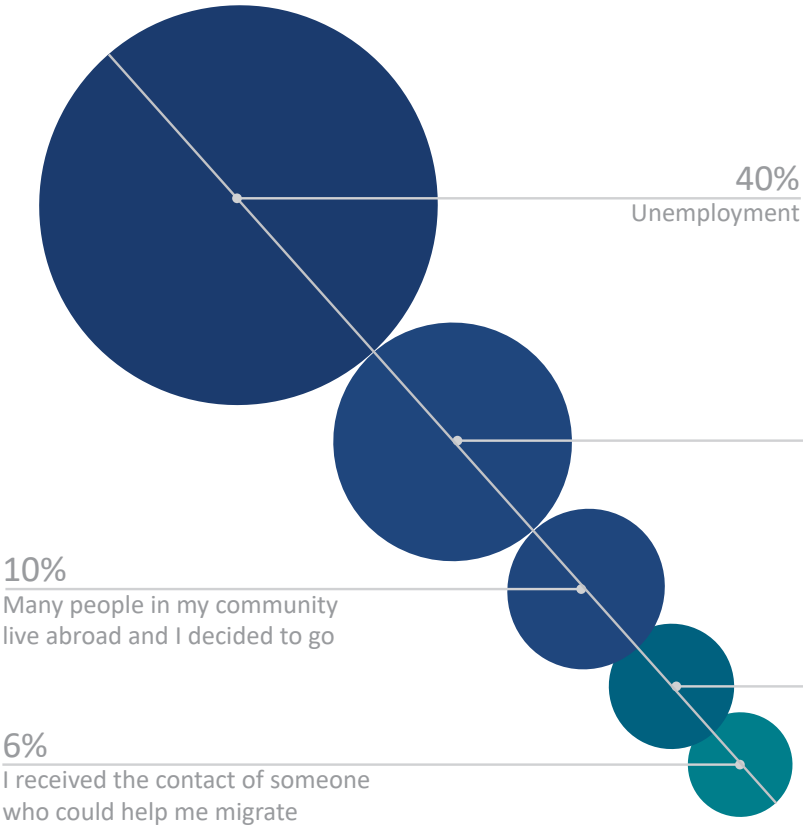
[4] Dorigo, G., & Tobler, W. (1983). Push-pull migration laws. Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 73(1), 1-17. https://www.jstor.org/stable/2569342
[5] Includes Gulf Countries, Middle Eastern countries, and countries in Western Asia such as Iran and Turkey.
[6] Includes Central Asia, East Asia, South Asia, and South Eastern Asia, as well as Pacific countries such as Fiji and Australia.

Push factors

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY REASONS FOR MIGRATION (top 5 answers)



LIFE EVENT THAT TRIGGERED MIGRATION (top 5 answers)



40%
Unemployment

24%
My friends/family were migrating and encouraged me to join

10%
Many people in my community live abroad and I decided to go

8%
A family member/friend abroad encouraged me to join them abroad

6%
I received the contact of someone who could help me migrate

Push factors are the conditions of a migrant's origin that cause them to make the choice to leave their homes (Dorigo and Tobler, 1983). Although there are other, more complex ways to analyse the drivers of migration, push factors are a simple way to begin to understand the reasons behind migration.

When respondents were asked to list their primary and secondary reasons for migration, 73 per cent responded that the main reason behind their intention to migrate was lack of jobs and livelihood opportunities in Bangladesh.

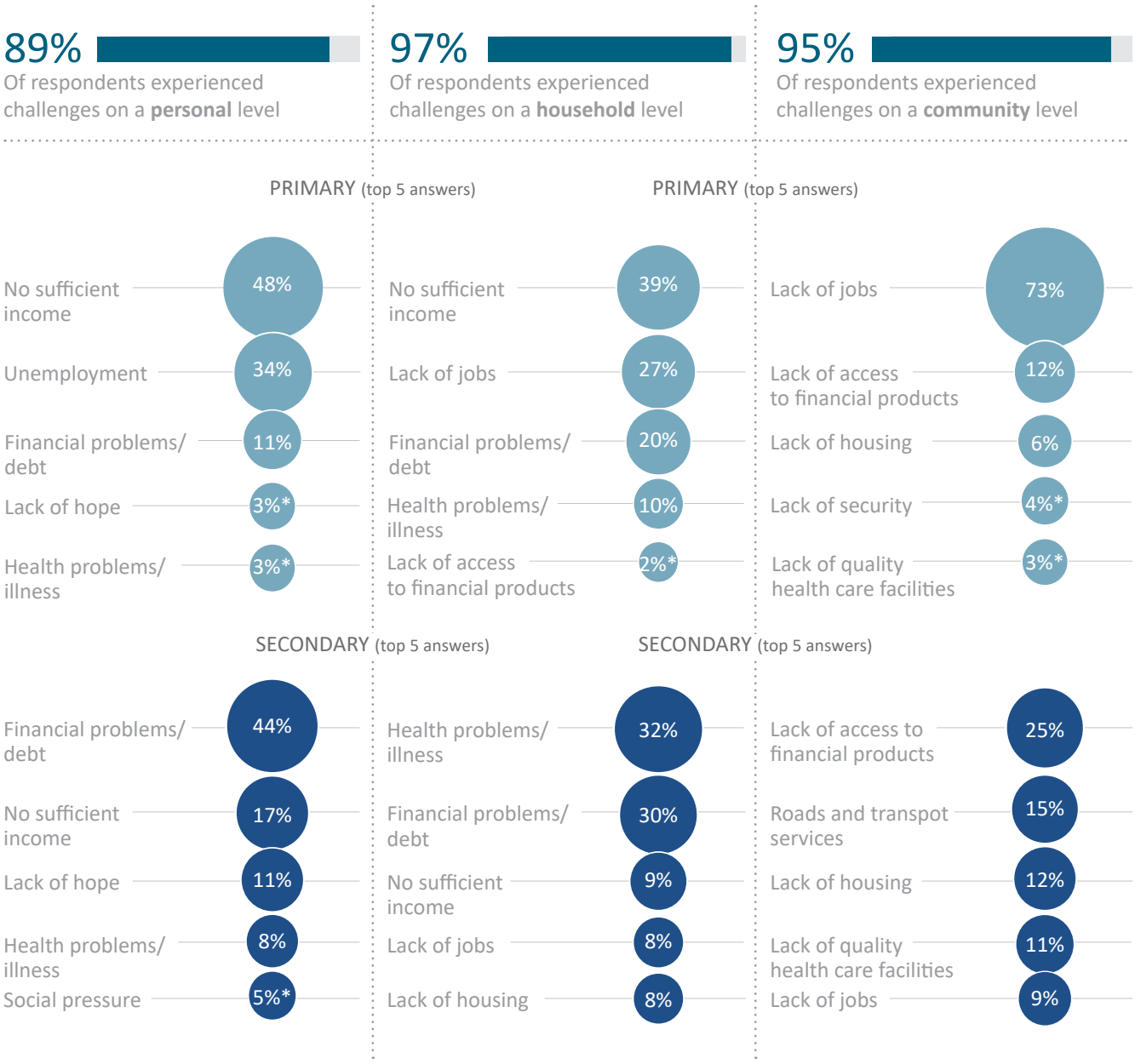
Most common reported challenges[1]

Respondents were also asked to identify specific challenges they faced at the personal, household and community levels to support the understanding of how drivers of migration might affect individuals at different levels in different ways.

Eighty-nine per cent of potential migrants reported facing personal challenges during the six months prior to the interview. Insufficient income was the most commonly reported primary personal challenge. Financial problem/debt was the most commonly reported secondary personal challenge.

At the household level, 97 per cent of potential migrants reported facing challenges. As with personal challenges, insufficient income was the most common primary household challenge. Health problems/illness was the most cited secondary household challenge.

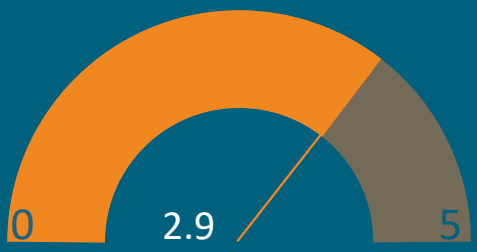
At the community level, 95 per cent of potential migrants reported that their communities face challenges. Respondents most frequently cited a lack of job as their primary community level challenge.



[1] These questions were only asked to respondents who responded "yes" to whether they experienced challenges for each level.

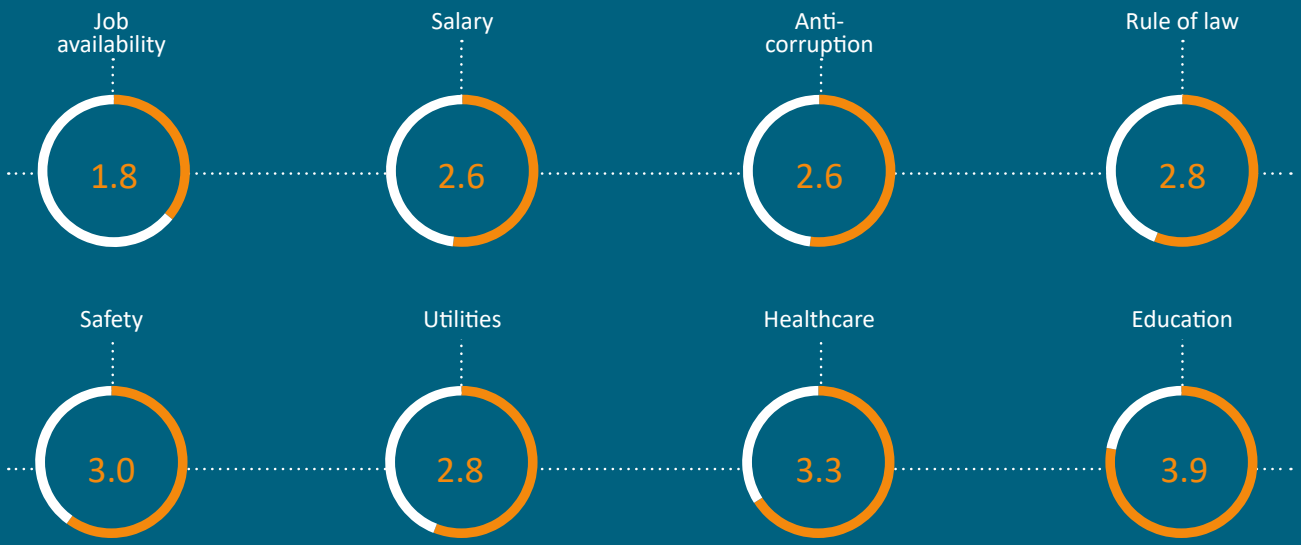
MIGRANT PERCEPTIONS OF LOCAL SERVICES

CUMILLA



1=very poor 2=poor 3=average 4=good 5=very good

Bangladeshi potential migrants were asked to rate the services present in their communities. By averaging the ratings given to different services, a service quality index was created for each district where surveys took place. A service quality matrix was created by averaging each survey rating per each district.



The ratings give an understanding of potential migrants' perceptions about their local services and are not a statement about the actual state of services in each district. Since these are potential migrants' perceptions, they must be interpreted with care, as they are subjective and may have been influenced by individuals' exposure to services elsewhere.

Migration networks, support and planning

Eighty-six per cent of respondents reported friends or extended family living in their intended destination.

Of the potential migrants with friends or family members in intended countries of destination, 99 per cent reported having received support from them.

This support often takes the form of help with securing employment (94%), help with documents (82%) or financial assistance (63%)†.

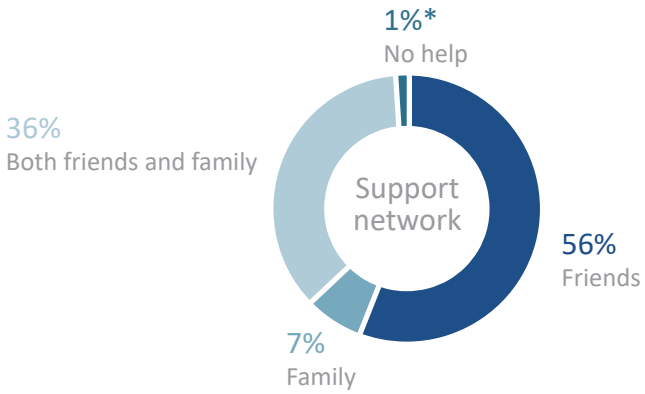
Fifty-six per cent of potential migrants reported social media such as facebook, whatsapp, viber etc. as their main information source about migration.

Most potential migrants reported having planned to be away for more than one year, with 89 per cent of potential migrants planning to be away for more than three years.

NETWORK AND SUPPORT

86%
of respondents have friends or family already in the destination

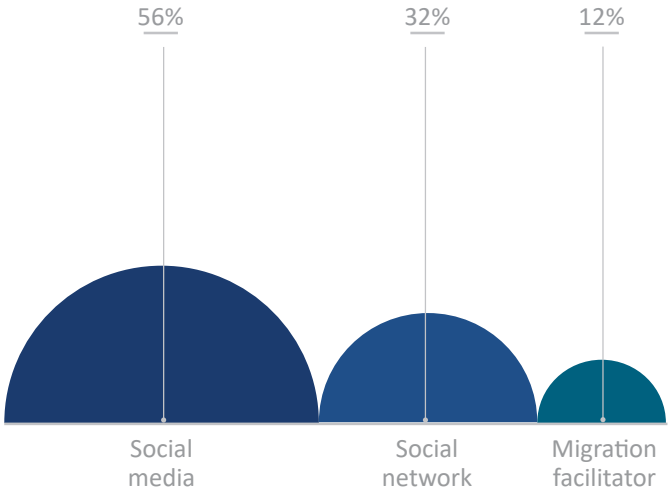
HAVE ANY OF YOUR FRIENDS OR FAMILY ALREADY IN THE INTENDED DESTINATION SUPPORTED YOU WITH YOUR MIGRATION ARRANGEMENTS?



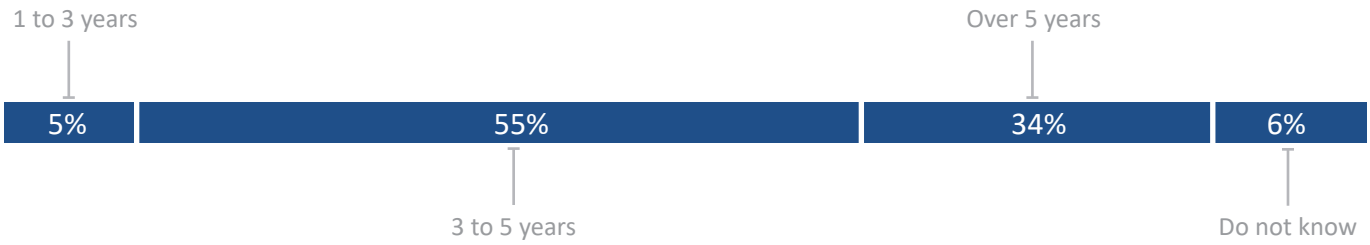
HOW HAVE THEY SUPPORTED YOU WITH YOUR MIGRATION ARRANGEMENTS?

(top 5 answers, multiple answers possible)

INFORMATION SOURCES ON MIGRATION



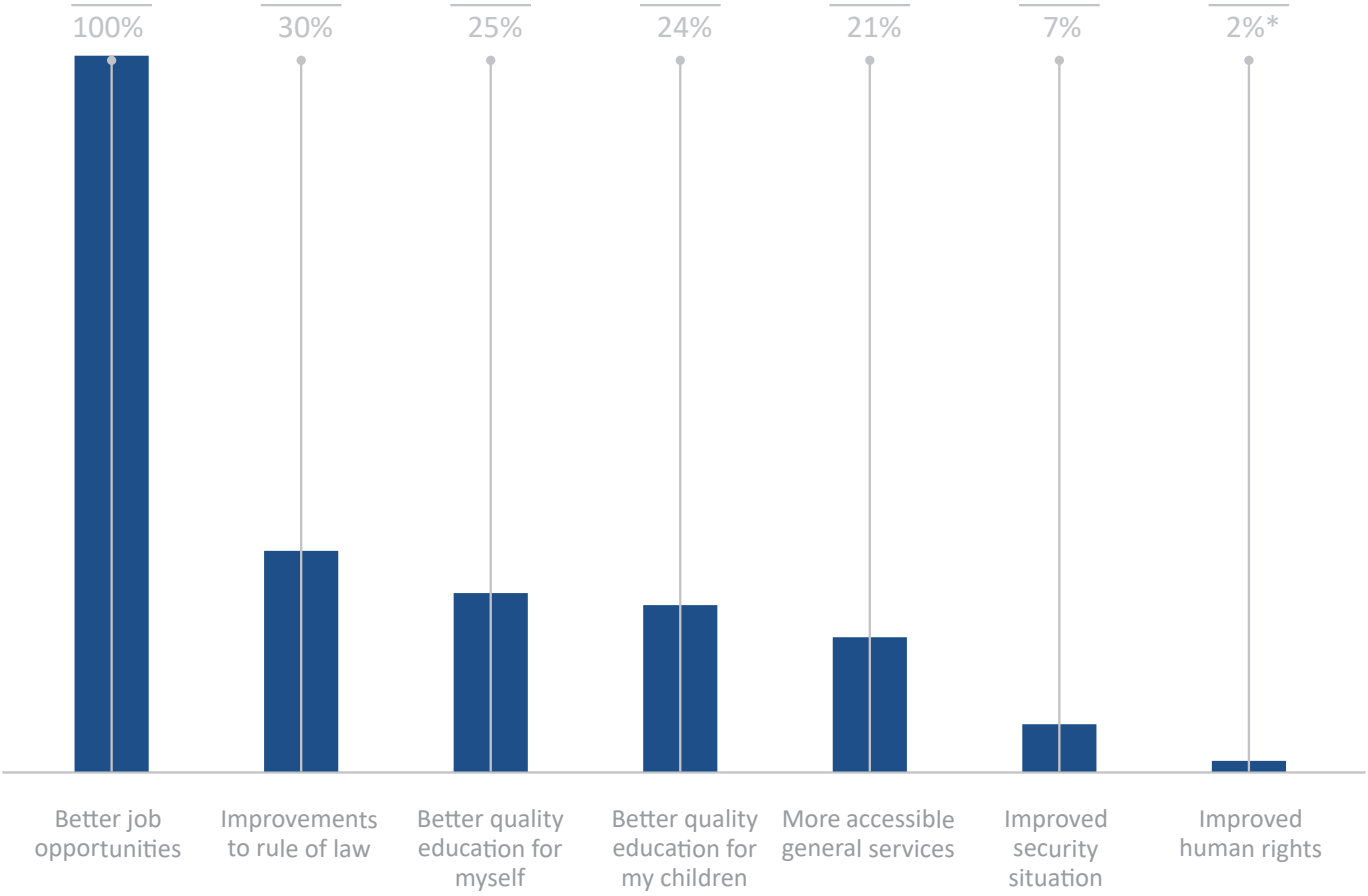
PLANNED TIME AWAY



Conditions to Stay

Potential migrants were asked what changes needed to occur in order for them to consider staying in Bangladesh. These questions were asked to understand the space for future policy action. Better job opportunities were cited by every respondent (100%), and other answers included improvements to the rule of law, better education, security situation or human rights, as well as more accessible services (including health care and education)†.

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE FOR YOU TO STAY? (top 7 answers, multiple answers possible)



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DTM
IOM DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX

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