

# UNDERSTANDING MIGRATION

THROUGH THE EYES OF RETURNEE MIGRANTS



# Summary

The purpose of this survey was to gather data on returnee migrants, more specifically; on their perceptions and experience of the overall process of migration (from initial recruitment to return). We also gathered data on returnee migrants awareness of local government support services in general, and central governments migrant-specific services. This will allow us to provide the local government units with direct feedback from returnee migrants and for us to make recommendations for them to improve their service delivery for migrants. The questions related to both local and central government services are important in the ongoing decentralisation phase, as we really want to push migration as an area within the remit of local government, not just of central government.

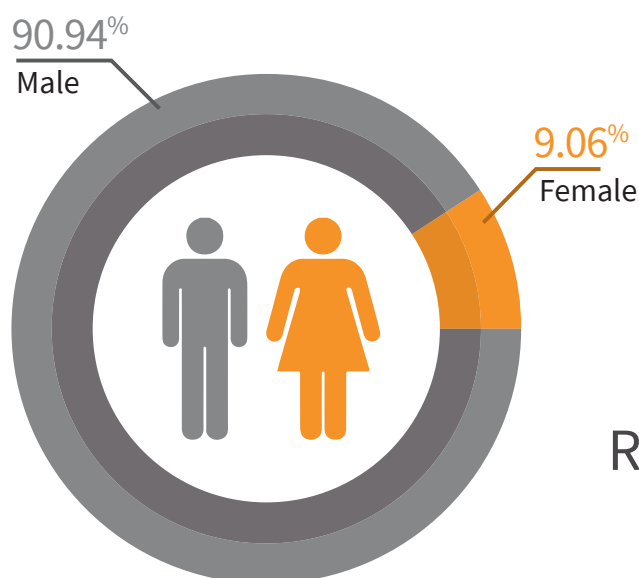
This survey revealed some important findings related to the experience of returnee migrants and their awareness of both local and central government services. We believe it is important to reframe migration as an area within the remit of the local government as many prospective and current migrants are far-removed from the central government, therefore may find it more difficult to access migration-related services.

The survey reconfirmed that migrants face problems at every stage of the migration process and that they do not always use formal channels to address these, leading to many problems not being fully solved. Additionally, migrants are still expected to pay high fees at the recruitment stage, despite the introduction of government policies such as the “free-visa free-ticket” policy (2015).

The survey also revealed that many returnee migrants are unaware of the overall role of local government, which suggests they do not expect to receive support related to migration from their local government. In relation to the central government, some returnee migrants were aware of some of the migration related services provided, but these numbers were still relatively low.

Through this survey and our work around the Citizen Helpdesk project, we hope to reframe migration as a policy area for local government to play a more significant part in it. This makes geographical sense in that migrants and their families will be closer to the government officials who can support them. In the ongoing context of the federal decentralisation process, it is the right time to push for migration support services at the local level of government.

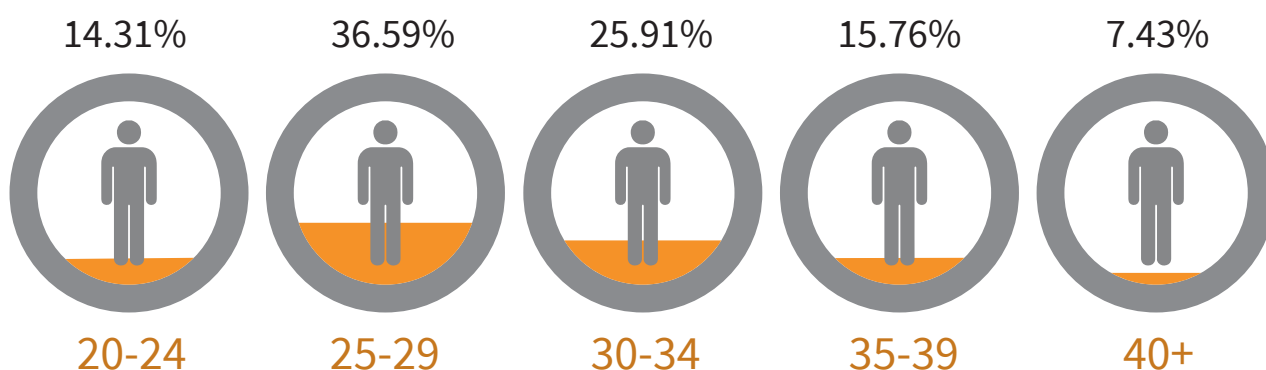
# Respondent Demographics



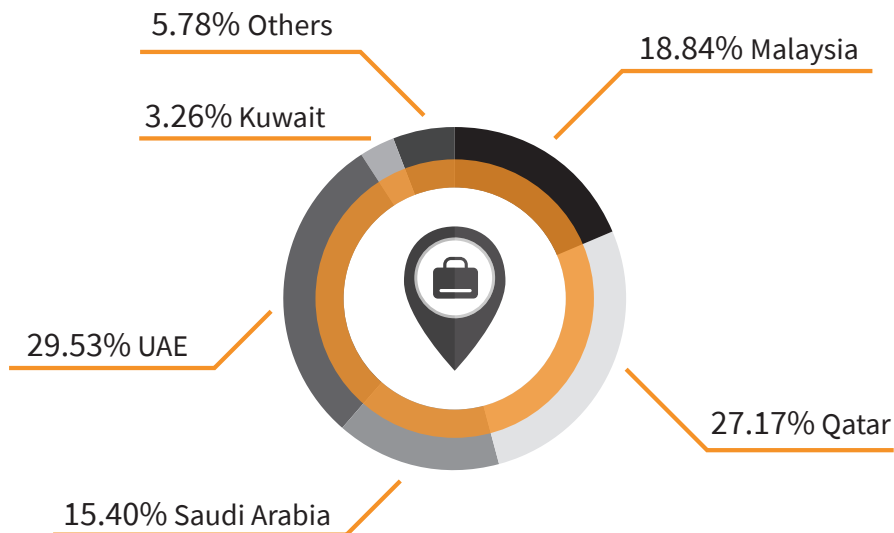
552  
Returnee Migrants

The survey respondents were returnee migrant workers from 67 districts across Nepal. We received 552 responses to the surveys, which were carried out by trained enumerators. 90.94% of participants were male, with the remaining 9.06%, female. The largest age group that participated were those aged 25-29 (36.59%), with those aged 30-34 (25.91%) as the second largest respondent age-group.

## Migrant Workers Age Group

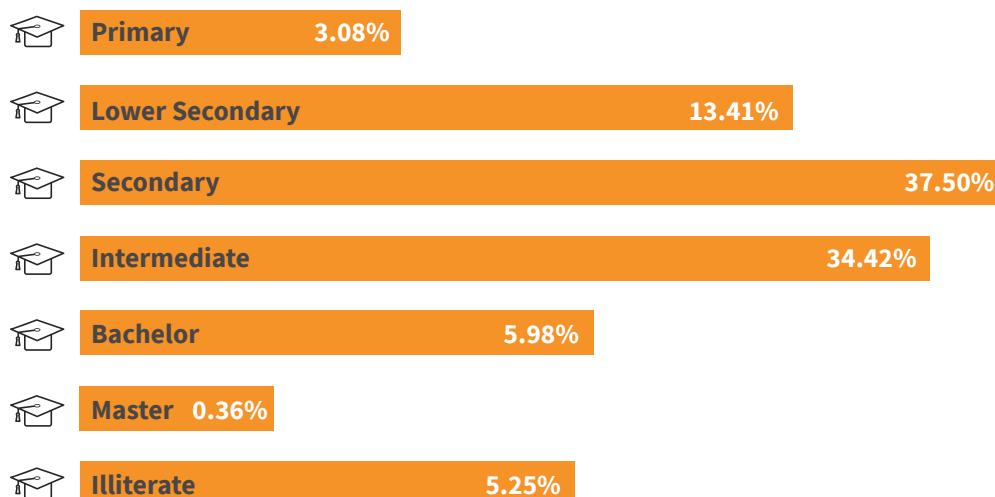


# Top Destination Countries



In terms of geographical areas of foreign employment, the UAE and Qatar were the regions where most of the respondents had returned from, with 29.53% and 27.17% of respondents respectively. Survey respondents had also returned from Malaysia (18.84%), Saudi Arabia (15.4%) and Kuwait (3.26%) amongst others. In relation to the education levels of participants, the majority had a 'secondary' (37.5%) or 'intermediate' (34.42%) level of education.

## Migrant Workers Education Level



# Initial Stage of Migration

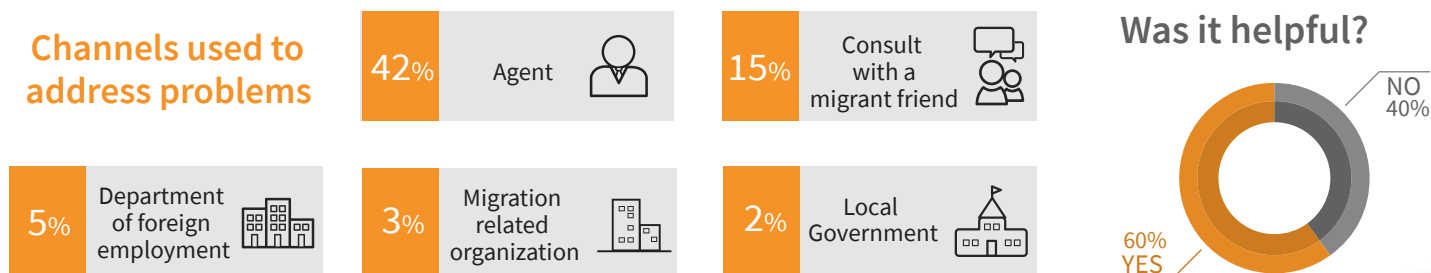
When asked about problems faced during the initial recruitment process, 30% of participants stated that they had faced a problem during this stage. When asked to expand on the problems faced, the three most common problems were: being fully dependent on recruitment agent or manpower agencies (29.01%), a lack of access to information on the recruitment process (27.78%) and difficulties in accessing government services related to outgoing migrants (15.43%).



Of the 30% of respondents who faced a problem during the recruitment stage, 68% took action to address their problem.



After taking action, 62.70% of respondents considered this helpful in solving their problem.

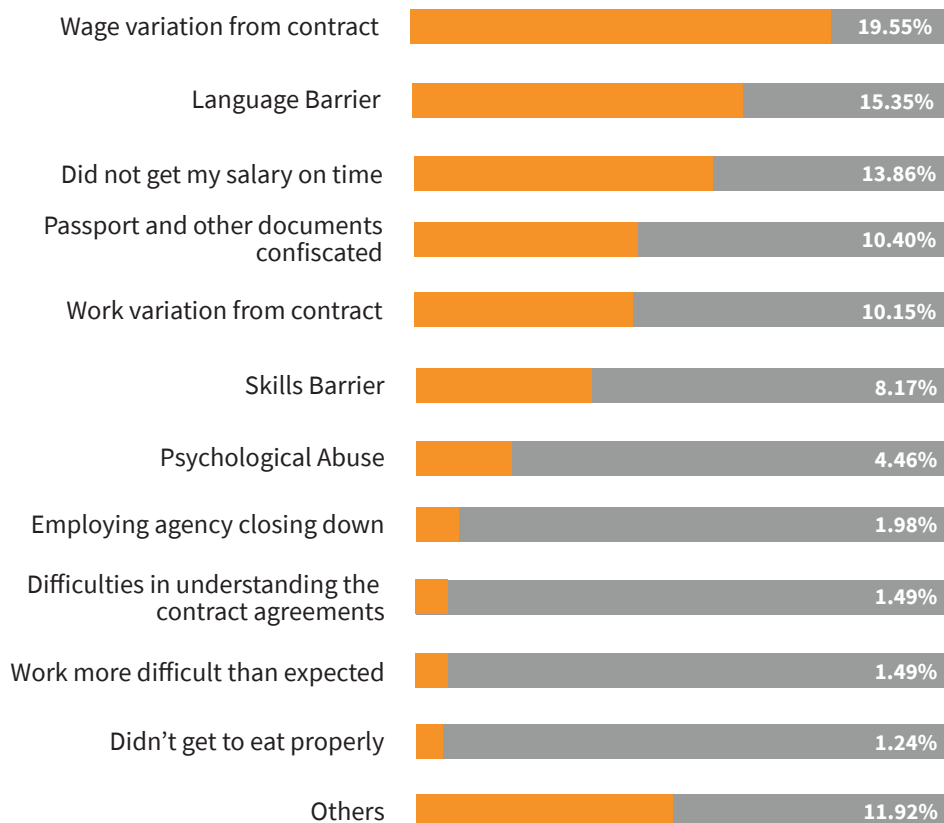




## During Migration

Respondents were asked what problems they faced during their foreign labour. 60% of respondents stated that they faced a problem during this stage, which is unsurprising due to the high level of dependency they have with agents or manpower agencies during the migration process. Of these 60%, the most commonly cited problems were; wages varying from contract agreement (19.55%), language barrier (15.35%) and not receiving the salary on time (13.86%).

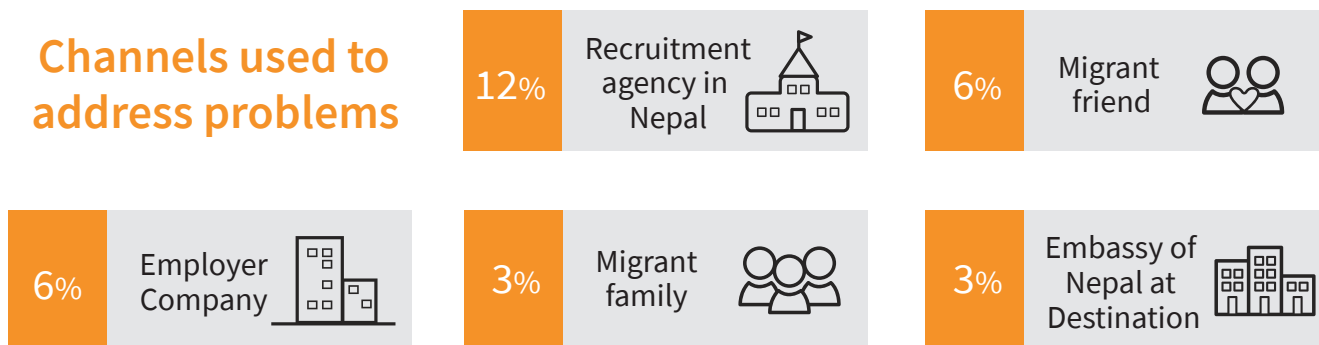
Did you face any problems  
on your stay abroad?



Respondents were again asked if they took action to address their problem, and the number decreased considerably when compared with addressing problems during the recruitment process, to only 36% of respondents who did take action. 12% approached a recruitment agency in Nepal for guidance, and 6% respectively contacted their employer or asked a migrant friend for advice. At this stage of the migration process, it seems that problems become harder to address as only 21.70% of migrants who faced a problem and attempted to address it found their method helpful.



### Channels used to address problems



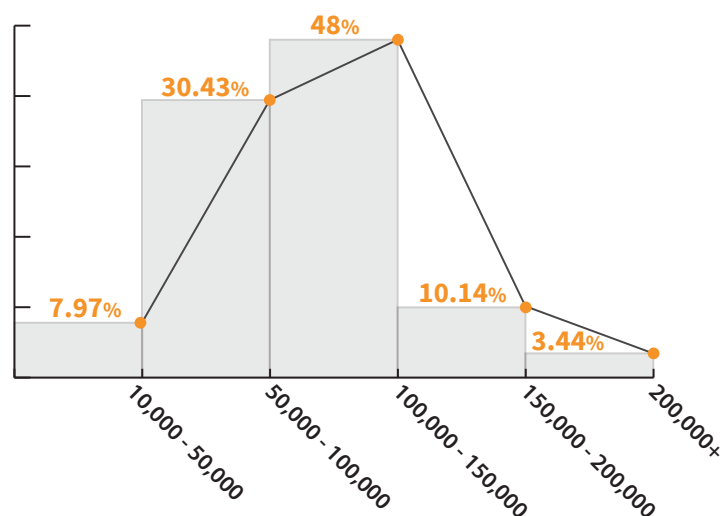
### Was it helpful?



## Recruitment Fees

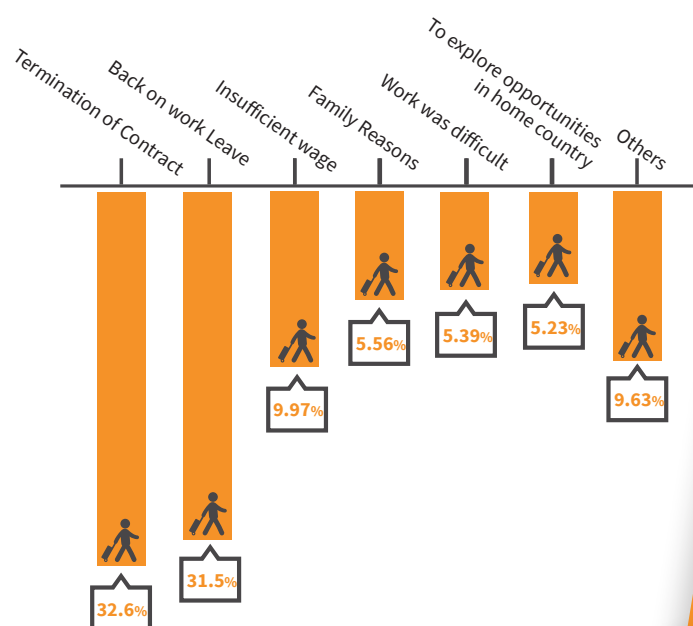
Many outgoing Nepali migrants pay a high fee during the recruitment process. Of the respondents to our survey, 48% of respondents paid between 100,000-150,000npr, and 13.58% paid between 150,000 and 200,000npr + during the initial recruitment phase.

How much did you pay for the recruitment process?



## Reason for Returning

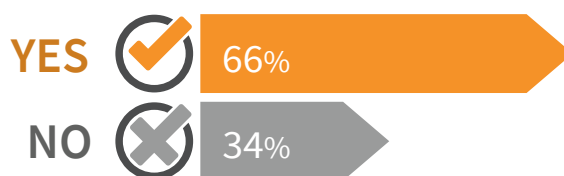
As all participants were returnee migrants, they were asked about the reasons for their return back to Nepal. 32.68% said their return was due to the termination of their contract, 31.54% said they were back on leave from work and 9.97% said they were unsatisfied with the wage they were receiving abroad.



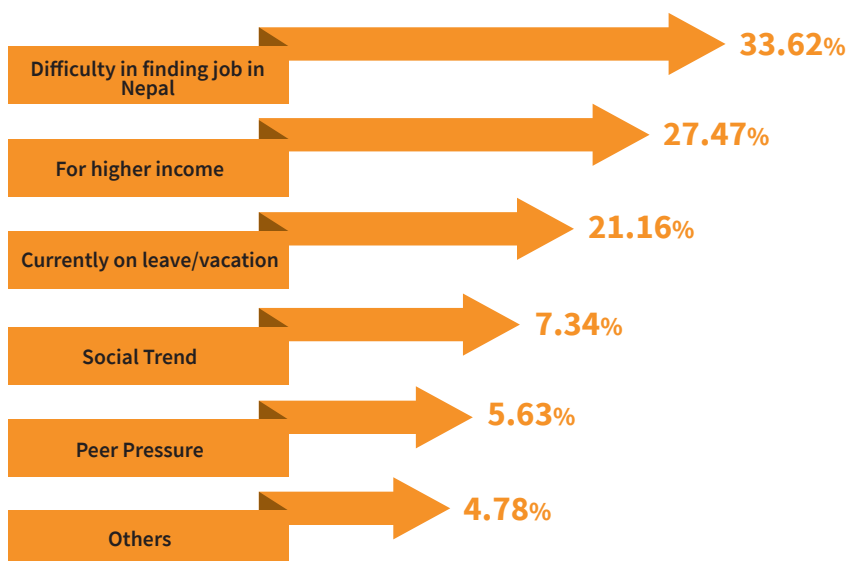


33.7% answered 'no' to the question if they were planning to migrate again. When asked why they didn't want to return abroad, 59.82% stated they wanted to start their own business and 20.98% said they wanted to remain at home and take care of their family. For the 66.3% who stated 'yes' they would migrate again, the reasons for this were; due to the difficulty of finding a job in Nepal (33.62%), because they receive a higher income abroad (27.47%) and because they were currently on leave or vacation, so were planning on returning anyway (21.16%).

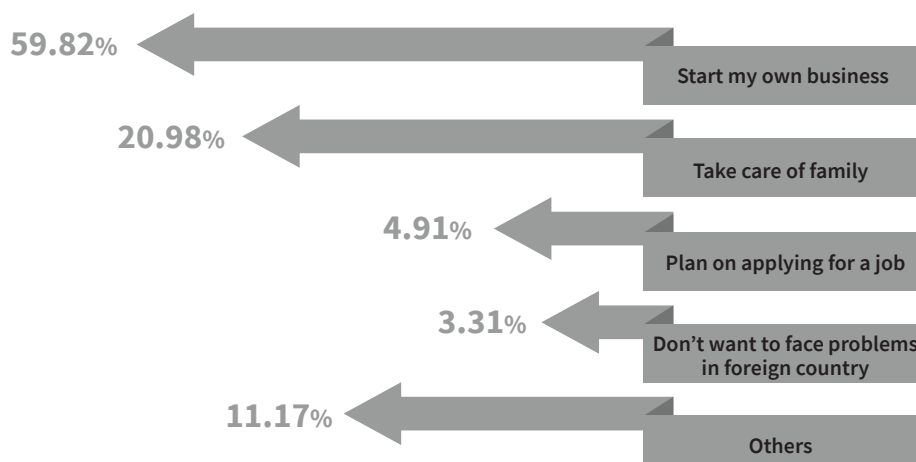
## Are you planning to migrate again?



## Why do you want to migrate again?



## Why did you decide not to migrate?



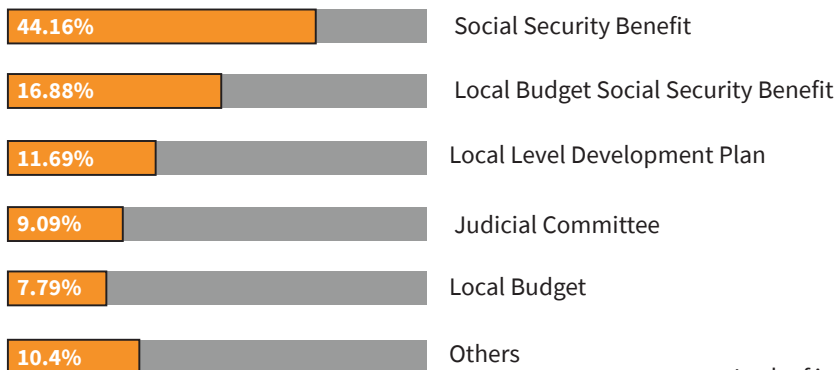
# Perception of Local Government

When survey respondents were asked if they were aware of local government policies in general, only 13.95% said 'yes'. Of these 13.95%, 44.16% were aware of the Social Security benefit provided by local government. Of those who did not know about the remit of local government, 38.63% said they had little interest in finding out about local governments role, and 34.37% stated that because they had been abroad for a long time, they were unaware of local governments recently appointed local government responsibilities.

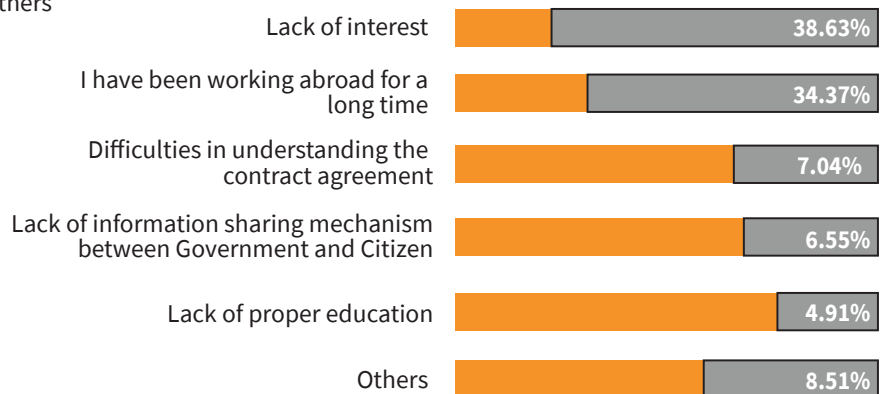
**Are you aware about local level government policy and its function amount?**



**What aspects are you aware of?**



**If 'not' why?**



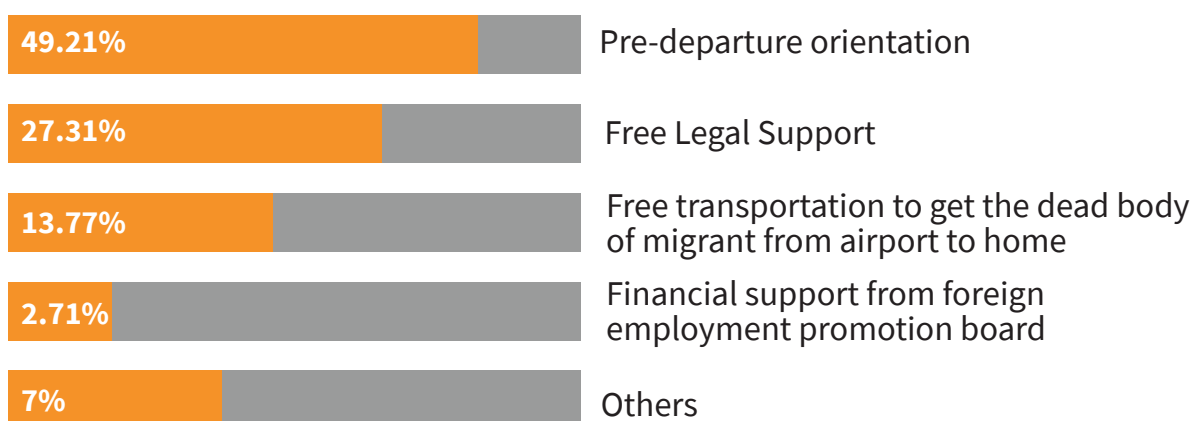
# Perception of Central Government

Respondents were then asked specifically about their knowledge of central government's support services specifically for migrants - of which, 47.1% said "yes" they do know about migrant support services. Of these respondents who knew about central government support services, 49.21% stated they were aware of the pre-departure orientation offered by the government for all outgoing migrants. 27.31% were also aware of the free legal support offered by the government.

**Are you aware about the Government's support to Migrant workers?**



**What support are you aware of?**





**An initiative to close  
the feedback loop and ensure  
people powered accountability  
in Nepal**

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