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MIGRATION OF SRI LANKAN WOMEN AS HOUSEMAIDS TO THE MIDDLE EAST

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MIGRATION

OF

SRI

LANKAN

AS HOUSEMAIDS TO THE MIDDLE EAST

SRIYANI TIDBALL

WOMEN

FACT

More than 1.7 million Sri Lankans now work abroad, and nearly 600,000 are housemaids... In Saudi Arabia, the most common destination, they call Sri Lanka “the country of housemaids.”

FACT

Fifteen to 20 percent of the 120,000 (approx) Sri Lankan women who leave each year for the Gulf return prematurely, face abuse, nonpayment of salary, or get drawn into illicit human trafficking schemes or prostitution.

Hundreds of housemaids have become pregnant, often after rapes, producing children who, until Sri Lanka's Constitution was recently amended, were Stateless because their fathers were foreigners.

LABOR MARKET FOR SRI LANKAN MAIDS

Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, U.A.E. and Jordan were the major labor receiving countries that have captured over 86% of the Sri Lankan foreign workers.

Their work contracts do not fall under labor laws but under the jurisdiction of immigration authorities.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNINGS

Foreign exchange earnings show that these employees earned Rs. 382,801 Million in 2009 which was 47.03% of total foreign exchange earnings of Sri Lanka. A very large source of income for the Government of Sri Lanka.

According to Reuters Sri Lanka received \$2.5 billion from workers' remittances in 2008 and \$3.4 billion in 2009.

IN 2009

Departures of workers for foreign employment: 247,119

Female participation was 51.73%, out of total departures

89% of total female migrant workers that left Sri Lanka went as housemaids

The number of licensed foreign employment agencies in Sri Lanka increased from 626 to 646

182 raids on illegal recruiting agencies

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY SLBFE

The number of complaints received in 2009 from women working as housemaids increased by 2,402 complaints, 4.88% of recruitment.

Recorded Harassment Complaints (Physical and Sexual)

2005 – 1,949

2006 - 1,765

2007 – 997

2008 – 1,188

Source: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY SLBFE 2009

Complaints: 12,061 – 78% females

Physical and sexual harassment: 96% female

Not sent back at the end of contract: 92% female

Not payment of agreed wages: 81% female

Breach of contract: 62% female

Source: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

COMPLAINTS BY COUNTRY

Country	2007			2008			2009		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
KSA	424	3343	3747	662	3534	4196	1232	4564	5796
Kuwait	70	1486	1556	234	1820	2054	259	2097	2356
Jordan	12	833	845	54	950	1004	37	1190	1227
UAE	193	510	703	272	549	821	399	599	998
Qatar	338	114	452	418	137	555	440	209	649
Source	SLF BE	(2009)							

DEATHS OF HOUSEMAIDS

**Number of deaths reported during the year
2009 was 333. An increase by 4.88% over 2008.**

Analysis of the most recent 340 deaths

Accidental: 277

Homicide: 50

Suicide: 13

**Source: Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign
Employment**

KUWAIT

KUWAIT - Nearly 2,000 women domestic workers every year since the liberation of Kuwait in 1991 have fled the homes of abusive employers. These women are mainly from Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Bangladesh, and India. They report patterns of rape and physical assault, with debt bondage and illegal confinement being common.

Human Rights Watch Global Report on Women's Human Rights

KUWAIT (TIER 3)

Kuwait is a destination country for men and women trafficked for the purposes of forced labor. The majority of trafficking victims are from among the over 500,000 foreign women recruited for domestic service work in Kuwait ... Adult female migrant workers are particularly vulnerable, and consequently are often victims of sexual exploitation and forced prostitution.

Extracted from U.S. State Dept Trafficking in Persons Report, June 2009

SAUDI ARABIA

Foreign embassies continued to receive many reports that employers abused foreign women working as domestic servants. Some embassies of countries with large domestic servant populations maintained safe houses to which their citizens may flee to escape work situations that included forced confinement, withholding of food, nonpayment of salaries, beating and other physical abuse, and rape.

Extracted from U.S. State Dept, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor 2005

SAUDI ARABIA

The story of Ariyawathi – doctors removed 13 nails and five needles from her body – leaving nine nails in her body

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ge9dyWzxDAs>

The story of Rizana Nafeek on death row

The story of Padma

The story of Chandragani

DISTRIBUTION OF REMITTANCES (BILLIONS OF UNITED STATES DOLLARS)

	1990	1995	2001	2002	2003
East Asia and Pacific	3.0	9.9	13.7	17.0	17.6
Europe and Central Asia	3.2	5.6	10.2	10.3	10.4
Latin America and Caribbean	5.7	12.9	22.9	26.8	29.6
Middle East and North Africa	11.4	10.0	13.2	13.0	13.0
South Asia	5.6	10.0	13.1	16.9	18.2
Sub-Saharan Africa	1.5	2.7	3.9	4.1	4.1
Total	30.4	51.2	77.1	88.1	93.0

Source: International Monetary Fund, and World Bank, "Global monitoring report 2004: policies and actions for achieving the MDGs and related outcomes." (DC2004-0006) (Washington, D.C., 2004).

DEPARTURES FOR FOREIGN EMPLOYMENT SRI LANKA 1997 - 2007

Year	Male	No. %	Female	No. %	Total
1997	37,552	24.99	112,731	75.01	150,283
1998	53,867	33.71	105,949	66.29	159,816
1999	63,720	35.45	116,015	64.55	179,735
2000	59,793	32.82	122,395	67.18	182,188
2001	59,807	32.50	124,200	67.50	184,007
2002	70,522	34.61	133,251	65.39	203,773
2003	74,508	35.51	135,338	64.49	209,846
2004	80,699	37.59	134,010	62.41	214,709
2005	93,896	40.60	137,394	59.40	231,290
2006	90,170	44.65	111,778	55.35	201,948
2007	102,629	47.23	114,677	52.77	217,306

Source: Information Technology Division-Airport Survey-SLBFE 1992-1993

MANPOWER LEVEL

Manpower Level	Male	Female	Total
Professional Level	12,200	2,550	14,750
Middle Level	36,500	10,000	46,500
Clerical & Related	59,300	11,780	71,080
Skilled	260,400	107,100	367,500
Semi Skilled	3,100	235	3,335
Unskilled	250,800	77,990	328,790
Housemaids		810,500	810,500
Total	622,300	1,020,155	1,642,455

Source: Information Technology Division-Airport Survey-SLBFE

MORE INFORMATION

**About 40% of the migrants do not face
difficulties**

40% have difficulties not related to trafficking

20% at the mercy of traffickers

Source: Rural Development Foundation Sri Lanka

MORE INFORMATION

**A mid-2009 survey states about housemaid
returnees to Sri Lanka**

**48% were assaulted by someone from the
employer's household**

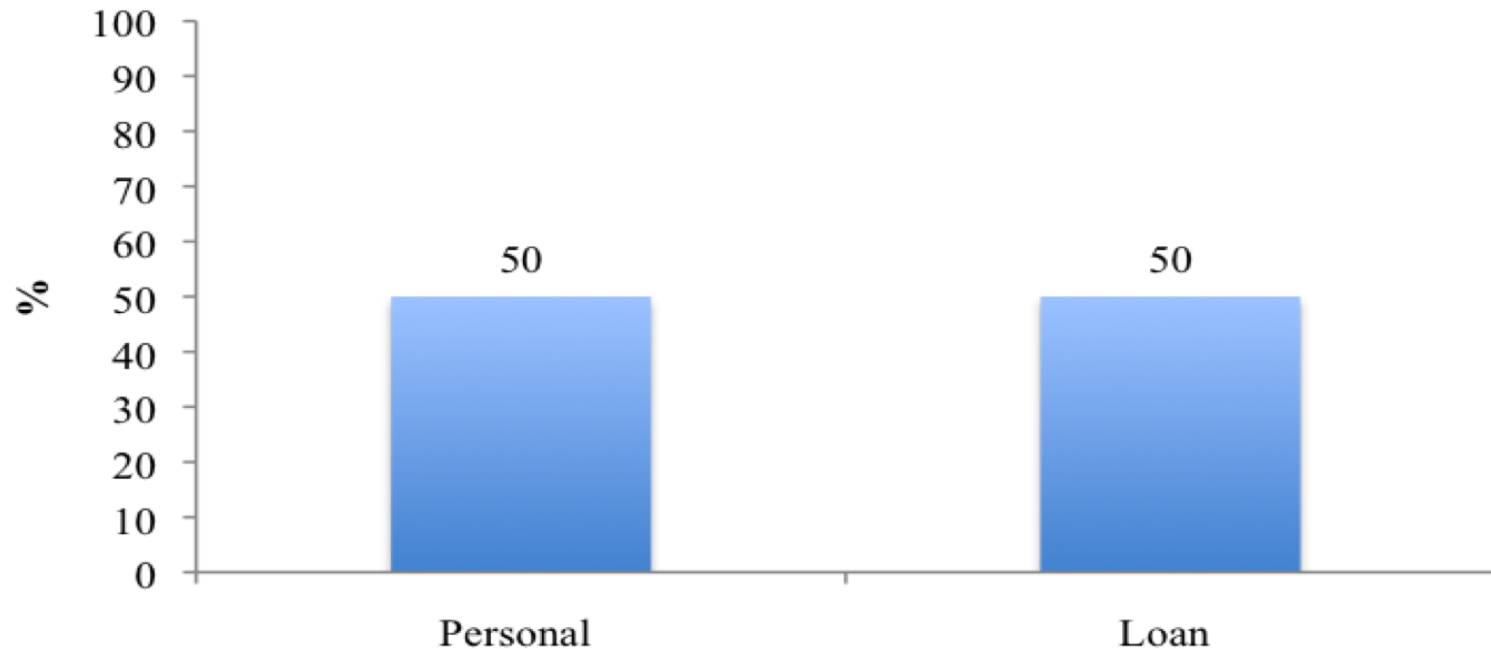
52% were not paid the promised salary

84% were not paid for their overtime work

Source: TIP(2010) U.S. Dept of State

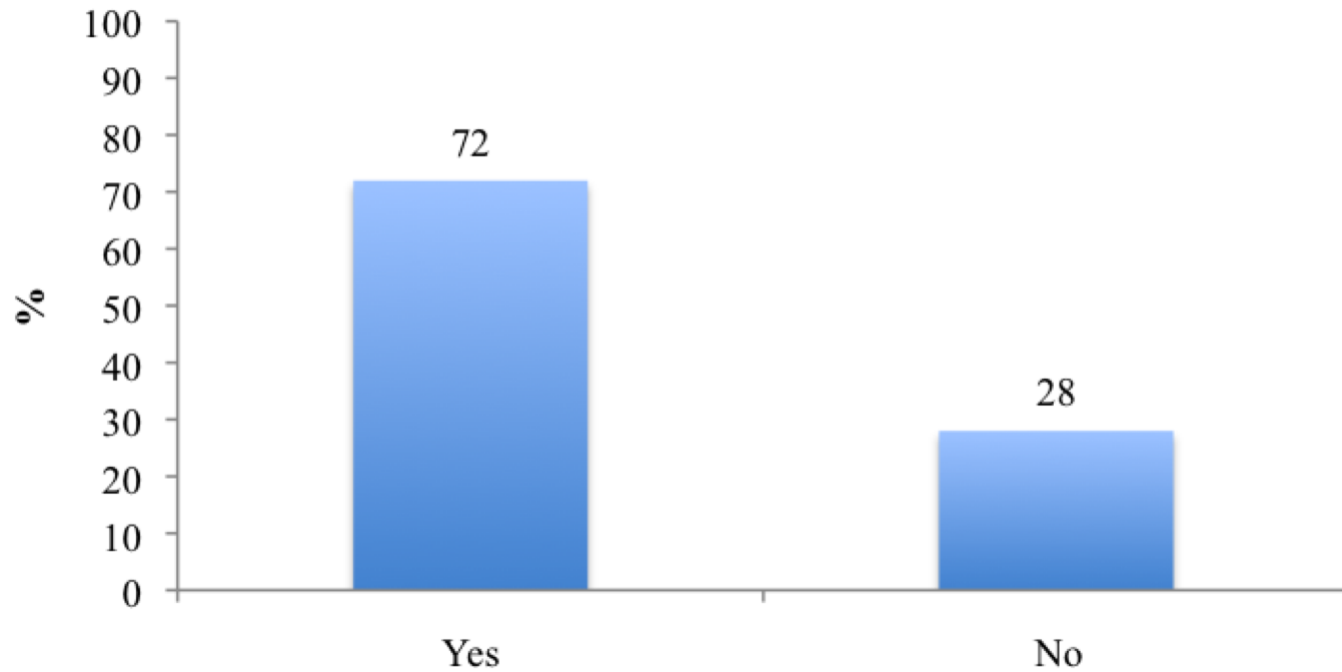
AFTER THEIR EMPLOYMENT AS HOUSEMAIDS

Of Those Who Paid: Personal / Loan

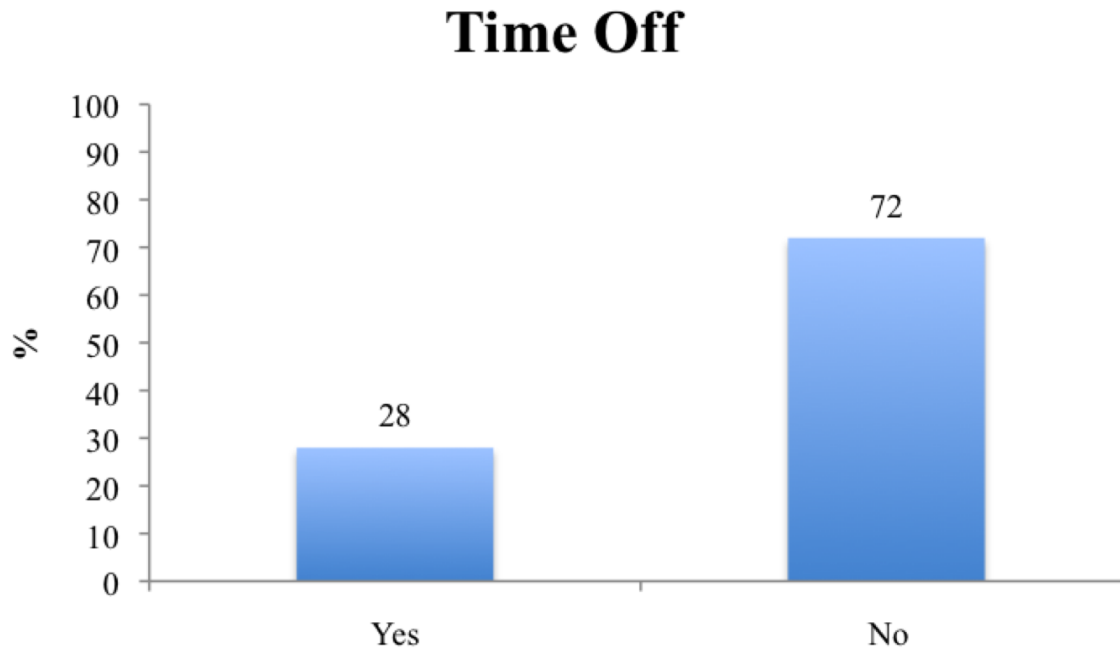


THE COST OF GETTING THE JOB

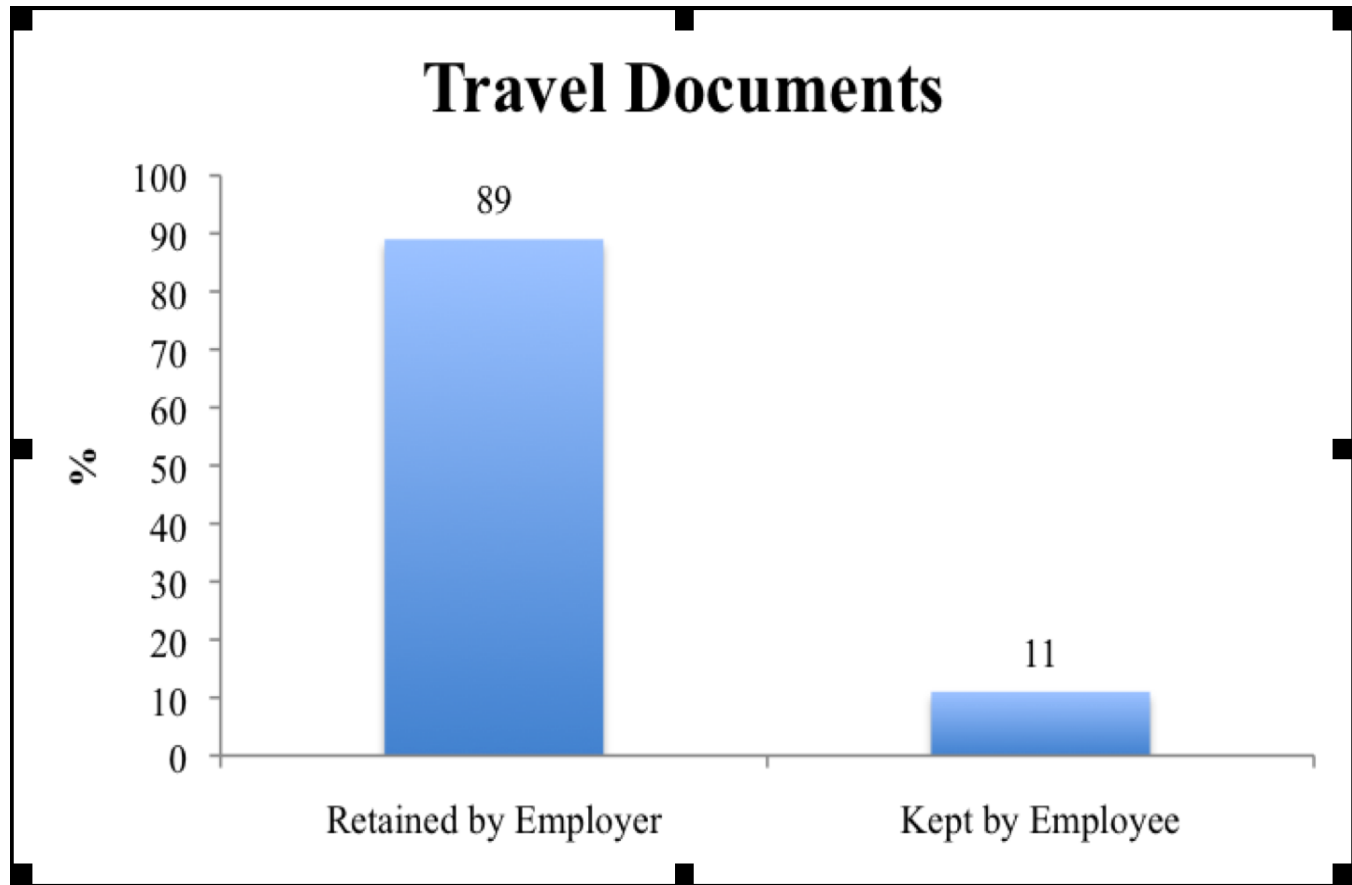
Did You Pay the Agent?



DID YOU HAVE ANY TIME OFF EACH WEEK

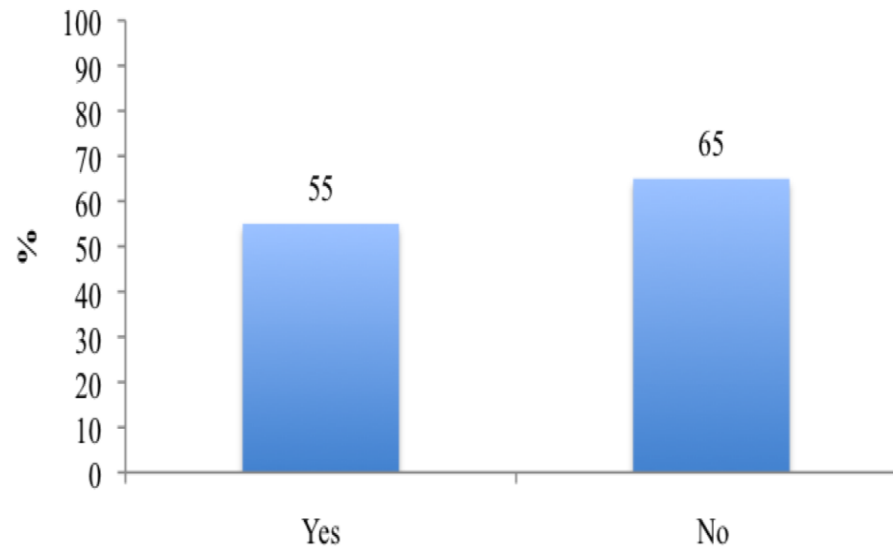


EMPLOYERS RETAINS TRAVEL DOCUMENTS



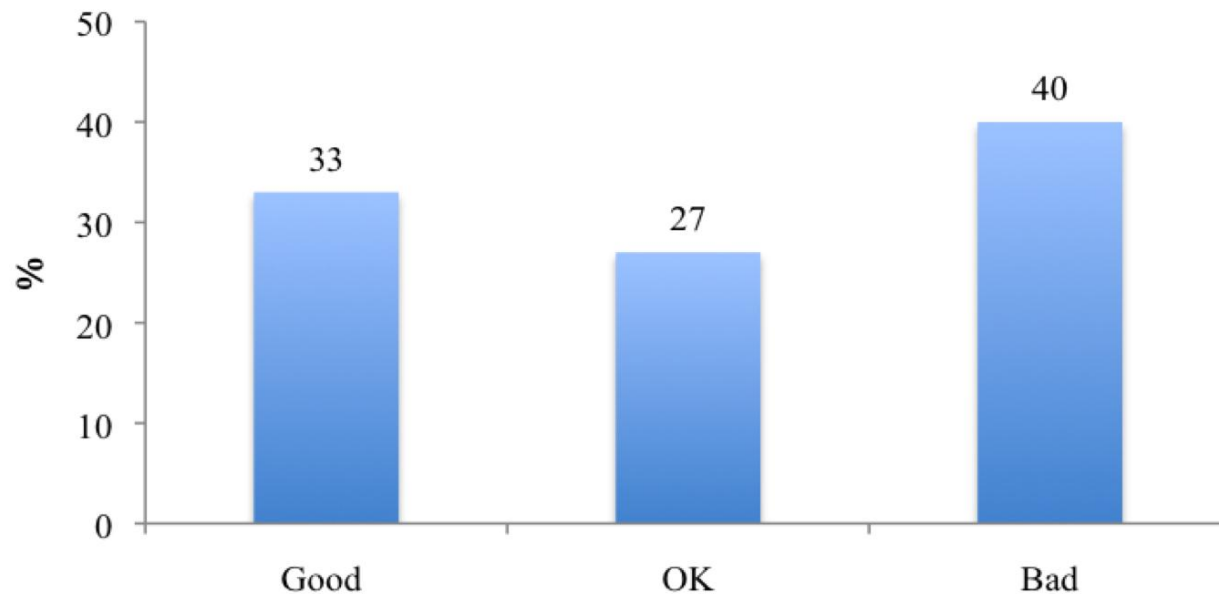
KNEW ILL-TREATED SRI LANKAN MAIDS

Know Other Sri Lankans Who Were
Ill-Treated



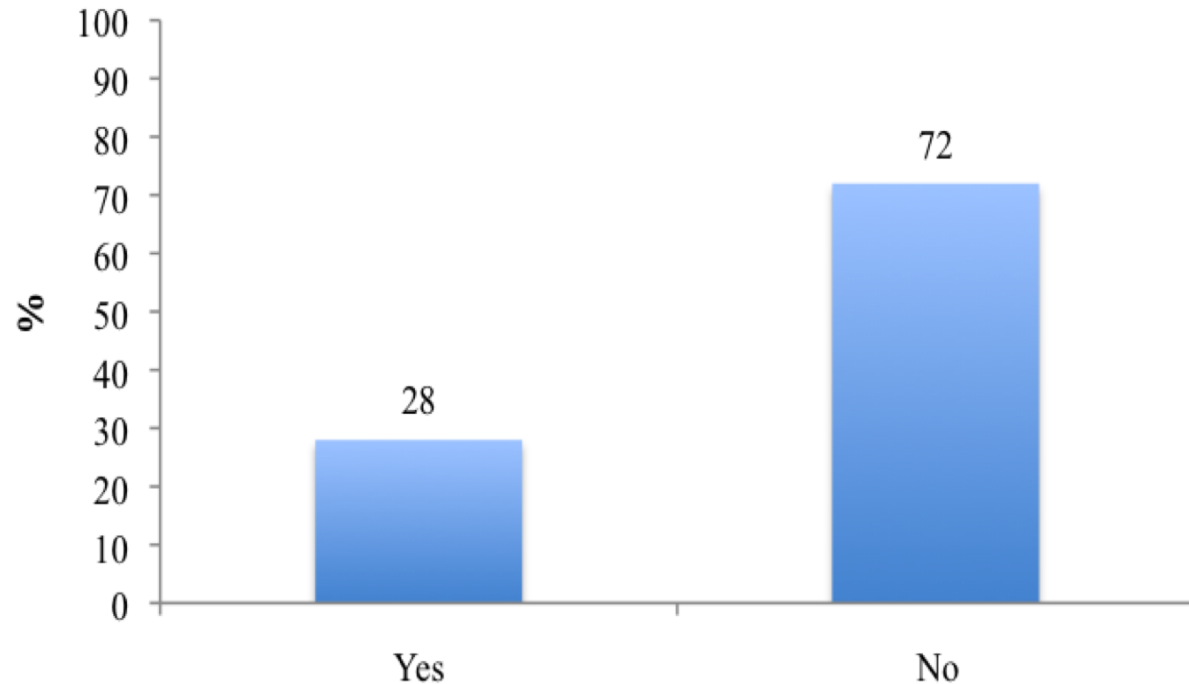
COMING BACK TO SRI LANKA

Home Situation on Return



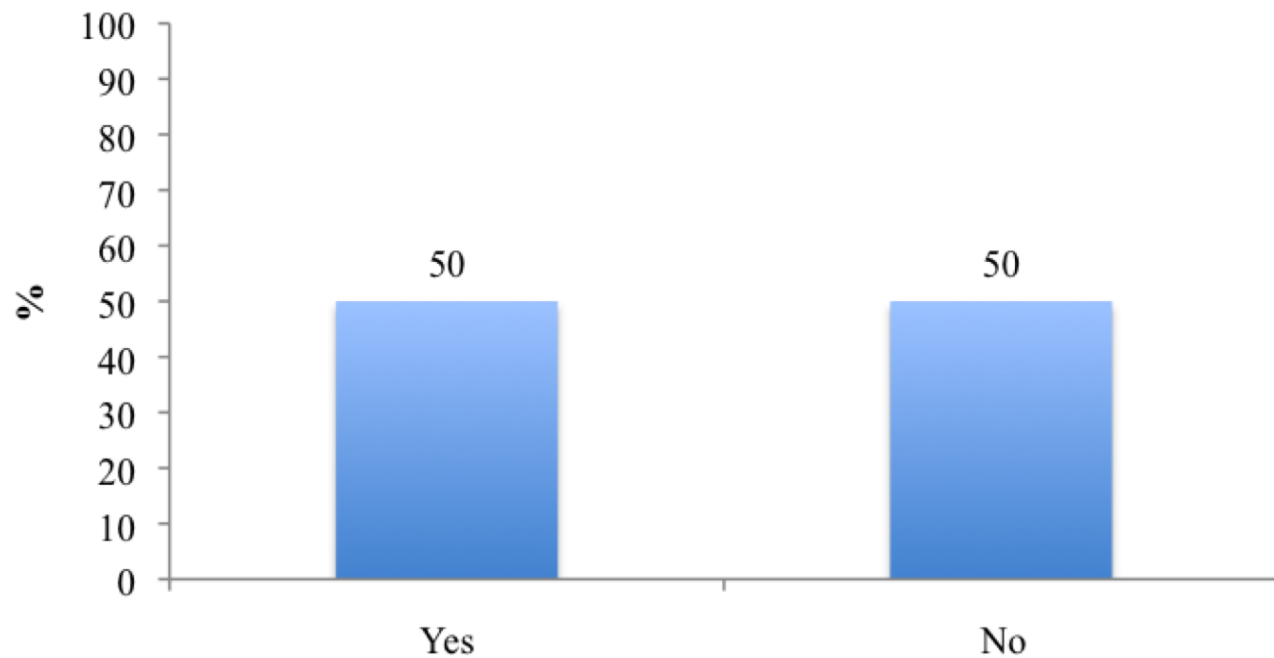
MADE MONEY AS A HOUSEMAID

Make Money as Planned



DID THIS HELP YOUR FAMILY

Are You Glad You Went?



IOM AND CENWOR

Due to interpretation: Professor of Law, and head of CENWOR Savithri Gunasekera says human trafficking law needs to be reformed for they cannot conclude that Sri Lanka's migrant women are being trafficked.

SOCIAL UPHEAVAL WITHOUT A MOTHER AT HOME

Families become dysfunctional

Lack a mother's care and love

Money gets used before the mother returns

Husband starts drinking or becomes unfaithful

Increased incidents of incest

Some teenage children get pregnant

Some get abused

Children drop out of school

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Two Catholic nuns (a German and a Sri Lankan) lived in Jordan for 10 years and helped women in distress. They are trying to deter women from becoming housemaids.

GOSL has recently made 21 minimum age, working on skills training, prosecuting illegal employment agencies and policy reform

Need more job opportunities in Sri Lanka

NGO's: WIN, ACTFORM, Heavena ...

The story of Indu

THANK YOU

Sriyani Tidball