



**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency



# Sri Lankan Refugee Returnees in 2019 and 2020

Results of Household Visit Protection Monitoring Interviews (Tool Two)  
October 2022



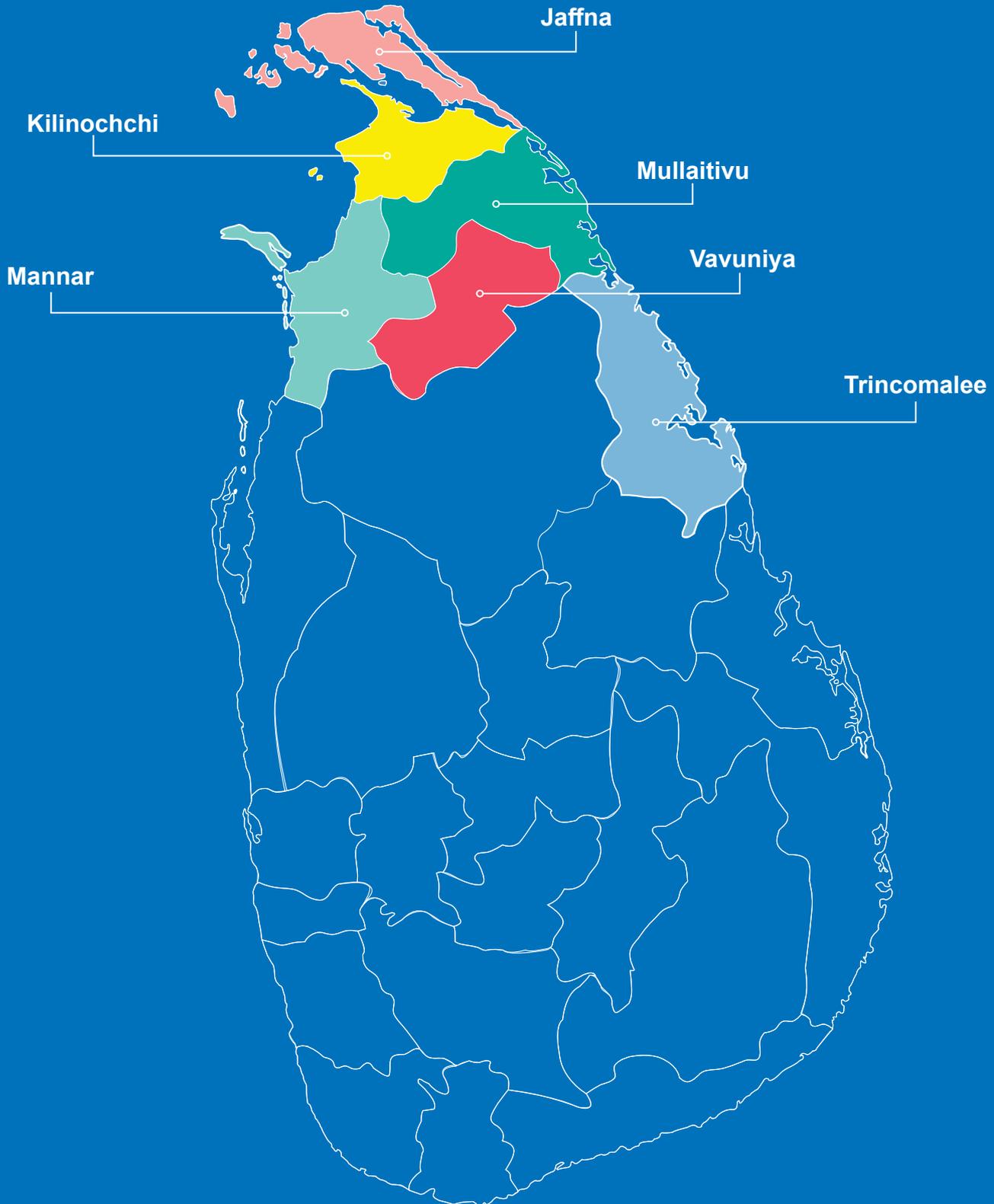
# **Sri Lankan Refugee Returnees in 2019 and 2020**

**Results of Household Visit Protection Monitoring Interviews (Tool Two)  
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**Six districts in the Northern and Eastern Provinces were covered in this Household Visit Protection Monitoring Interviews (Tool Two) research**

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# Points to be kept in mind in reading this report

**Refugee returnees, not IDP returnees:** This report reflects the experiences and views of refugee returnees in 2019 and 2020 and it should not be assumed that the findings reflect experiences and views of all IDP returnees. Throughout this document, the term 'returnee' only refers to refugee returnees. Although each group was forcibly displaced, there are significant differences in their displacement situations, including the duration they were away from the area of origin, educational and work opportunities while in displacement, documentation needs (e.g., birth certificates), as well as programme assistance during the period of return and reintegration.

## **Impact of covid-19:**

- ▶ 2020 was the first full year of the covid-19 pandemic and responses should be looked at in this context. It should also be noted that the number of returnees in 2020 was lower than in previous years due to restrictions in travel between India and Sri Lanka due to the pandemic.
- ▶ Secondly, the challenging circumstances of undertaking fieldwork from December 2021 to March 2022 in view of the continuing covid-19 situation should also be kept in mind.

**Sample size:** The report covers a significant proportion of returnees from the two years being covered. Overall, the total household interviews sample size (of 2019 and 2020 returnees added together) was 222, with 153 families being covered among the 436 refugee returnee families who returned in 2019, and 69 families being covered among the 97 refugee returnee families who returned in 2020. As in the past, the research was undertaken in all five districts of the Northern province and in the Trincomalee district of Eastern province, the districts housing significant numbers of returnees.

**Data is self-reported:** All data is as reported by the refugee returnee respondents. Interviewers did not attempt to verify answers provided by respondents (e.g., independently inspect shelter for damage). Data is therefore accurate only if the respondent was truthful in response.

**Rounding off data:** Due to rounding off of decimals to the nearest whole number, in some instances totals may not add up exactly to 100%.

**Multiple responses:** For questions where respondents can give multiple responses, the sum of the responses could exceed 100%.

## Abbreviations

BC	Birth Certificate
CRPO	Child Rights Promotion Officer
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
DS	Divisional Secretary
GN	Grama Niladhari
HH	Household
HoH	Head of Household
HRCSL	Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka
HSZ	High Security Zone
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
LDO	Land Development Ordinance
MOH	Medical Officer of Health
MRE	Mine Risk Education
NFI	Non-Food Item
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIC	National Identity Card
PWSN	Person with Specific Needs
SL	Sri Lanka
TID	Terrorist Investigation Division
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WDO	Women Development Officer

# Introduction

Since the end of the armed conflict in Sri Lanka in May 2009, increasing numbers of Sri Lankan refugees and asylum-seekers outside the country have been considering the possibility of voluntary repatriation.

Responsive to this demand, UNHCR Sri Lanka in cooperation with UNHCR offices in countries of asylum, in particular in Tamil Nadu, India, continues to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of Sri Lankan refugees.

This initiative is aimed at obtaining and analysing credible factual data regarding the return and reintegration experience of those who have already returned. Solid protection monitoring data of these returnees allows UNHCR to intervene as appropriate - and improve the protection environment. The report produced on the basis of data collected from returnees every month upon their immediate return to their places of origin is known as "Tool One", and the report produced on the basis of data collected from returnees every year thereafter is known as "Tool Two". This data and its analysis also assist UNHCR staff in countries of asylum to better counsel Sri Lankan refugees and asylum-seekers, who are considering 'return', as to the challenges and potential risks linked to voluntary repatriation. Such counselling, when backed by a solid analysis of the situation on the ground, helps to ensure that any decision to repatriate is an informed one. It is also a key advocacy tool as UNHCR shares this report with donors and government entities to highlight gaps which could be addressed by donor driven and government assistance programmes.

For facilitated voluntary repatriation, UNHCR staff in the country of asylum counsel prospective returnees and verify the voluntary nature of their decision. UNHCR then provides air transport for refugees who wish to return. UNHCR Sri Lanka staff meet each facilitated returnee upon arrival at the

airport to ensure his / her safe arrival and provide protection counselling and social advice to the returnee. UNHCR also assists the returnee with reintegration and non-food item (NFI) cash grants and a modest transportation allowance for onward transportation to his / her village of origin under a UNHCR-funded programme with the Bank of Ceylon. Upon arrival in the village of origin, the UNHCR Field Office located in Jaffna registers the facilitated returnees who visit the office or one of the five District Offices of the Social Services Department in the five Northern Districts and in the Trincomalee District in the Eastern Province for post return protection monitoring and follow-up advocacy and intervention. Returnees also receive counselling on reintegration support, including procedures to obtain essential civil documentation, such as birth certificates and national identity cards. Referrals are made to government authorities and specialized NGOs / agencies to obtain further assistance. Furthermore, returnees were directly linked to Mine Risk Education programmes in their areas of return.

A significant number of Sri Lankan refugees return spontaneously. Although spontaneous returnees are not eligible for UNHCR cash grants or NFI assistance, UNHCR encourages this group to approach UNHCR for protection monitoring purposes and referral to specialized NGOs / agencies that can support their reintegration process.

In addition to collecting monitoring information from individuals who approach UNHCR or during frequent visits conducted by UNHCR and partners to returnee areas, UNHCR Sri Lanka utilizes the two "tools", named as Tool One and Tool Two, to ensure a systemised approach to returnee protection assessment and monitoring and has done so since 2011. These monitoring "tools" cover all refugee returnees known to UNHCR, whether their return is facilitated or spontaneous.

### Tool One:

UNHCR staff undertake a short, one-time standardised protection interview when returnees approach the UNHCR field office. The report produced on the basis of these interviews is known as 'Tool One'. Tool One has been operational in all areas of refugee return since May 2011.

Although Tool One interviews are onetime snapshots of the initial return experience for each family, the comparison of this assessment data from month to month indicates trends and feeds into protection monitoring.

While these initial interviews under Tool One provide useful information on the return and reintegration process, the interviews are relatively short, concentrating on quantitative data, and are undertaken within the first few days or weeks following return. The methodology also disproportionately relies on responses from heads of household, and thus, does not necessarily reflect the age, gender and diversity spectrum of refugee returnees. Thus, soon after the launch of Tool One, it was apparent that an additional protection monitoring mechanism was required. This resulted in the commencement of 'Tool Two'.

### Tool Two:

For 'Tool Two', UNHCR field staff and UNHCR's protection partner staff, visit households of a representative sample of refugee returnees, to collect a comprehensive mix of quantitative and qualitative data regarding the return and reintegration experience (in general one year after return).

UNHCR gains in-depth knowledge and information necessary to analyse the reintegration process and protection challenges faced by returning refugees through both a mid and long-term perspective. Moreover, since interviews take place inside the returnee's home and include open-ended questions, a more accurate and in-depth response is expected.

Tool Two functions as a detailed protection assessment. In order to ensure it meets its full protection potential, UNHCR analyses the findings of this Tool alongside the findings of Tool One.

This document reports the data, analysis and conclusions of the Tool Two survey among refugee returnees who returned to their places of origin in 2019 and 2020, and is the work of UNHCR Sri Lanka, with the combined efforts of protection and field teams in Jaffna and Colombo. While the survey was conducted among returnees in 2019 and 2020, fieldwork was undertaken in 2021 and 2022, after the easing of the covid-19 pandemic in Sri Lanka.

## Methodology

The Tool Two questionnaire administered for this survey was developed by UNHCR in direct consultation with key external experts in order to provide the most comprehensive data possible regarding the voluntary repatriation and reintegration experience of refugees.

Sampling was undertaken in all five districts of the Northern Province and in the Trincomalee district of the Eastern Province. The randomly selected sample represented facilitated refugee returnees who approached UNHCR field offices in 2019 and 2020. The sample selection technique sought to balance the return type and districts of returnees. Respondents were spread across Jaffna, Vavuniya, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Mannar and Trincomalee districts.

UNHCR Colombo office provided UNHCR Jaffna office with the (randomly) selected list of households for interviewing specific to each district. Field staff visited sample households between December 2021 and March 2022 and interviewed the most senior member of the

household present. Respondents were informed that the exercise was voluntary and that their participation or non-participation has no link to material assistance or other programmes. Although none of the families visited refused to participate, family members from 28 out of the attempted census of 97 returnee households in 2020 and from 57 out of the preselected sample of 210 households among 2019 returnees could not be contacted as they were no longer in the envisaged locations at the time of the visit. The corresponding number of non participant households for the same survey among 2018 returnees (conducted in 2019) was 56 from a preselected sample of 357.

A list of reasons for being unable to undertake interviews is listed out in Table 1 below. The most prominent reason was the family having moved elsewhere (in Sri Lanka, back to India or to an unknown location). Further, it should be noted that if a household was empty at the time of the visit but neighbours indicated that the family still lived there, the team returned for the interview subsequently.

**Table 1: Reasons for unavailability of returnees as per neighbours, community or GN**

Reasons given by neighbours, community, GN for inability to contact returnees	2020	2019	2018
Returned but since moved elsewhere: location unknown	7	11	6
Returned but since moved elsewhere in Sri Lanka	11	21	23
Returned but since moved back to India	5	12	21
Returned, but since moved out of Sri Lanka	1	6	3
Head of household hospitalised	-	1	-
Head of household is in prison	1	-	-
Head of household passed away	3	5	2
Head of household has returned to India to bring back family	-	-	1
Currently under quarantine (for covid-19)	-	1	-
<b>No. of households not surveyed out of the planned sample</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>56</b>
No. of households surveyed out of the planned sample	69	153	301
No. of households randomly selected in the planned sample	97	210	357
Total number of returnee households during the year	97	436	563

Sample size and percentage of returnee households surveyed:

- ▶ 2020 returnees: Of the attempted census to interview an adult family member in the 97 households where the individuals or families returned in 2020, respondents from 69 households (71%) were interviewed using the Tool Two questionnaire.
- ▶ 2019 returnees: Of the 436 individuals or families that returned in 2019 (i.e., 436 households), 48% (210 households) were randomly selected for the administration of the Tool Two questionnaire. Due to the reasons outlined above, a total of 153 interviews were conducted, with family members from 57 households not being contactable. The percentage of 2019 returnee households surveyed was therefore 35%.

Responses were recorded by staff via pen and paper interviews. All completed questionnaires were sent to UNHCR Colombo. Questionnaires were scrutinized and keyed into a Microsoft Excel data base by data coders. Data analysis was then carried out using a combination of Microsoft Excel and SPSS<sup>1</sup> software.

District wise sample sizes are proportionate to the district wise population distribution of returnees for 2020 as well as for 2019 (Refer Table 2 below). Since data is reported separately for each year and the sample is proportionate to the no. of returnee household numbers, the data is not weighted.

**Table 2: Sample sizes and universe contribution by district**

District	2020				2019			
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
	Sample size (No. of families)	Universe population *	% sample contribution by district	% universe contribution by district	Sample size (No. of families)	Universe population *	% sample contribution by district	% universe contribution by district
Jaffna	20	31	29	32	37	119	24	27
Vavuniya	14	18	20	19	25	72	16	17
Kilinochchi	8	8	12	8	10	30	7	7
Mullaitivu	3	5	4	5	12	32	8	7
Mannar	11	19	16	20	34	97	22	22
Trincomalee	13	16	19	16	35	86	23	20
All districts	69	97	100	100	153	436	100	100

\* The Universe is the total no. of families who returned in 2020 / 2019

1 SPSS is a statistical analysis package for the social sciences

# Sample size and availability for interview

- ▶ Among 2020 and 2019 returnees, about 70% of selected households were surveyed, with respondents interviewed at their stated address (Table 3). Interviews were undertaken with the head of the household or another adult in the absence of the head of the household.

**Table 3: Sample achievement comparison 2020, 2019, 2018**

Sample achievement	2020	2019	2018
No. of selected households	97	218	357
No. of successful interviews	69 (71%)	153 (70%)	301 (84%)

- ▶ The 69 households surveyed among 2020 returnees constituted 172 family members including the respondent, and similarly the 153 households surveyed among 2019 returnees constituted 341 family members (Table 4).

**Table 4: Overview of the sample**

District	2020				2019			
	Total sample size sought (No. of families)	Located and interviewed		Families unavailable for interview	Total sample size sought (No. of families)	Located and interviewed		Families unavailable for interview
		Families	Individuals			Families	Individuals	
Jaffna	31	20 (65%)	58	11 (35%)	60	37 (62%)	69	23 (38%)
Vavuniya	18	14 (78%)	28	4 (22%)	36	25 (69%)	64	11 (31%)
Kilinochchi	8	8 (100%)	17	- (0%)	15	10 (67%)	15	5 (33%)
Mullaitivu	5	3 (60%)	5	2 (40%)	16	12 (75%)	27	4 (25%)
Mannar	19	11 (58%)	26	8 (42%)	48	34 (71%)	95	14 (29%)
Trincomalee	16	13 (81%)	38	3 (19%)	43	35 (81%)	71	8 (19%)
All districts	97	69 (71%)	172	28 (29%)	218	153 (70%)	341	65 (35%)

**Note:** In 2020, the sample sizes in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts were low. However, since the universe is also low in these two districts and the sample size is more than 50% of the universe, the data from these two districts could be looked at separately, but keeping in mind that small sample sizes can result in large variations in the percentages of responses.

The remainder of this report is based on the responses received from the 2020 returnee sample of 69 households and the 2019 returnee sample of 153 households, who were visited and interviewed. In many areas of the report, a comparison is also made with the survey findings among a sample of 301 interviews among 2018 returnees (and for which a separate report is also available). The data and resultant analysis could not incorporate the return and reintegration experience of sample households who had moved elsewhere. Their experiences may be different, possibly more negative than those who were interviewed and represented below.

# Summary of research findings

▶ Across all three years of return i.e., 2020, 2019 and 2018, about three fourths of respondents were heads of households (75%, 78% and 81% among 2020, 2019 and 2018 returnees respectively), and a fifth were spouses (19%, 20% and 15% among 2020, 2019 and 2018 returnees respectively)<sup>2</sup>. About half the respondents were females (54%, 59% and 54% among 2020, 2019 and 2018 returnees respectively).

▶ The proportions in the vulnerable age groups (of below 18, as well as 60 and above) among all family members in the sample had increased to nearly 50% among 2020 returnees, up from a little over 40% among 2019 and 2018 returnees.

The average household size remains much lower than the Sri Lankan average of 3.8. i.e., the average number of working age adults per returnee household continues to be a little over one, suggesting that vulnerability remains high in the event of death or disability of a working age adult.

▶ In all three years of return, 11% were PSWNs. PWSNs were mainly with physical or mental disabilities and / or chronic diseases, or were single older persons / parents.

▶ The extent of receiving livelihood assistance increased to 67% among 2020 returnee households, up from 54% and 34% among 2019 and 2018 returnee households respectively. The percentage of households with no livelihood increased to double digits (14%) among 2020 returnees compared to 7% and 4% respectively among 2019 and 2018 returnees. However, when comparing types of livelihood of 2020 and 2019 returnees with those of 2018 returnees, there was a marked shift in the types of employment from unskilled labour to other types of work (mainly self employment, trading, farming and fisheries).

Financial support from relatives (local or overseas) continued to be the most widely mentioned source of income, and less than 5% of households had a second source of income.

The percentage of households receiving government income assistance among 2020 and 2019 returnees had dropped to 2%, from 20% among 2018 returnees.

▶ In all three returnee groups, every household / family was registered with the DS / GN. About 75% of 2020 and 2019 returnees were also visited by persons other than from the DS or GN offices compared with just 20% of 2018 returnees. These visits were mainly by NGOs and hardly any 2020 and 2019 returnees were visited by CID / TID, the police or the military.

▶ Across all three years of return, about 95% of respondents said they and their family had a BC and about 90% of adults had a SL NIC. Most of those without a SL NIC had either applied for one, or did not have supporting documents to submit their applications.

▶ About a third of the family members were born in India. About a fifth of them were facing or had faced issues in getting Sri Lankan citizenship, mainly as a result of delays in obtaining the BC or not being aware of the application process.

▶ 4% to 5 % of 2020 and 2019 returnees were from plantation areas, up from 2% among 2018 returnees, and all of them had documents to prove Sri Lankan nationality.

▶ In all three years of return, about 70% of returnees were having land. About half of those owning land had returned to their own land which they had left behind when leaving Sri Lanka as a refugee, and the rest were equally divided between those who received land after returning to Sri Lanka from the government or received it from others.

Among the balance 30% not having land only about half had applied for land, and among them none had been successful so far with their submissions, with respondents saying their applications were either rejected or were still being processed. Among those who had not applied for land, most said the reasons for not applying were that they didn't know how to apply, were not interested in doing so, or were told by others that it was not possible to get land.

<sup>2</sup> The balance respondents were mostly other adult family members, and adult relatives (6%, 2% and 3% among 2020, 2019 and 2018 returnees respectively with a few being other adult relatives)

- ▶ In all three groups of returnees, while about 70% had land (as stated above), only about 50% were residing on that land. The main reason for the rest (20%) not doing so was that they did not have funds to build a house / shelter on this land.

Only about 40% of the returnees received shelter assistance: about 60% did not. Among 2020 and 2019 returnees, the numbers not having received shelter assistance were particularly high in the Jaffna, Vavuniya and Trincomalee districts.

- ▶ Among all three returnee groups, over 90% had access to uncontaminated drinking water. All 2020 returnees had three meals a day (in the last one week prior to the survey), up from 96% among 2019 returnees and 92% among 2018 returnees. 91% of 2020 returnee households had their own toilet, up from 88% among 2019 returnees and 85% among 2018 returnees.
- ▶ All except one respondent among the 2020 and 2019 returnees said they did not have landmines threats where they live. Almost all had not received MRE (Mine Risk Education).
- ▶ About 15% of 2020 and 2019 returnees said the military was present in their village / area, less than the 24% of 2018 returnees who said so. Among those having a military presence in their area, opinion was divided with about 40 to 50% accepting the presence of the military and the rest being concerned of the military presence, or refusing to respond.
- ▶ All respondents said that they would report a serious crime to the authorities, mainly to the police, and to a lesser extent to the DS / GN / WDO / CRPO offices. Among those who had gone to the police, about 80% were satisfied with the response/services received.

A concern is the high mentions for not being willing to seeking assistance from the courts in case of a dispute: about 85% among 2020 and 2019 returnees said they would not go to the courts. The main reasons for this reluctance were insufficient knowledge of the legal process, social stigma in going to courts, and concerns about the time and cost that would be incurred.

In the event of a civil dispute within the community or among neighbours, almost all would continue to seek help from the local authorities.

- ▶ Delays in being registered to vote at elections were widely prevalent among 2020, 2019 and 2018 returnees. Only between 60% to 70% of adults were registered to vote among all three groups of returnees. Most of the rest had applied to be registered and were awaiting a response.

Voicing a political opinion seems acceptable, with about three fourths continuing to feel at ease to air their own political views in public.

- ▶ Across all three groups of returnees, almost everyone felt safe or very safe in general where they currently lived, and only 1% felt they were treated differently by the local community because they were refugees.

▶ 28% of returnee families in 2020, 22% of returnee families in 2019 and 32% of returnee families in 2018, had family members who finished schooling (upto a certificate level) or higher education in India, the country of asylum. Among these households, almost all respondents said the relevant school or higher education certificates / records were accepted by Sri Lankan education authorities.

▶ Among the 18 to 25 year olds able to work from among the 2020 and 2019 returnees, only about 40% were employed or working (mostly in self-employment, farming and fisheries, or in the private sector). A significant minority of those not employed were however pursuing higher studies.

About two thirds of those who were unemployed were females. Among all the unemployed 18 to 25 year olds willing to work, half had completed 12 years of schooling (passed their Advanced Levels or equivalent), and most of the rest had got through their Ordinary Levels (or equivalent). The main reasons for being unemployed were the difficulty of finding suitable work, followed by not being interested in looking for work.

▶ Across all three sets of returnees about 90% were satisfied with the return to Sri Lanka. The main reasons for 10% not being satisfied in returning back were the lack of a livelihood and the high cost of living.

▶ Among 2020, 2019 and 2018 returnees, about 90% were UNHCR facilitated returnees who returned by air. Almost all the rest were spontaneous returnees, who also returned by air.

About 90% of the 2020, 2019 and 2018 returnees intended to stay for good in their current place. Almost all would advise other returnees to return with UNHCR assistance, mainly because they felt assured of a safe return as well as receiving financial assistance.

▶ While the vast majority of the facilitated returnees used the reintegration grant for everyday expenses such as food and clothing, among 2020 returnees a higher proportion than returnees from the previous two years said they used the grant for other expenses, particularly for housing / shelter expenses.

Over 90% of facilitated returnees in each year also received the NFI cash grant, which was used for everyday expenses or to purchase NFI items. Just a tenth of NFI grant recipients experienced some obstacles in receiving this grant, the main ones being identification issues, distance to the bank and timelines. Most suggested that UNHCR should increase the amount of the grant, and some suggested an increase in the baggage allowance.

The proportion of facilitated returnees receiving other reintegration assistance from the DS office in the form of cash was 51% among 2020 returnees, down from 58% among 2019 returnees and 70% among 2018 returnees.

▶ Finally, the impact of the covid-19 pandemic on livelihoods was severe with almost all respondents saying they either completely or partially lost their main livelihood.

While almost 95% of 2020 and 2019 returnees had received the covid-19 vaccine, a little over 5% had not. The main reasons mentioned were that they / their family members had a medical condition, or that they didn't have the opportunity to be vaccinated in India or Sri Lanka.

# Dashboard of selected research findings

INFORMATION AREAS		2020	2019	2018
	Average Household Size	2.5	2.2	2.5
	Households with no livelihood <sup>3</sup>	14%	7%	4%
	Feel Generally or Completely Safe	98%	96%	99%
	Satisfied with return to Sri Lanka	87%	93%	90%
	HHs with PWSNs	11%	11%	11%
	Not having a BC	4%	3%	6%
	Adults not having SL NIC	10%	6%	11%
	Household has own toilet	91%	88%	85%
	Uncontaminated drinking water	91%	91%	92%
	3 meals a day	100%	96%	92%
	Grade 11 and below children in school	89%	94%	NA
	No landmines in area	100%	99%	99%
	Received covid-19 vaccine	91%	93%	NA

<sup>3</sup> In the report pertaining to 2018 refugee returnees the percentage for 'No livelihood' includes households dependent on receiving government assistance as well as those receiving income support from relatives in Sri Lanka or overseas, and on this basis, the percentages are 2020: 33%; 2019: 29%; 2018: 35%.

# A

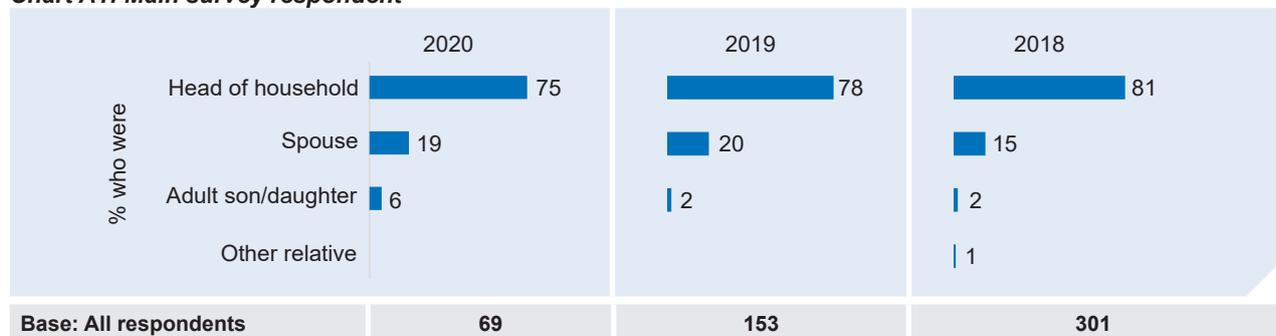
## BASIC RESPONDENT INFORMATION

**Intent of analysis:** To illustrate the profiles of the households and surveyed respondents, which provides a context with which to read into the Tool Two survey results.

### Sample profile

- ▶ Respondents were mostly the head of household, followed by the spouse (Chart A1).

**Chart A1: Main survey respondent**



- ▶ Among returnees in 2020, 2019 and 2018, a little over half the respondents were females (Table A1). In the Mannar district, as many as two thirds of respondents were females in 2020 and 2019 (64% and 68% respectively), similar to the 67% who were female respondents in 2018.

**Table A1: Gender split of respondents**

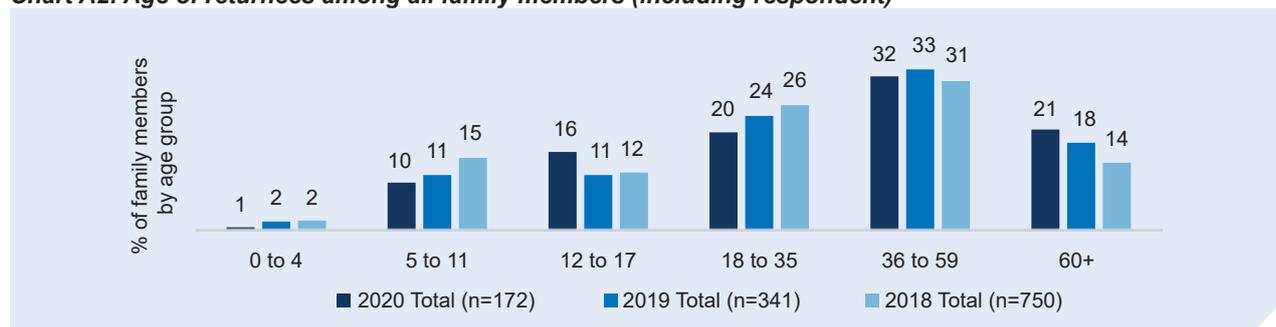
Gender	2020 (%)	2019 (%)	2018 (%)
Female	54%	59%	54%
Male	46%	41%	46%

Base: All respondents

- ▶ Taking all family members into account for each year of return (including respondents), the largest group were older adults aged 36 to 59, followed by younger adults 18 to 35 (Chart A2).

Proportions in the vulnerable age group (of below 18 and 60+) had increased slightly to 48% in 2020, up from 42% in 2019 and 43% in 2018. (However, the absolute numbers in the vulnerable ages are lower as there were less returnees in 2020.)

**Chart A2: Age of returnees among all family members (including respondent)**



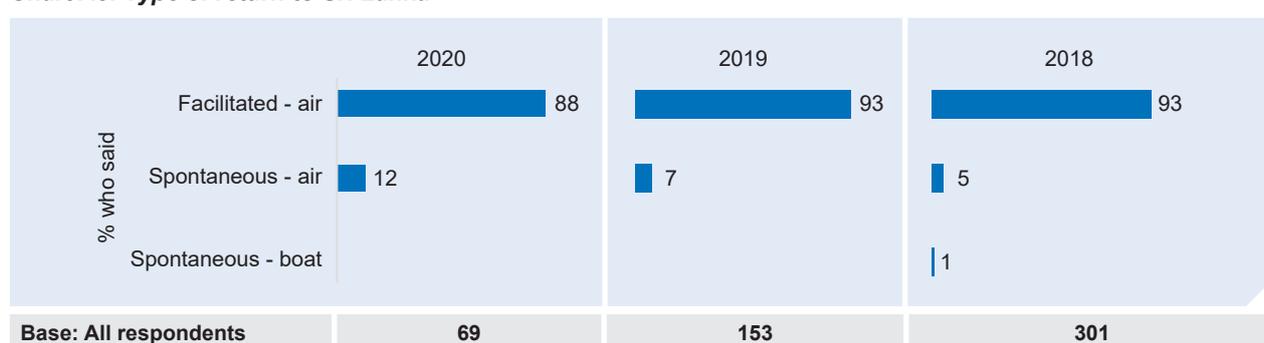
- ▶ In terms of gender, the proportion of female returnees among all family members were slightly higher than the proportion of males (Table A2).

**Table A2: Gender split of all returnee family members**

Gender	2020	2019	2018
Female	55%	53%	51%
Male	45%	47%	49%
<b>Base: All family members</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>750</b>

- ▶ All interviewed returnees were voluntarily repatriated from India. About 90% returned via UNHCR's facilitated voluntary repatriation programme and the rest returned spontaneously, mostly by air (Chart A3).

**Chart A3: Type of return to Sri Lanka**



## Vulnerability risk

- ▶ The 69 respondents for the 2020 returnees sample represented 172 family members, thus resulting in an average household size of 2.5. Likewise, the average household sizes among 2019 and 2018 returnees were 2.2 and 2.5 respectively. These average household sizes were lower than the Sri Lankan national average of 3.8 (Table A3).

Further, the average number of working age adults (aged 18-59) in a typical returnee household was between 1.3 and 1.4, well below the Sri Lankan average of 2.2 for such adults. In view of there being just about one adult (on average) in returnee households, incapacity or demise of an adult in refugee returnee households could have a significant impact on the welfare of the family.

**Table A3: Age profile in an average household: Sri Lanka vs Returnees**

Age Group	Sri Lanka national average	2020	2019	2018
0-4	0.3	<0.1	<0.1	0.1
5-17	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.7
18-59	2.2	1.3	1.3	1.4
60+	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3
Average Household Size	3.8	2.5	2.2	2.5
<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>(5.4 m households)</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>301</b>

- ▶ Among the total number of family members of 2020, 2019 and 2018 returnees, 11% of family members in each year of return were persons with specific needs (PWSNs). The incidence of PWSNs was higher among returnees residing in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts (Table A4).

**Table A4: Incidence of persons with specific needs (PWSNs) in family**

2020				2019			
District	No. of house-holds	No. of family members	% of family members who are PWSNs	District	No. of house-holds	No. of family members	% of family members who are PWSNs
Jaffna	20	58	7	Jaffna	37	69	7
Vavuniya	14	28	11	Vavuniya	25	64	9
Kilinochchi	8	17	24	Kilinochchi	10	15	20
Mullaitivu	3	5	0	Mullaitivu	12	27	22
Mannar	11	26	19	Mannar	34	95	13
Trincomalee	13	38	8	Trincomalee	35	71	8
All districts	69	172	11	All districts	153	341	11

- ▶ Most PWSNs were with physical and mental disabilities, or kidney disease, or were single: single female household head, single older person, single parent and widowed or divorced (Table A5).

**Table A5: No. of PWSNs by category (main mentions)**

No. of mentions (stated by at least 2 respondents)	2020	2019
Physical disability	4	11
Kidney disease	3	-
Single female head of household	3	5
Single older person	3	5
Old age	2	-
Single parent	2	6
Mental illness	2	2
Heart ailment	1	2
Diabetes	-	5
Widowed / divorced	1	3
Woman at risk	1	2
Asthma	-	2
<b>Base: No. of PWSNs</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>38</b>

# B

## REGISTRATION AND OTHER VISITS BY AUTHORITIES

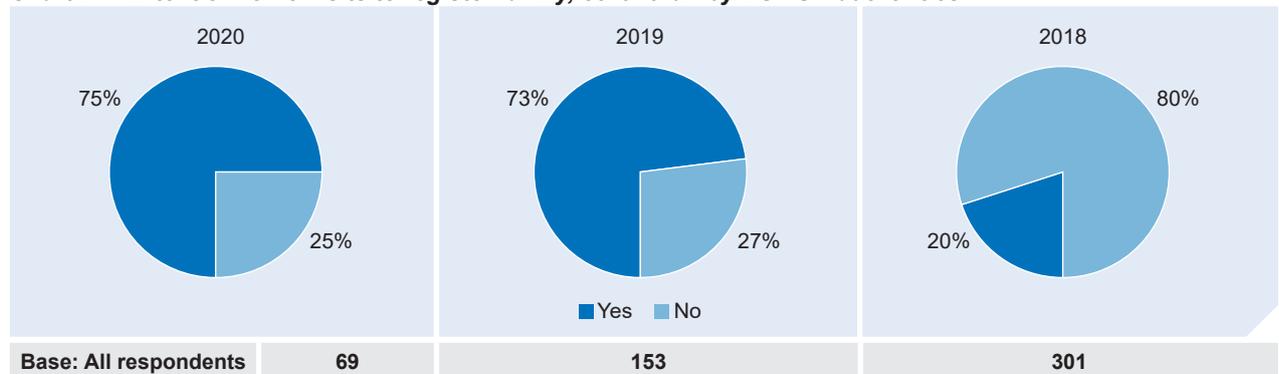
**Intent of queries:** To identify if returnees were able to register as residents in the areas of return, if they in fact do so, and to ascertain if returnees are visited by military or police, for registration or any other purposes, and the frequency of such visits.

There are numerous and persistent anecdotes regarding the close surveillance of civilians in the North and East by security or intelligence personnel, including repeated visits to homes. This is one attempt to gather factual data on the existence and scope of any such activity.

### Registration feedback

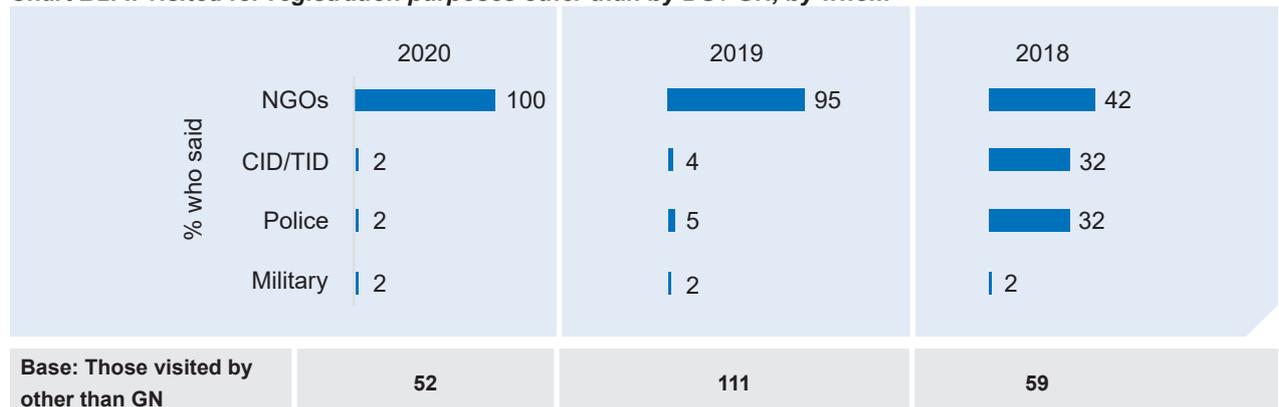
- ▶ Among 2020 and 2019 returnees, as was the case with those who returned in 2018, all respondents said their houses / families were already registered with the DS / GN.
- ▶ As many as three fourths of 2020 and 2019 returnees said that there were visits to register their family by people other than from the DS or GN offices (Chart B1). This is almost four times higher than the 20% saying so among the 2018 returnees. As mentioned subsequently, this increase is mostly due to a sharp rise in the number of visits by NGOs (for monitoring, assessment and delivery of reintegration assistance).

**Chart B1: Extent of home visits to register family, other than by DS / GN authorities**



- ▶ Among 2020 and 2019 returnees, among those visited, almost all visits were by NGOs, unlike in 2018 where CID / TID and police visits were also prominent (Chart B2). It is conceivable that CID / TID visits had reduced in 2020 and 2019 due to covid-19.

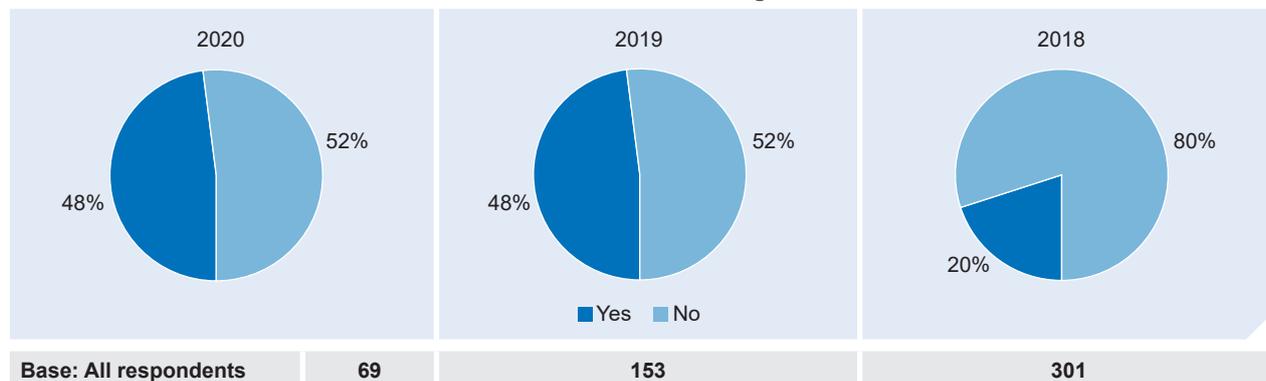
**Chart B2: If visited for registration purposes other than by DS / GN, by whom**



## Other visits

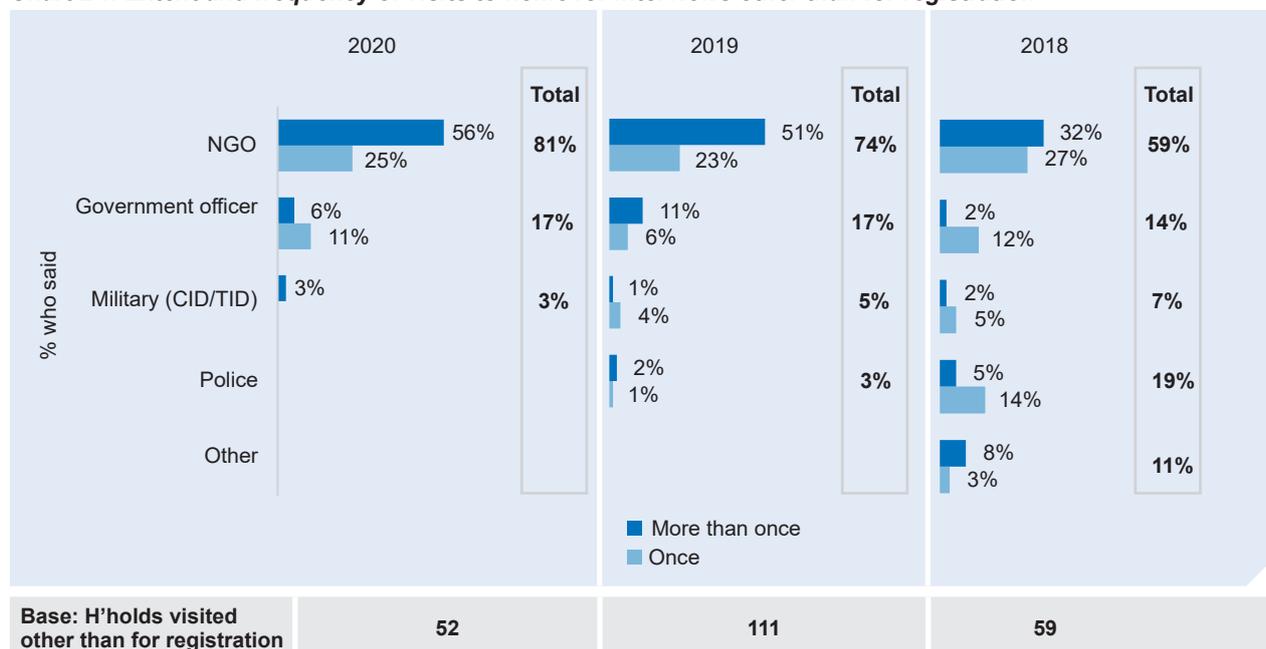
- Among 2020 and 2019 returnees, about half said there were additional visits to their homes, other than for registration (Chart B3). There were no major differences by district. Among 2018 returnees, again only 20% said they experienced these visits.

**Chart B3: Extent of visits to home for interviews other than for registration**



- In 2020 and 2019, among those visited at home for interviews other than pertaining to registration (48% of households in each year), most visits were by NGOs (generally more than one visit) followed by visits from government officers. Visits by the police had dropped to zero in 2020 from 19% of such visited households in 2018 (Chart B4). Visits by the military had also declined.

**Chart B4: Extent and frequency of visits to home for interviews other than for registration**



# C

## CIVIL DOCUMENTATION

**Intent of queries:** To determine if returnees have essential civil documentation (such as birth certificates and national identity cards) and to determine if there are any constraints to access them. In this section, the enumerators ensured that data was collected for each family member in the household, not merely for the respondent or the head of the household. For birth certificates, the data reflects Sri Lankan vs. non Sri Lankan issued birth certificates. These queries also helped determine the percentage of refugee returnees without essential documents and who may be at risk of statelessness.

### Birth certificates (BCs)

- ▶ Among all family members, 4% of 2020 and 3% of 2019 returnees did not have any BC (issued in India or in Sri Lanka), compared to 6% in 2018 (Chart C1).

**Chart C1: Incidence of individuals not having any Birth Certificate**



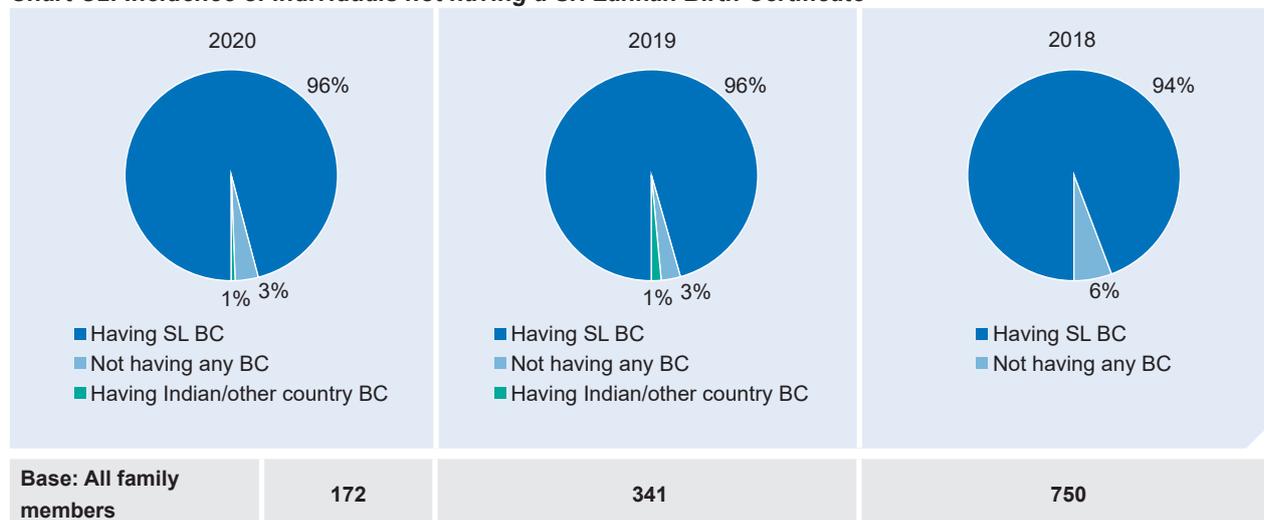
- ▶ As shown above, among all family members among 2020 and 2019 returnees, less than 5% did not have any BC, and among them, half (3 family members) were born in India among 2020 returnees, and most (8) were born in India among 2019 returnees (Table C1).

**Table C1: Country of birth of individuals not having any BC (issued either by Sri Lankan or Indian authorities)**

No. of family members without any BC	2020			2019			
	No. born in India	No. born in Sri Lanka	Not stated	No. of family members without any BC	No. born in India	No. born in Sri Lanka	Not stated
6 (4%)	3	2	1	11 (3%)	8	2	1

- ▶ 4% did not have a Sri Lankan BC (3% did not have any BC and 1% had another country / Indian BC). i.e., 96% of family members had a Sri Lankan BC (Chart C2).

**Chart C2: Incidence of individuals not having a Sri Lankan Birth Certificate**



- ▶ Among Under 18s, 2% of 2020 and 7% of 2019 returnees did not have a Sri Lankan BC (Table C2).

**Table C2: Extent of Under 18s without a SL BC**

2020 returnees			2019 returnees			2018 returnees		
Total no. of U18s	No. of U18s without SL BC	% U18s without SL BC	Total no. of U18s	No. of U18s without SL BC	% U18 without SL BC	Total no. of U18s	No. of U18s without SL BC	% U18s without SL BC
46	1	2%	84	6	7%	222	14	6%

## National identity cards (NICs)

- ▶ 74% of 2020 and 76% of 2019 returnees were adults, a higher proportion than the 62% being adults among 2018 returnees (Table C3).

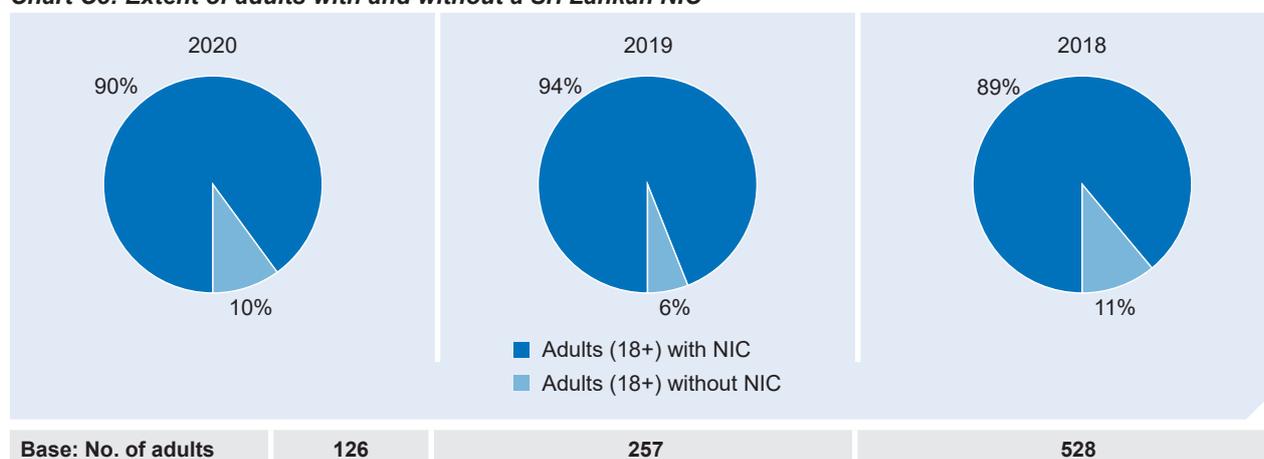
**Table C3: Age composition of all family members**

Age composition of household (family) members	2020		2019		2018	
	No.	%*	No.	%*	No.	%*
Total no. of children below 18 years	46	26	84	25	222	30
Total no. of adults	126	74	257	76	528	70
No. of adults (18+) with NIC	114	67	241	71	468	62
No. of adults (18+) without NIC	12	7	16	5	60	8
Total of all family members	172	100	341	100	750	100

\* Percentage of all family members

- ▶ Among them, 10% of adult returnees in 2020 and 6% of adult returnees in 2019 did not have a Sri Lankan NIC (Chart C3). A similar proportion of 2018 adult returnees too (11%) didn't possess one. These proportions were particularly high in the Trincomalee district among 2020 returnees, with a quarter of adults (25%) not having a Sri Lankan NIC.

**Chart C3: Extent of adults with and without a Sri Lankan NIC**



- ▶ Among 2020 and 2019 returnees the number who did not possess a Sri Lankan NIC were more or less equally split into those who never had a SL NIC and those who had a NIC in the past but do not have it now (Table C4).

The main reasons for not having a Sri Lankan NIC were that they had applied for one but not received it yet, and that they had no or insufficient supporting documents. i.e., about half of those who didn't have a NIC had applied for one but have not yet received it, and this has been a predominant reason for all three returnee groups from 2018 to 2020.

**Table C4: Number never having and not replacing lost NIC, and reasons**

No. who said	2020	2019	2018
Never had Sri Lankan NIC	6	9	48
Had Sri Lankan NIC but not now	6	7	12
<b>Total not having Sri Lankan NIC</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Reasons for never having a SL NIC:</b>			
Applied but not received	3	-	28
No supporting documents	3	7	19
Disabled person	2	-	-
<b>Reasons for having SL NIC but not now:</b>			
Applied but not received	2	4	6
No supporting documents	2	2	6

## Absence of essential Sri Lankan identity documents

- ▶ 3% of family members among 2020 and 2018 returnees and 4% among 2019 returnees did not possess any essential identity document i.e., Sri Lankan BC, NIC or passport (Table C5).

**Table C5: Incidence of individuals (including minors) not currently having at least one Sri Lankan registration / identity documents: BC, NIC, Passport**

2020			2019			2018		
Total no. of household members	No. without a SL identity document (BC, NIC or passport)	As a % of all household members	Total no. of household members	No. without a SL identity document (BC, NIC or passport)	As a % of all household members	Total no. of household members	No. without a SL identity document (BC, NIC or passport)	As a % of all household members
172	5	3%	341	12	4%	750	19	3%

**Base: All family members**

- ▶ Among the 172 returnee family members belonging to the 69 households surveyed among 2020 returnees, a third (33%) were born in India. Corresponding percentages for 2019 and 2018 returnee family members were 31% and 29% respectively (Table C6).
- ▶ Table C6 also illustrates that many children born in India have now become adults, since the percentage of individuals born in India among 2020 and 2019 returnee households well exceeds the number of current children (less than 18 years) in these households i.e., exceeds 100%.

**Table C6: Number of individuals born in India**

	2020			2019			2018		
	Individuals born in India	As a percentage of total family members	As a percentage of total returnee children	Individuals born in India	As a percentage of total family members	As a percentage of total returnee children	Individuals born in India	As a percentage of total family members	As a percentage of total returnee children
All districts	57	33%	124%	107	31%	127%	216	29%	97%
All Family members		172			341			750	
No. of children			46			84			222

**Note: Many children have subsequently become adults resulting in percentages exceeding 100%**

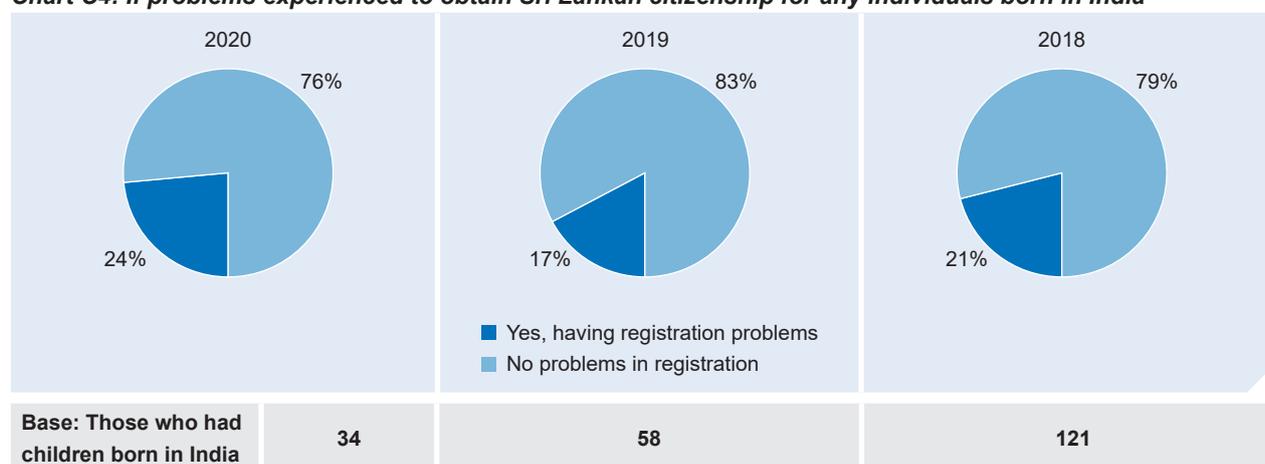
- ▶ All children born in India had their births registered in India (100% in 2020 and 2019; 99% in 2018), predominantly at the hospital where the child was born (Table C7). Except for one respondent in the 2020 returnee sample, all others had birth documents issued in India at the time of the survey.

**Table C7: Number of households whose children were born in India, and where registered**

Births and registrations in India	2020	2019	2018
% who registered births in India	100	100	99
% who registered births at:			
Hospital	94	91	75
Refugee camp	6	9	6
Chennai consulate	0	0	18
% who currently had the birth documents registered in India	97	100	99
<b>Base: No. who had children born in India</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>121</b>

- ▶ Among the families (households) where children were born in India, most families did not experience any problems in obtaining Sri Lankan citizenship for the children, but in each group of returnees about a fifth had faced or were facing issues in getting Sri Lankan citizenship for their Indian born children (Chart C4).

**Chart C4: If problems experienced to obtain Sri Lankan citizenship for any individuals born in India**



- ▶ The main problems encountered in getting Sri Lankan citizenship for Indian born children were with regard to delays in obtaining birth certificates and not being aware of the application process (Table C8).

Half these respondents (4 out of 8 of the 2020 returnees and 5 out of 10 of the 2019 returnees) were however, subsequently able to resolve their problems.

**Table C8 Problems encountered in obtaining SL citizenship for children born in India**

No. who said	2020	2019	2018
Delay in obtaining BC	1	4	13
Not aware of process	1	3	3
No money to pay late registration fee / penalty	1	-	5
Process is ongoing	2	1	-
Lacking documents	1	1	-
Lost reference number	1	-	-
No response	2	-	4
<b>Base: No. who had problems to get SL registration for children</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>25</b>

## Families from plantation areas (Hill Country)

- ▶ About 5% of returnees in 2020 and 2019 were from plantation areas (Table C9) and all of them had documents to prove their Sri Lankan nationality.

**Table C9: Extent to which families were from the plantation areas (Hill Country)**

% who said	2020	2019	2018
Yes, from plantation areas / hill country	4	5	2
No	96	95	98
<b>Base: All respondents</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>301</b>

# D

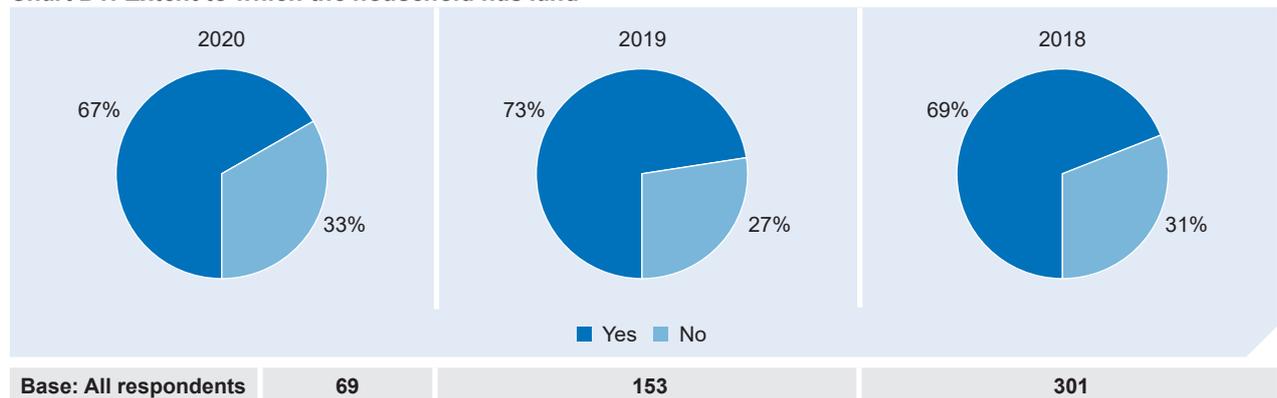
## LAND AND SHELTER

**Intent of queries:** To identify shelter needs (repair or construction of a new shelter) of refugee returnees, the extent of landlessness, property document procurement and replacement needs, and what mechanisms are used or trusted by returnees to resolve disputes.

### Land ownership and access to land

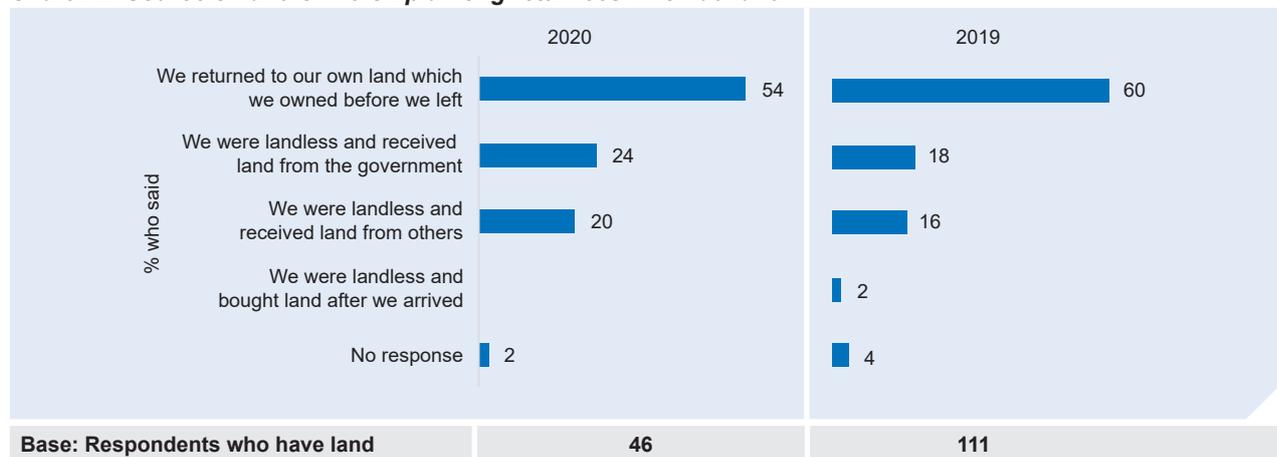
- Overall, about 70% of respondents said that they have land and about 30% said they had no land of their own (Chart D1). In the Trincomalee district the percentage of households not having land was higher (69% among 2020 returnees and 40% among 2019 returnees).

**Chart D1: Extent to which the household has land**



Of the above-mentioned 70% of returnees who said they have land, a little over half of them had returned to the land which they already owned before they left Sri Lanka as refugees. The rest said they received land from the government and others (Chart D2).

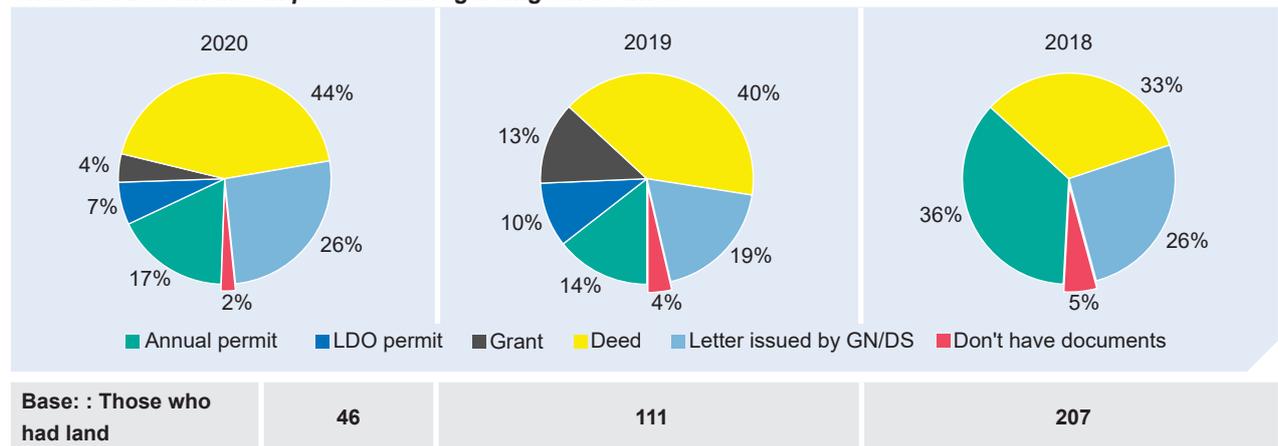
**Chart D2: Source of land ownership among returnees who had land**



- ▶ Among 2020 and 2019 returnees, many of those who had land (44% and 40% respectively) had the title deeds to the land (Chart D3). Others had documents issued by the GN or DS, and annual permits. Less than 5% didn't have land ownership documents.

Among 2018 returnees, a third (36%) had an annual land permit but the possession of this document was less prevalent among the 2020 and 2019 returnees, since the issuance of land grants and LDO permit have increased.

**Chart D3: Documents in possession regarding land owned**



- ▶ Among the few who didn't have any documents to prove land ownership (a total of five respondents in 2020 and 2019 taken together), three had applied for ownership documents to the authorities and were awaiting a response, while the other two respondents did not provide a reason for not having such documents.
- ▶ All but two respondents who had land said they had access to their land (98% and 99% respectively among 2020 and 2019 returnees, similar to the numbers among 2018 returnees). The two respondents who did not have access to their land stated as reasons that the house still does not feel safe (isolation / fear of community reprisal) and the household land is in a high security zone (HSZ) or under military or police occupation.
- ▶ All, except one of 2020 returnee and two of 2019 returnees who had land, said they did not have any disputes. The few respondents who were having disputes were trying to resolve this internally / bilaterally (two respondents) or have been seeking the help of the GN / DS officials.

- ▶ As shown in Table D1 below, of the approximately 30% who didn't have land, only about half had applied for land to the authorities. However, none of these applicants (12 respondents in 2020 and 28 in 2019) had been successful in their application as at the time of the survey, and the main reason mentioned was that applications were being processed (as was also stated by 2018 returnees).

Among those who had not applied for land among 2020 returnees, the main reason for not applying was that they did not know how to go about the process. Among 2019 returnees most were either not interested in applying or thought / were told that they would not succeed with their application.

**Table D1: Status of non land owners applications for land**

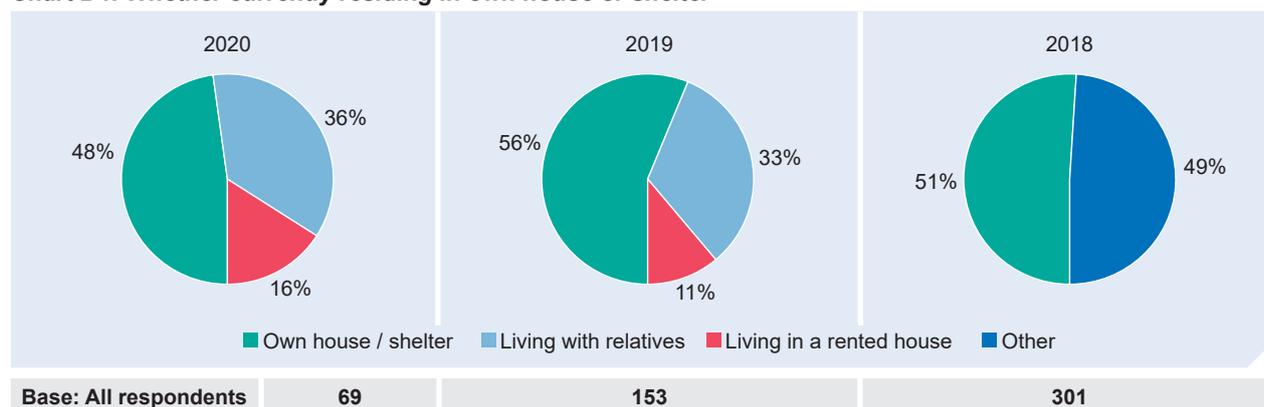
2020							
Don't have land 23 respondents (33%)						Have land 46 respondents (67%)	
Applied for land 12 (52%)			Not applied 11 (48%)				
Application successful	0	<b>Application unsuccessful</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Don't know how to apply</b>	<b>6</b>		
		<b>Being processed</b>	10	Had more urgent things to do	4		
		Rejected	1	Thought / told it's not doable	1		
		Status unknown	1				

2019							
Don't have land 42 respondents (27%)						Have land 111 respondents (73%)	
Applied for land 28 (67%)			Not applied 14 (33%)				
Application successful	0	<b>Application unsuccessful</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>Not interested to apply</b>	<b>6</b>		
		<b>Being processed</b>	24	<b>Thought / told not achievable</b>	<b>5</b>		
		Rejected	3	<b>Don't know how to apply</b>	<b>3</b>		
		Status unknown	1	More urgent things to do	4		

- ▶ Only about half the respondents said they were residing in their own house or shelter and the rest were staying with relatives or in a rented house (Chart D4).

**Chart D4: Whether currently residing in own house or shelter**



- ▶ About 70% of those who were not residing in their own home or shelter said they didn't have their own home / shelter in the first place before having to leave the country (Table D2).

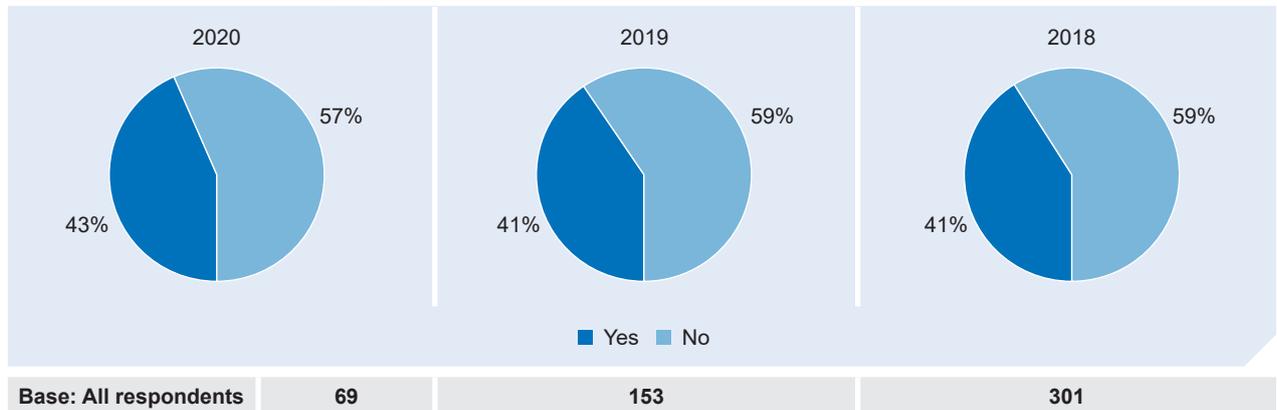
**Table D2: Main reasons for not residing in own house or shelter**

% who said	2020	2019	2018
We did not have our own house / shelter before fleeing	69	72	75
It is occupied by another household	8	6	3
It is still totally destroyed and we have no money to repair it	3	10	5
<b>Base: Respondents not residing in their own home / shelter</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>147</b>

## Shelter assistance

- ▶ In all three years, about 60% did not receive shelter assistance. The numbers not receiving shelter assistance were highest in the Trincomalee, Jaffna and Vavuniya districts (Chart D5 and Table D3).

**Chart D5: Extent of receiving any shelter assistance**

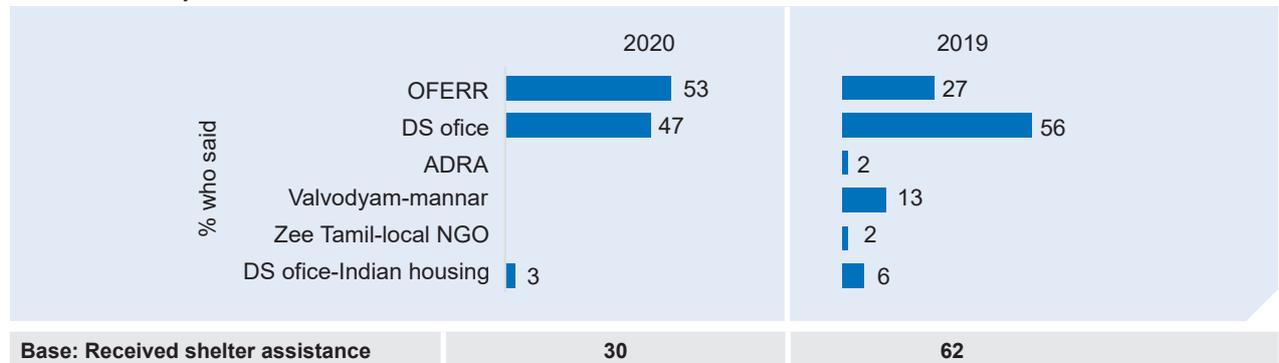


**Table D3: Extent of receiving any shelter assistance – by district**

2020				2019			
District	Base	% who said		District	Base	% who said	
		Yes	No			Yes	No
Jaffna	20	40%	60%	Jaffna	37	22%	78%
Vavuniya	14	29%	71%	Vavuniya	25	52%	48%
Kilinochchi	8	63%	38%	Kilinochchi	10	50%	50%
Mullaitivu	3	67%	33%	Mullaitivu	12	50%	50%
Mannar	11	64%	36%	Mannar	34	62%	38%
Trincomalee	13	31%	69%	Trincomalee	35	26%	74%
All districts	69	43%	57%	All districts	153	41%	59%
<b>Base: All respondents</b>							

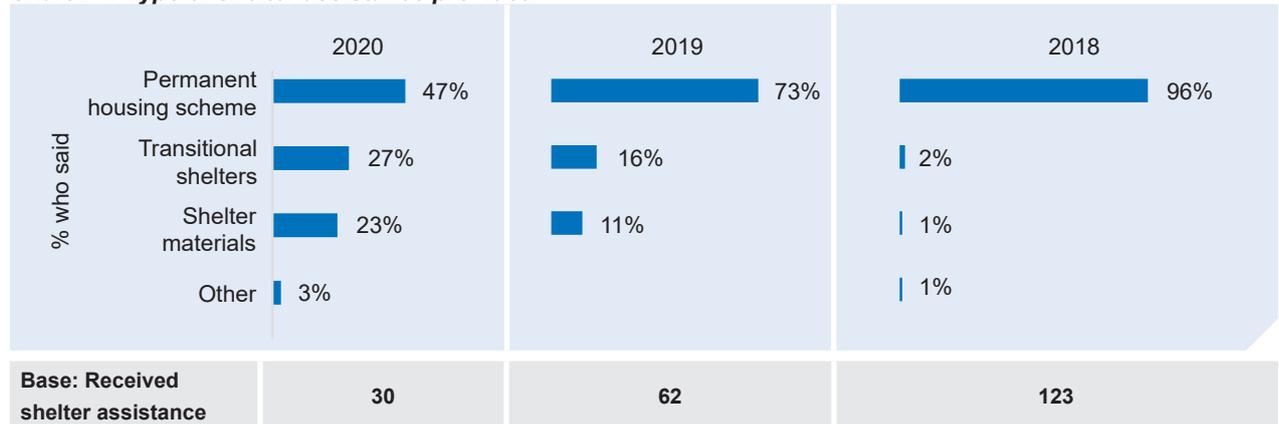
- ▶ The NGO OfERR and the DS office were the main providers of shelter assistance (Chart D6).

**Chart D6: Who provided shelter assistance**



- ▶ Among those who received shelter assistance, the proportion receiving permanent housing has decreased annually, replaced by transitional shelters and shelter materials (Chart D7).

**Chart D7: Type of shelter assistance provided**



# E

## SECURITY AND JUSTICE

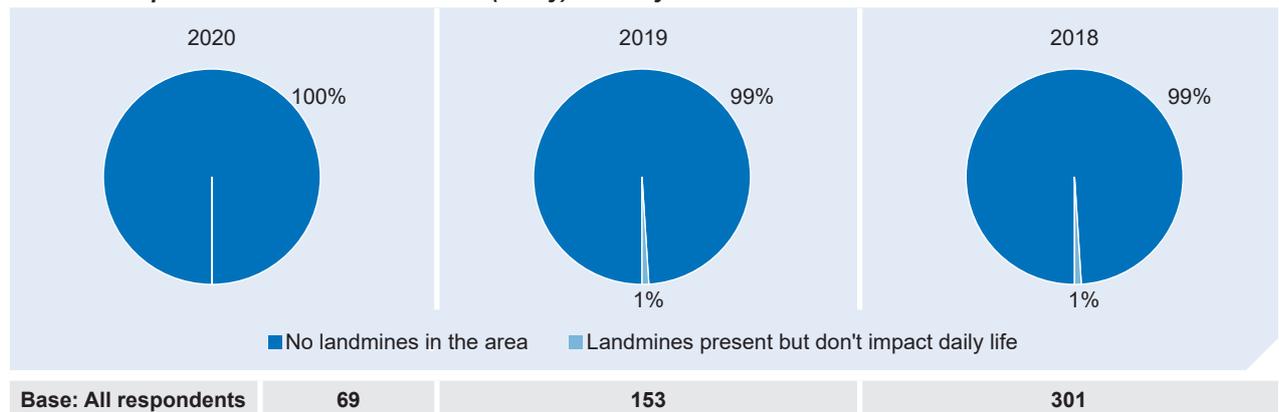
**Intent of queries: To identify refugee returnees' personal perceptions of post-return security and military / security forces presence in areas of return, to ascertain how returnees reintegrate within their neighbourhoods and home communities, to identify the impact of landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXOs) on reintegration, and to know where returnees go if they encounter security concerns.**

Given the sensitivity of these questions, a mix of yes / no, multiple choice and open questions were asked to promote accurate responses, but without prompting / leading an answer.

### Impact of landmines

- ▶ Among both groups of returnees (2020 plus 2019), all except one respondent (in Mannar district) said there were no landmines where they live (Chart E1). The one respondent in Mannar district who mentioned there were landmines in their area said this did not affect their daily lives.

**Chart E1: Impact of landmines in the area (if any) on daily life**

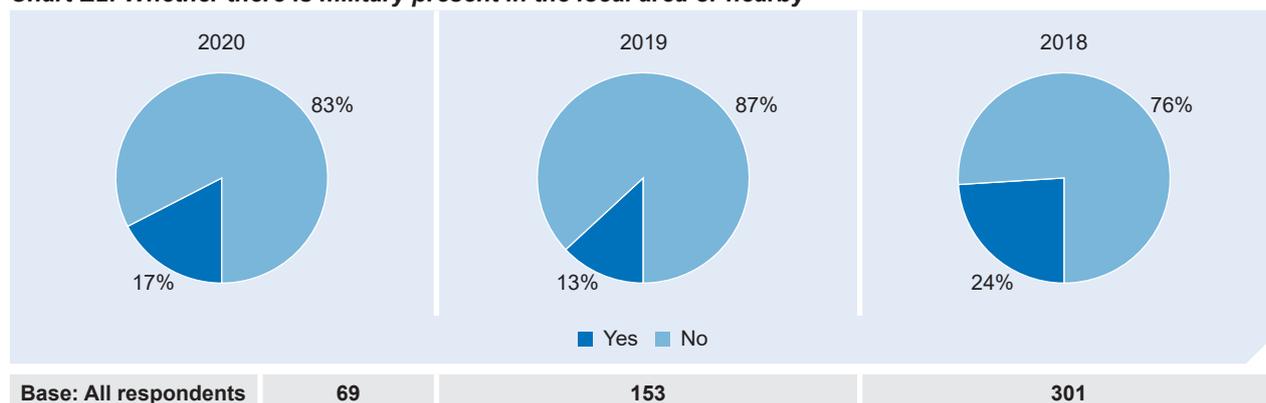


- ▶ All 2020 returnee respondents and all except one of the 2019 returnees (in Kilinochchi district) said they or their families had not received Mine Risk Education (MRE). The respondent who received MRE said it was disseminated through children at school.

## Relations with the military

- ▶ 17% and 13% of 2020 and 2019 returnees respectively, said there was a military presence in their village / area, less than the 24% who said so among 2018 returnees (Chart E2). Among both groups, a higher proportion in the Trincomalee district (23% and 20% among 2020 and 2019 returnees respectively) than other districts said the military was present in their area.

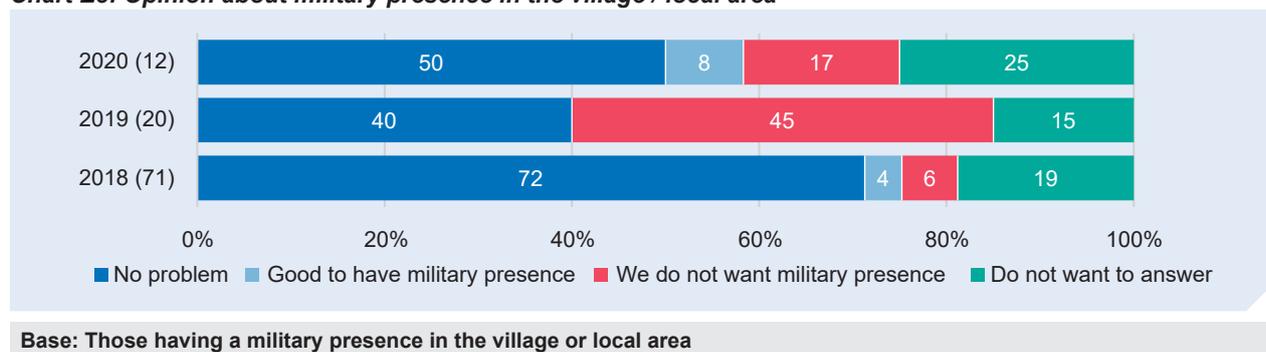
**Chart E2: Whether there is military present in the local area or nearby**



- ▶ Among returnees who said there was a military presence in their village / area, negative / neutral responses among the 2020 and 2019 returnees were higher than among the 2018 returnees. Among 2019 returnees as many as 45% did not want a military presence nearby (Chart E3).

Among the 2018 returnees who said they had a military presence in the village or local area, attitudes towards the military were mostly not negative, with 72% saying there was no problem (in having a military presence) and a further 4% saying it was good to have the military nearby.

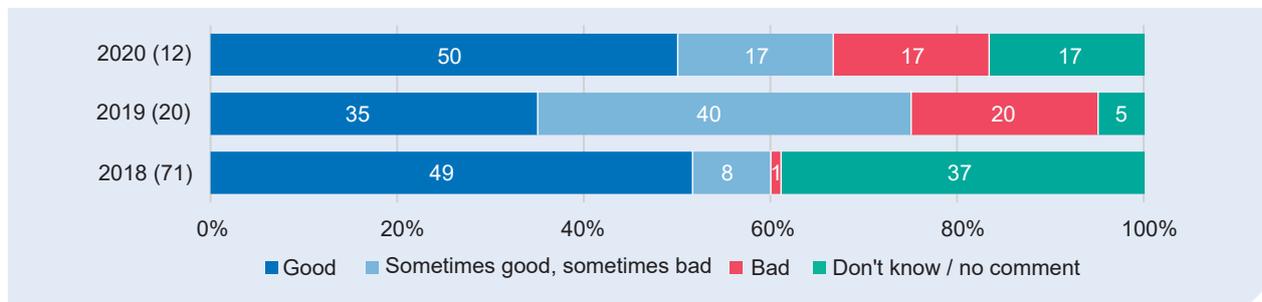
**Chart E3: Opinion about military presence in the village / local area**



**Base: Those having a military presence in the village or local area**

- ▶ As shown in chart E4, among those living with or near a military presence, opinions on the relationship between the military and the community were slightly worse than the opinion on the military presence itself (as shown in the above chart, E3) with lesser numbers responding as 'good'. Again, opinion was polarised.

**Chart E4: Opinion on relationship between the military and the community**

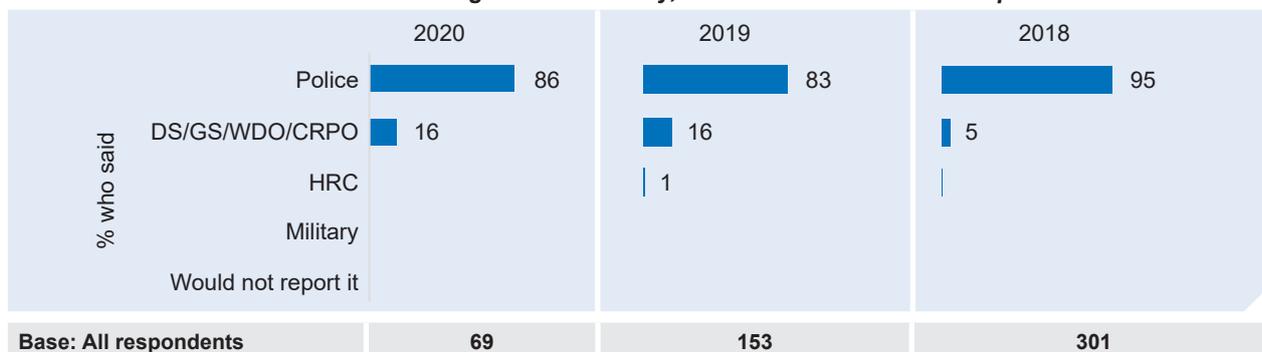


Base: Those having a military presence in the village or local area

## Physical security

- ▶ All returnees said they would report a serious crime to the authorities. Over 80% of 2020 and 2019 returnees said they would report it to the police and another 16% each mentioned other institutions or organisations such as the DS / GS / WDO / CRPO (Chart E5). One respondent from the 2019 returnees sample (residing in the Jaffna district) mentioned HRCSL.

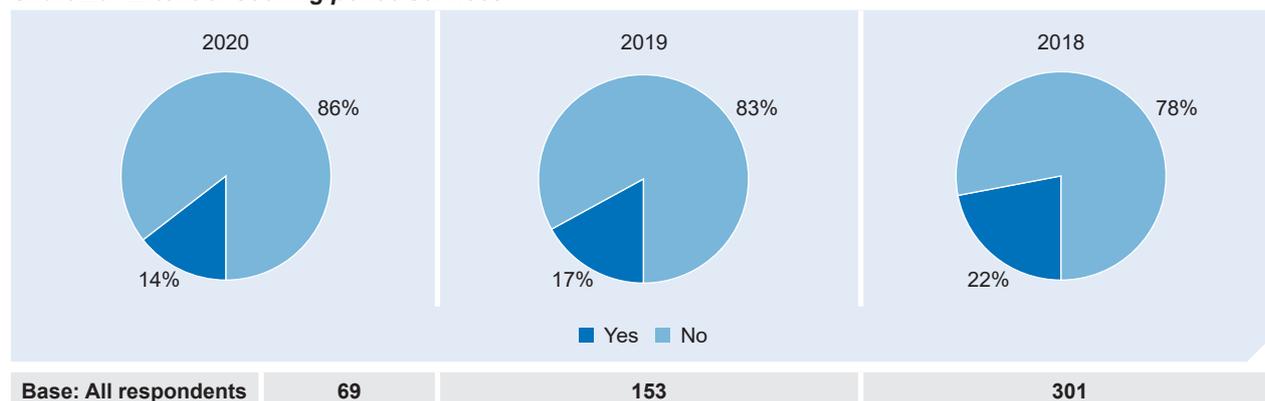
**Chart E5: If a serious crime committed against own family, to whom would it be first reported**



## Access to justice

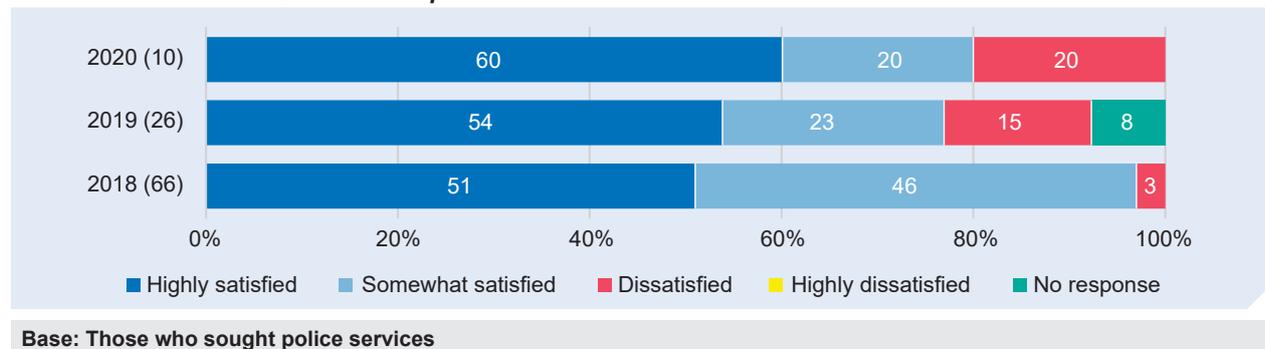
- ▶ About 15% each sought the service of the police among 2020 and 2019 returnees, less than the 22% who did so among 2018 returnees (Chart E6). The percentage seeking police services were notably higher in Trincomalee and Vavuniya districts (54% and 26% in Trincomalee district among 2020 and 2019 returnees respectively, and 28% among the 2019 returnees in Vavuniya district).

**Chart E6: Extent of seeking police services**



- ▶ Among returnees who went and sought the services of the police, half or more were highly satisfied with the service offered by the police and 80% or more were highly or somewhat satisfied (Chart E7). However, about a fifth were dissatisfied among 2020 and 2019 returnees, much more than the 3% who were dissatisfied among the 2018 returnees.

**Chart E7: Extent of satisfaction with police services**



Base: Those who sought police services

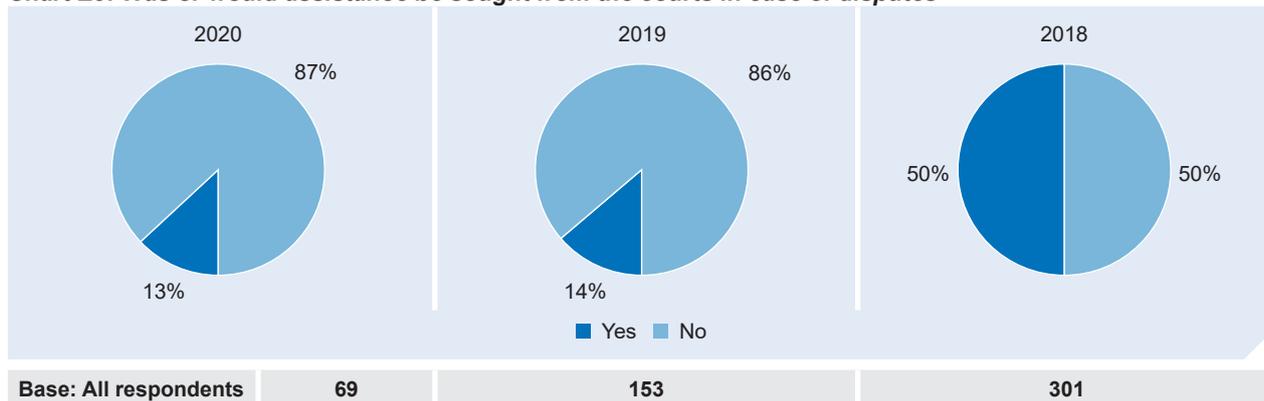
- ▶ Among 2020 and 2019 returnees, about 40% were living within 2 km from the nearest police station and over 80% were residing within 5km (Chart E8). This was similar across all districts.

**Chart E8: Distance from the house to the nearest police station**



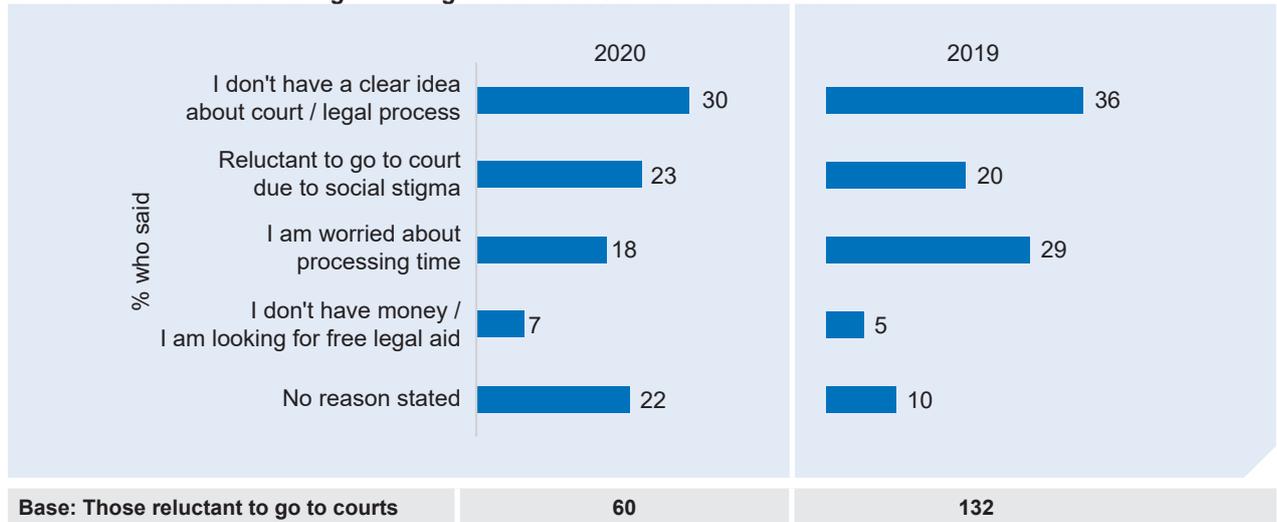
- ▶ Almost 90% of 2020 and 2019 returnees said they had not or would not seek assistance from the courts in case of a dispute, much higher than the 50% of 2018 returnees who said so (Chart E9). This pattern was evident in all districts.

**Chart E9: Was or would assistance be sought from the courts in case of disputes**



- ▶ The main reason for reluctance in seeking assistance was unawareness of the legal process, followed by concerns about social stigma (Chart E10). Among 2018 returnees the main reason was social stigma (stated by 44%) and not having any idea about the legal process (36%).

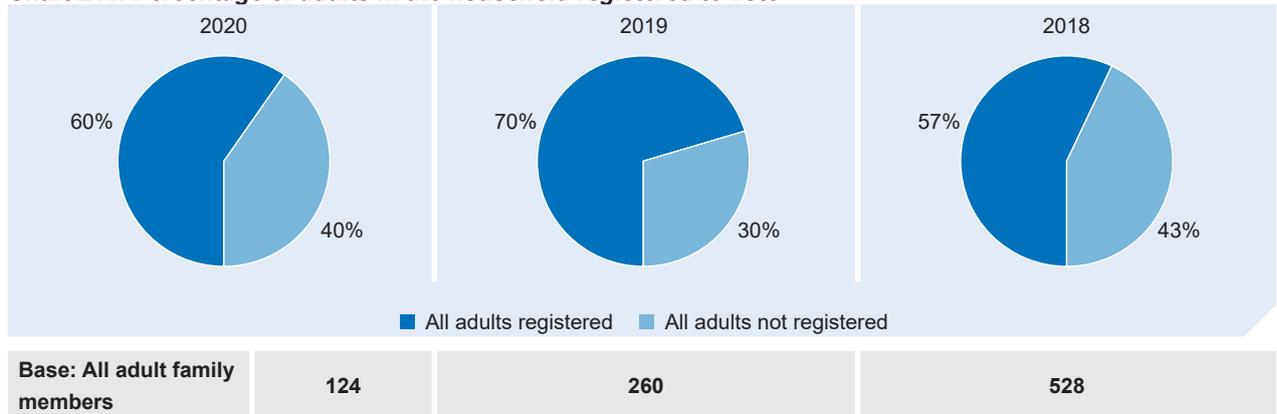
**Chart E10: Reasons for being unwilling to seek assistance from the courts**



### Participation in public affairs without being discriminated

- As shown in Chart E11, among all adult family members aged 18 and above, 60% and 70% respectively of 2020 and 2019 adult returnee family members were registered to vote. Among 2018 returnees, this percentage was 57%.

**Chart E11: Percentage of adults in the household registered to vote**



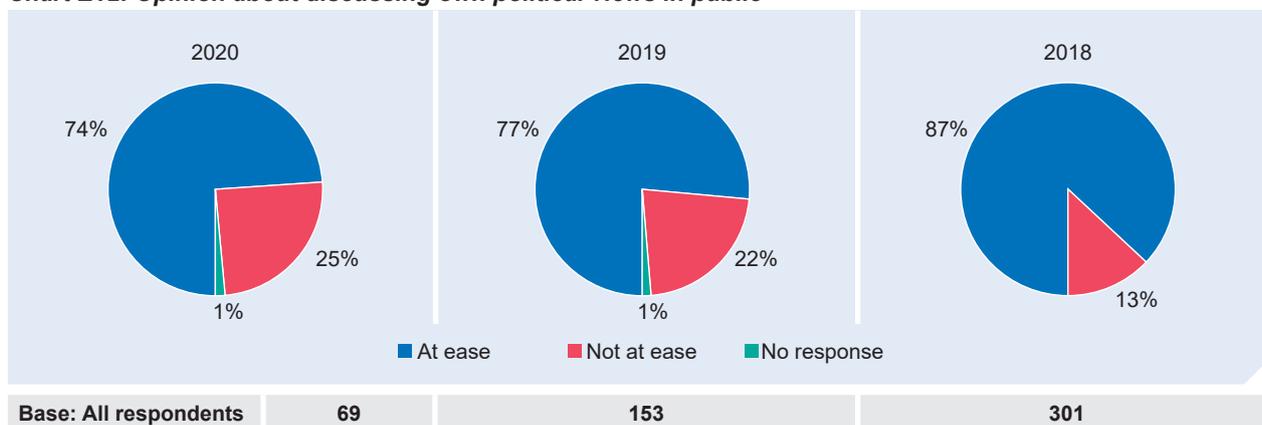
- ▶ The main reason for not registering was that the applications for registration were pending approval from authorities (Table E1). This was the main reason stated by 77% of the 2018 returnees as well.

**Table E1: Main reasons for not adults not registering to vote**

% who said:	2020	2019
Application to register pending approval	72	75
Not aware how to do so	6	8
I / family didn't want to	6	4
No documents to register	6	6
Other reasons	10	7
<b>Base: Respondents in whose home adult(s) not registered to vote</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>51</b>

- ▶ About three fourths of 2020 and 2019 returnees felt at ease to discuss political views in public (Chart E12), and the pattern did not vary much by district. Among 2018 returnees this percentage was in the high eighties.

**Chart E12: Opinion about discussing own political views in public**



## Restrictions in movement

- ▶ When respondents were asked if anyone restricts their movements, all 2020 and 2019 returnees said no one did so. Among 2018 returnees, the number saying they faced restrictions in movement was 2% (6 respondents out of 301).

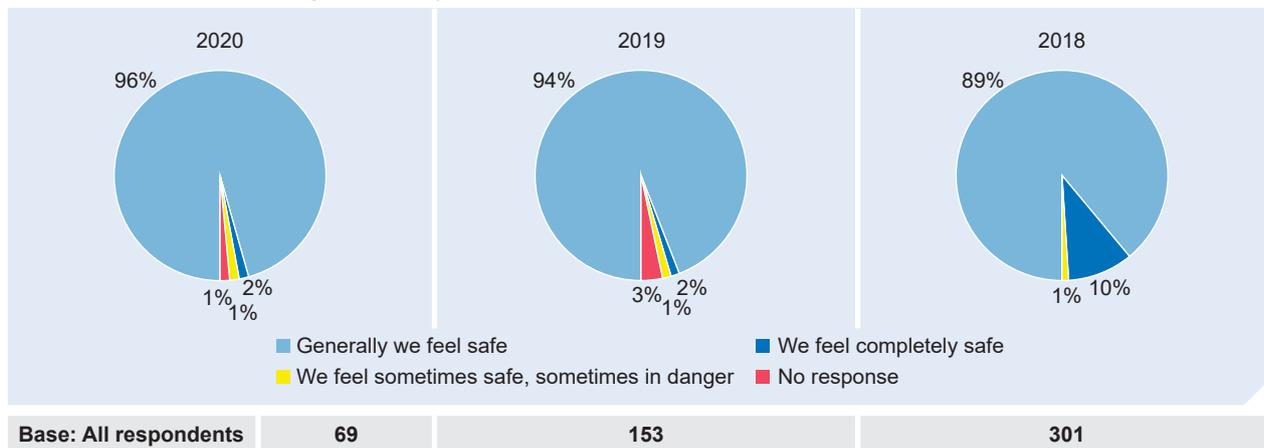
## Issues and perceptions

- ▶ All respondents were asked whether after returning to Sri Lanka, if any member of their families faced any of these safety concerns: killed, went missing / disappeared, harassed / repeatedly interrogated by the military or the police, arrested or sexually harassed or abused.

None of the 2020 returnees and all except one of the 2019 returnees experienced the above issues. The one respondent who responded as 'yes' said that one household adult member was harassed / repeatedly interrogated by the military.

- ▶ All respondents were asked how safe they or their families felt today where they currently lived. About 95% said they generally felt safe and a few (2%) said they feel completely safe (Chart E13). Among 2018 returnees as many as 10% said they felt completely safe.

**Chart E13: Extent of feeling safe today**



The very few (three respondents) who said they sometimes feel safe but at other times they felt they were in danger were asked why they said so. Responses were varied as outlined below.

- 2020 returnee (one respondent): due to crimes and violence
- 2019 returnee (one respondent): due to the presence / frequent visits by the armed forces
- 2019 returnee (one respondent): due to a personal land issue

## Relations with the community

- ▶ Only 1% each of the 2020 and 2019 returnees felt they were treated differently by the local community because they were refugee returnees: less than the 5% who said so among the 2018 returnees.
- ▶ In case of civil (not criminal) disputes almost all 2020 and 2019 returnees said they would seek help from the local authority (DS or GN), compared to 80% of 2018 returnees (Chart E14).

Also, the proportion that intended going to the police has declined sharply from 28% (2018) to 1% (2020 and 2019). The proportion mentioning courts has also declined from 17% (2018) to zero.

**Chart E14: If family has civil dispute within community / neighbour, where they would go to resolve it**



# F

## LIVELIHOODS

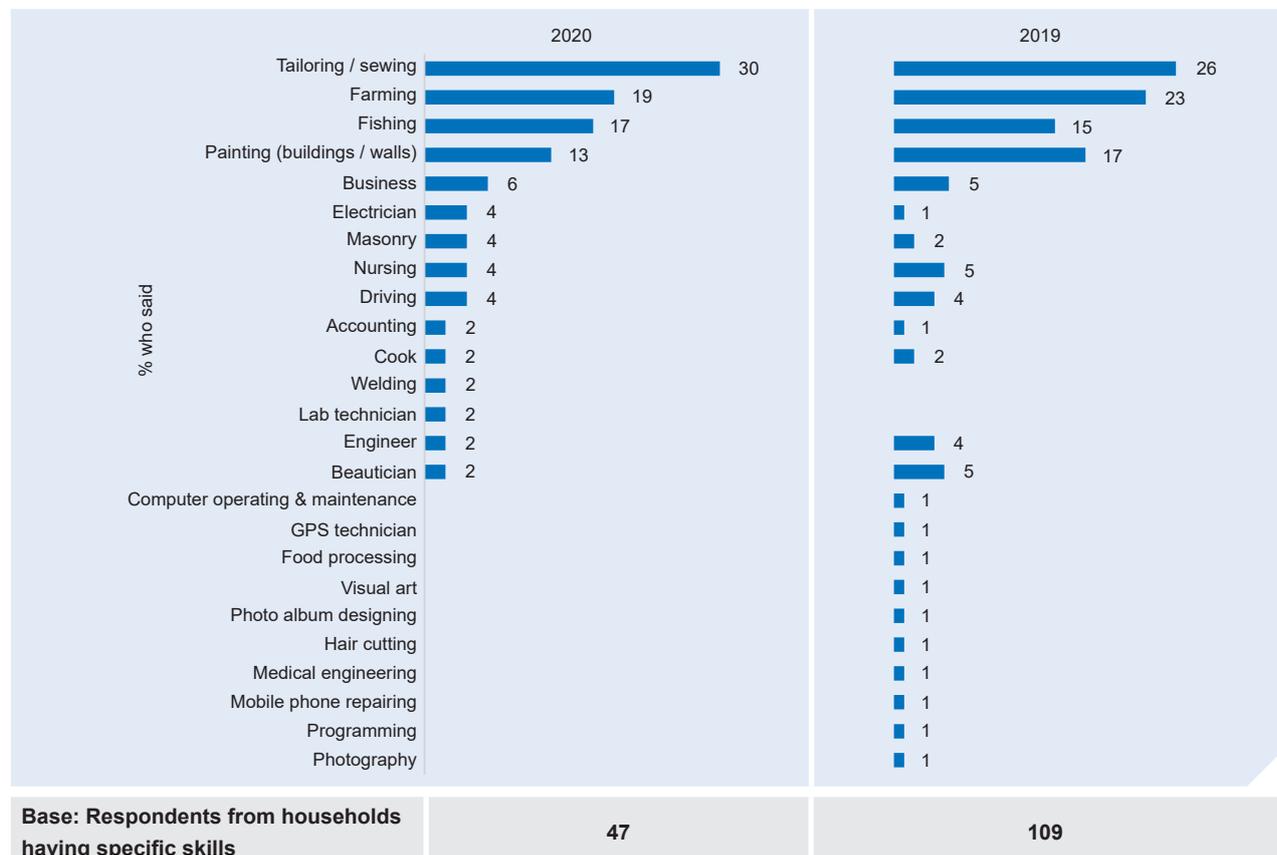
**Intent of queries:** To identify if returnees are able to restart their livelihoods or establish new ones following their return, to gather the type of livelihood activities achieved or sought, and to ascertain any constraints to establishing livelihoods.

### Skills, main sources of income and support, and extent of receiving livelihood assistance

- ▶ Respondents of the returnee families in 2020 and 2019 were asked what specific skills they and / or their family members have. 22 respondents out of the 69 returnee families in 2020 (32%) and 44 respondents of the 153 returnee families in 2019 (29%) said they or the other family members do not have any specific skills. Hence 68% of 2020 returnee households and 71% of 2019 returnee households had at least one member who had a specific skill.

In these (approximately) 70% of households, there was an average of 1.2 persons with a job or work skill. As shown in chart F1, among skills mentioned, the most widely mentioned were tailoring / sewing, farming, fishing and painting (buildings, houses and walls). There were also some mentions of business skills, electrician skills, masonry, driving, nursing, beautician skills and engineering.

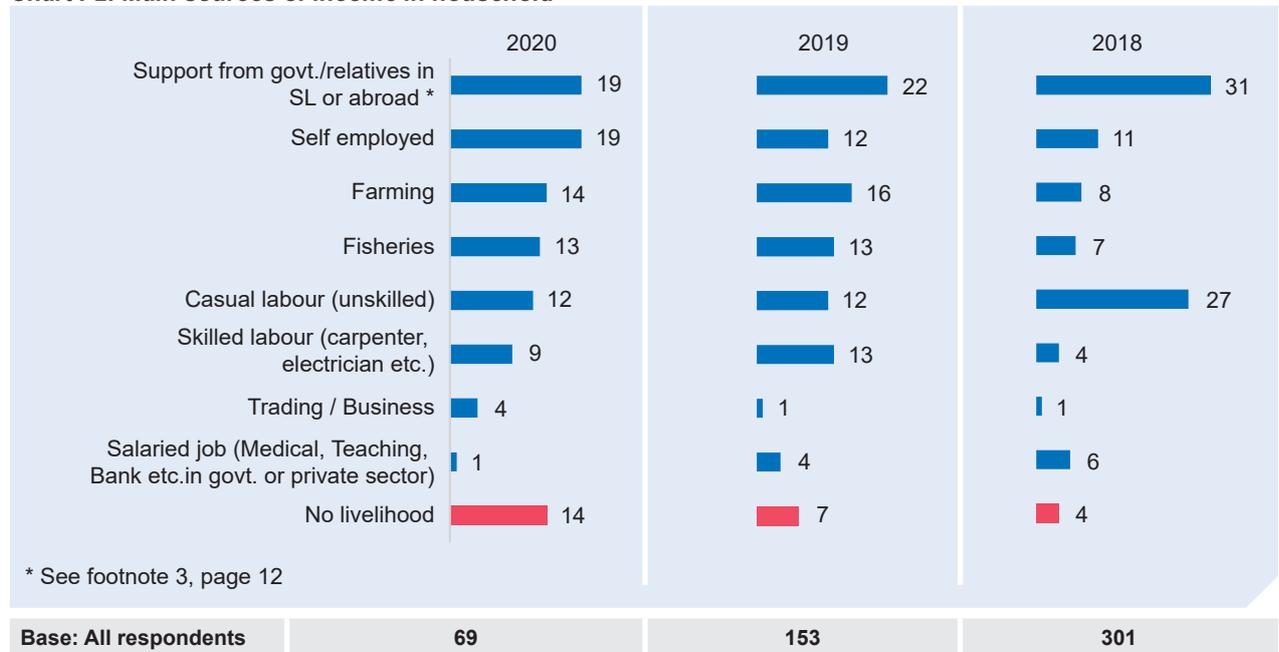
**Chart F1: Specific skills among family members**



- ▶ Financial support from relatives (local or overseas) continued to be the most widely mentioned source of income (Chart F2)<sup>4</sup>. Less than 5% of households had a second source of income.

Among returnees in 2020 and 2019, there was an increase in the percentage with no livelihood, while at the same time, there was a shift away from unskilled labour to other types of work.

**Chart F2: Main sources of income in household**



- ▶ The proportion that depended on support from government or relatives in Sri Lanka or abroad as their main source of revenue or did not have a livelihood, was about 30 to 35% overall (Table F1).

**Table F1: Dependence on government handouts or other remittances**

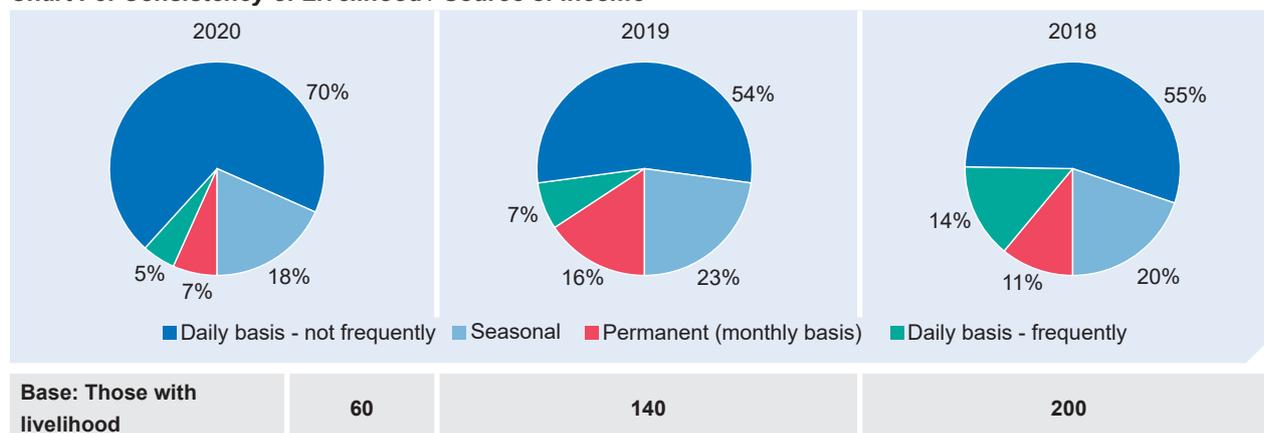
2020		2019	
Base	% depending on remittances / no livelihood	Base	% depending on remittances / no livelihood
69	35	153	29

Base: All respondents

<sup>4</sup> In 2020 and 2019, no one mentioned income support from the government

- ▶ Those respondents who had a livelihood (including those getting financial support from the government, but excluding those who said they had no livelihood) were asked how consistently they obtain an income. Among 2020 and 2019 returnees, 70% and 54% respectively said they are paid only on days they have work, which was not frequent (Chart F3). Another 18% and 23% respectively said the work was seasonal and income was also on a seasonal basis. Therefore, just 12% and 23% among 2020 and 2019 returnees respectively, said they had a regular income (either daily or monthly).

**Chart F3: Consistency of Livelihood / Source of income<sup>5</sup>**



- ▶ About half the returnees (60% of 2020 and 45% of 2019 returnees) were now having a different livelihood than before displacement. Prior to displacement, two thirds of these respondents depended on financial assistance from relatives and others and the balance one third earned a living (Table F2).

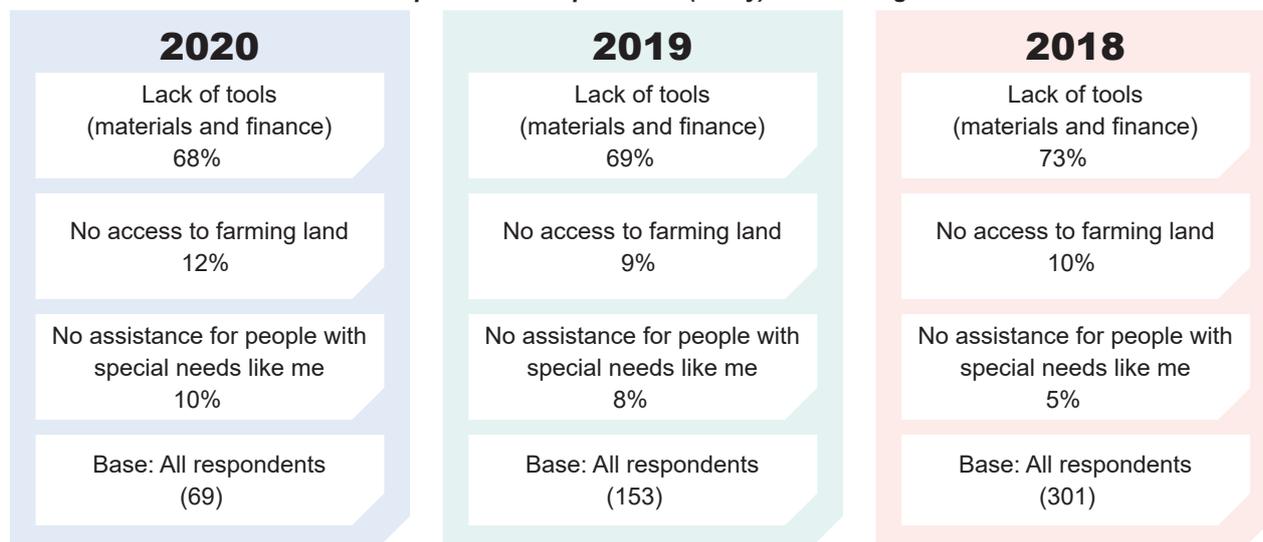
**Table F2: If respondents / family have the same primary livelihoods as they had before displacement (leaving Sri Lanka)**

All 2020 returnee respondents 69 (100%)			All 2019 returnee respondents 153 (100%)				
Same livelihood now as before displacement	Different livelihood now than before displacement		Not responded	Same livelihood now as before displacement	Different livelihood now than before displacement		Not responded
<b>27 (39%)</b>	<b>41 (60%)</b>		<b>1 (1%)</b>	<b>83 (54%)</b>	<b>69 (45%)</b>		<b>1 (1%)</b>
	Livelihood before displacement:				Livelihood before displacement:		
	Depended on financial help from relatives / others	Earned a living			Depended on financial help from relatives / others	Earned a living	
	<b>28 (41%)</b>	<b>13 (19%)</b>			<b>47 (31%)</b>	<b>22 (14%)</b>	
		<u>Top 3</u>				<u>Top 3</u>	
		Casual work / unskilled (5) Fisheries (3) Self-employed (2)				Farming (11) Self-employed (4) Fisheries (3)	

<sup>5</sup> For the research among 2018 returnees the base consists of those with a livelihood, excluding government disbursements and financial assistance from family members and others, but for the 2020 and 2019 returnees, this source of income is included

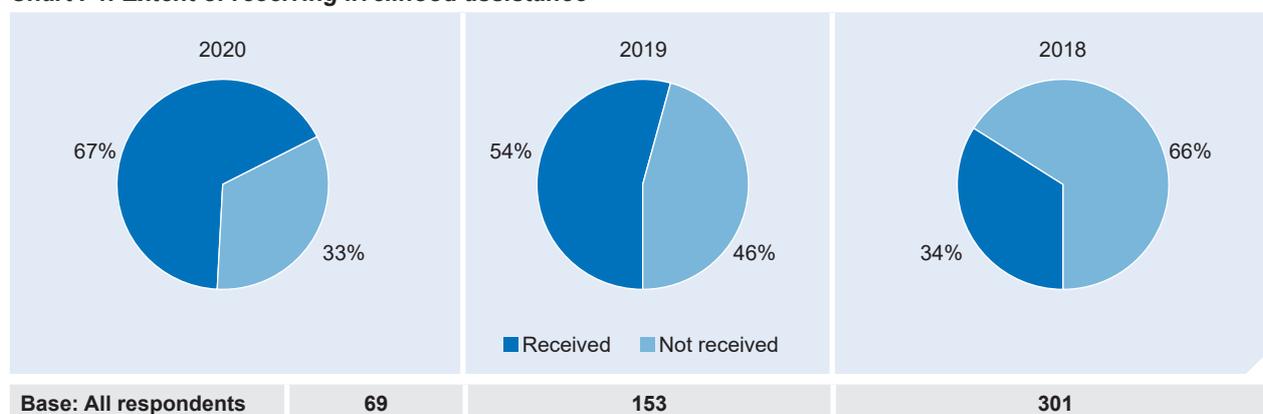
- ▶ Among all three groups of returnees the predominant impediment to restoring livelihoods, stated by about 70%, was insufficient material and financial resources (Table F3). Refugees who had special needs also said they required assistance.

**Table F3: Three most mentioned impediments or problems (if any) to restoring livelihood**



- ▶ The extent of receiving livelihood assistance increased from 34% among 2018 returnees and 54% among 2019 returnees, to 67% among 2020 returnees (Chart F4). In all districts too, a higher percentage of 2020 returnees than returnees in 2019 received livelihood assistance.

**Chart F4: Extent of receiving livelihood assistance**



- ▶ Among 2020 and 2019 returnees, livelihood assistance was almost completely provided by local NGOs and UN agencies (Table F4), whereas among 2018 returnees the leading providers were INGOs. Among the 2020 and 2019 returnees, the government (DS office) had only provided livelihood assistance to very few of those receiving assistance.

**Table F4: Providers of livelihood assistance**

% who said	2020	2019	2018
Local NGOs	65	54	17
UN Agency	37	42	25
Government	2	1	20
INGOs	-	-	43
Other	4	5	-
<b>Base: Those who received livelihood assistance</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>102</b>

- ▶ As shown below (Table F5), OfERR (mentioned by 48% and 46% of 2020 and 2019 returnees respectively) and UNHCR (mentioned by 37% and 40%) led the list of providers of livelihood assistance

**Table F5: Specific organisations or government units that provided livelihood assistance**

% who said	2020	2019
<b>Local NGOs</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>54</b>
OfERR	48	46
Valvodayam (Mannar)	11	5
ADRA	2	4
ALTRA	2	-
Thellippalai	2	-
<b>UN Agency</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>42</b>
UNHCR / JCAS	37	40
UNDP	-	2
<b>Government</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
DS Office	2	1
<b>Other</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Not specified	4	4
Co-operative (Fisheries)	-	1
<b>Base: Those who received livelihood assistance</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>83</b>

- ▶ Most received material, while the proportions receiving cash have declined among the 2020 and 2019 returnees (Table F6). The main items mentioned under material included poultry and livestock, fishing nets and sewing machines.

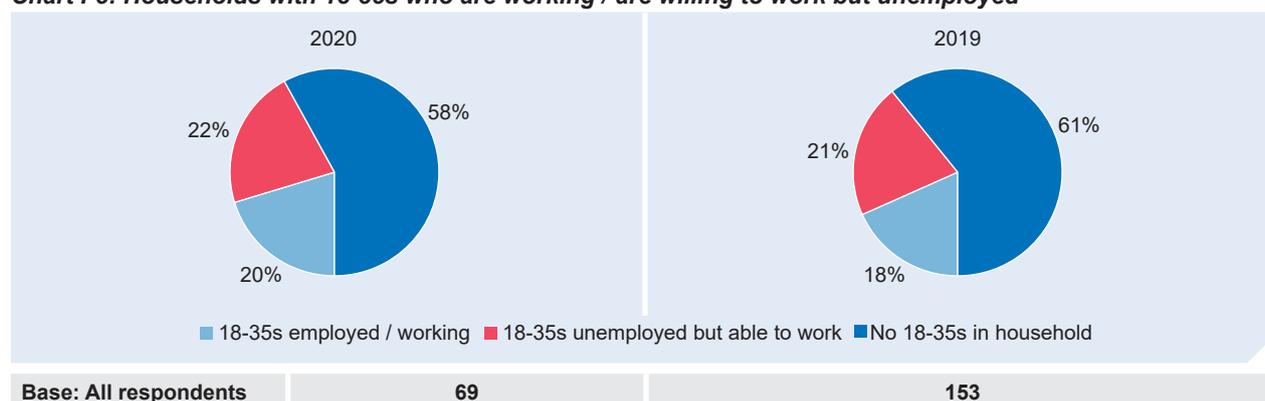
**Table F6: Type of livelihood assistance received**

Those who received:	2020	2019	2018
Material	85%	84%	77%
Cash	8%	10%	28%
Services	2%	5%	
Main items mentioned as material:			NA
Sewing machine	20%	11%	
Fishing net	18%	23%	
Poultry	14%	9%	
Water pumps	11%	12%	
Cattle	7%	7%	
Goats	7%	9%	
Water pipes	2%	4%	
<b>Base: Those who received livelihood assistance</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>102</b>

## Youth employment / unemployment

- ▶ About 20% of 2020 and 2019 returnee households had at least one young adult aged 18 to 35, employed. Another 20% or so of households had 18 to 35 year olds able to work, but with none employed. (Chart F5). These percentages were fairly similar across districts.

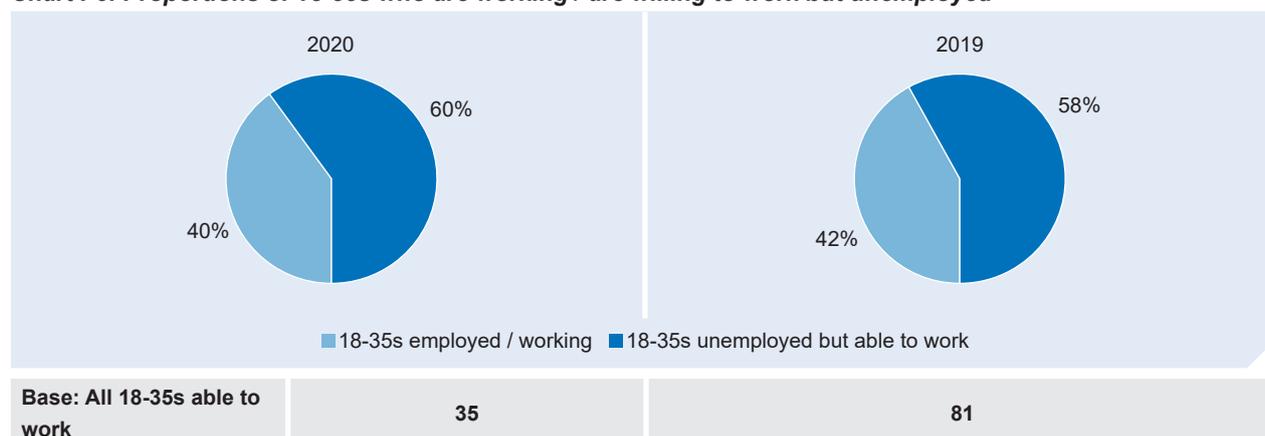
**Chart F5: Households with 18-35s who are working / are willing to work but unemployed**



- ▶ It should be noted that a few households would have had 18 to 35 year olds, some of whom were unemployed but are willing to work, and others in the same household who were already employed. They have been categorised as the latter group of respondents. Chart F6 shows the break up of the 18 to 35s by those employed, versus those not employed but able to work.

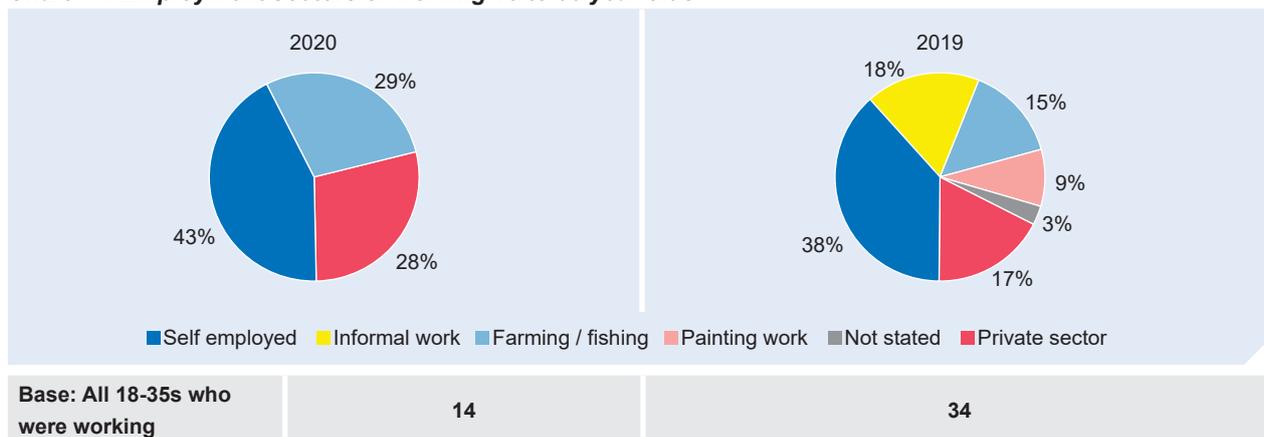
The proportions of 18-35 year olds willing to work, and categorised as those working versus not working, were similar across both returnee groups, with 40% working and 60% not doing so.

**Chart F6: Proportions of 18-35s who are working / are willing to work but unemployed**



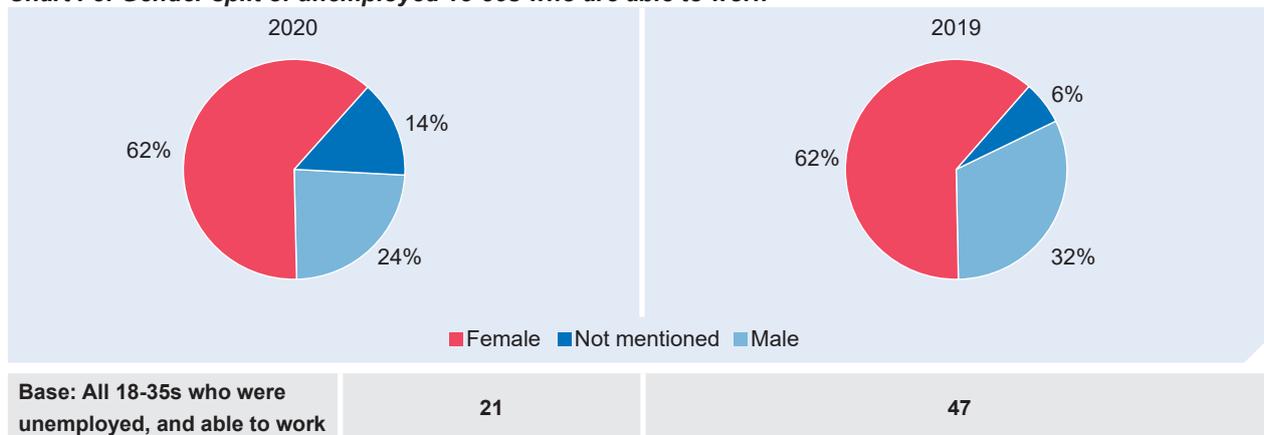
- ▶ Among 2020 and 2019 working returnees aged 18 to 35, the most common sector for work was self employment, followed by private sector and farming / fishing work (Chart F7). Among 2019 returnees, informal work was also mentioned by almost a fifth.

**Chart F7: Employment sectors of working 18 to 35 year olds**

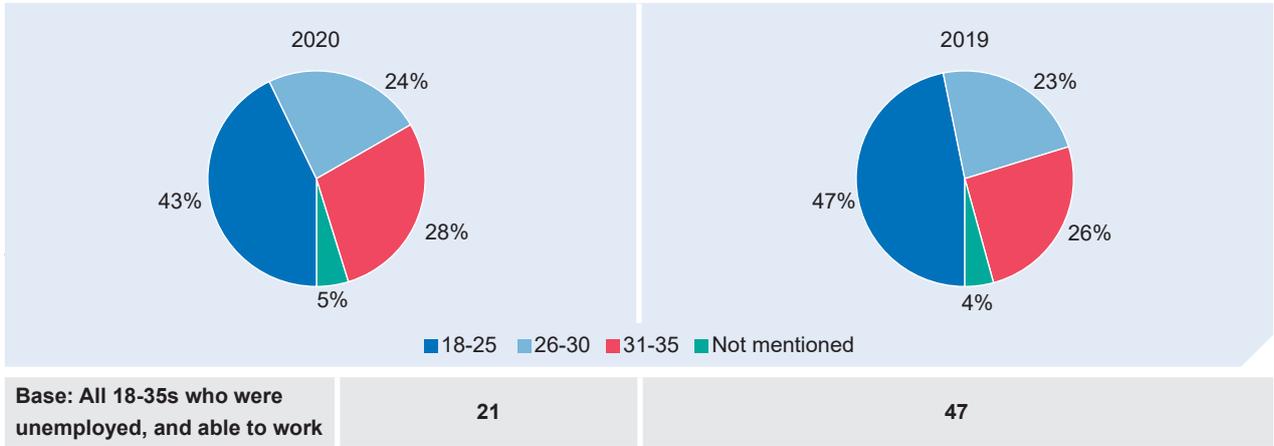


- ▶ About two thirds of 18 to 35s, who were unemployed but able to work, were females (Chart F8) and younger with almost half being 18 to 25 year olds (Chart F9).

**Chart F8: Gender split of unemployed 18-35s who are able to work**

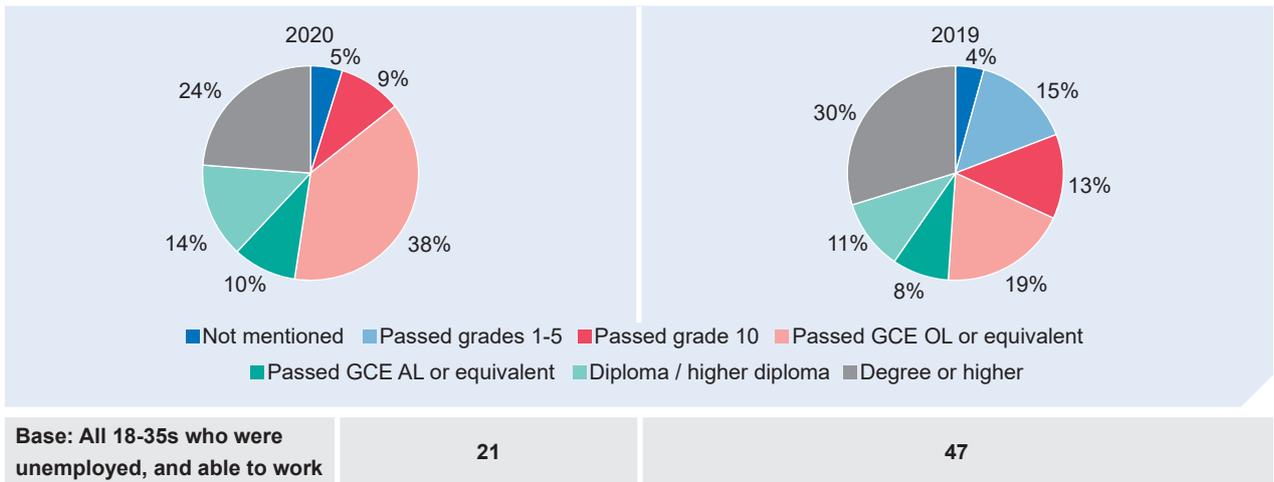


**Chart F9: Age split of unemployed 18-35s who are able to work**



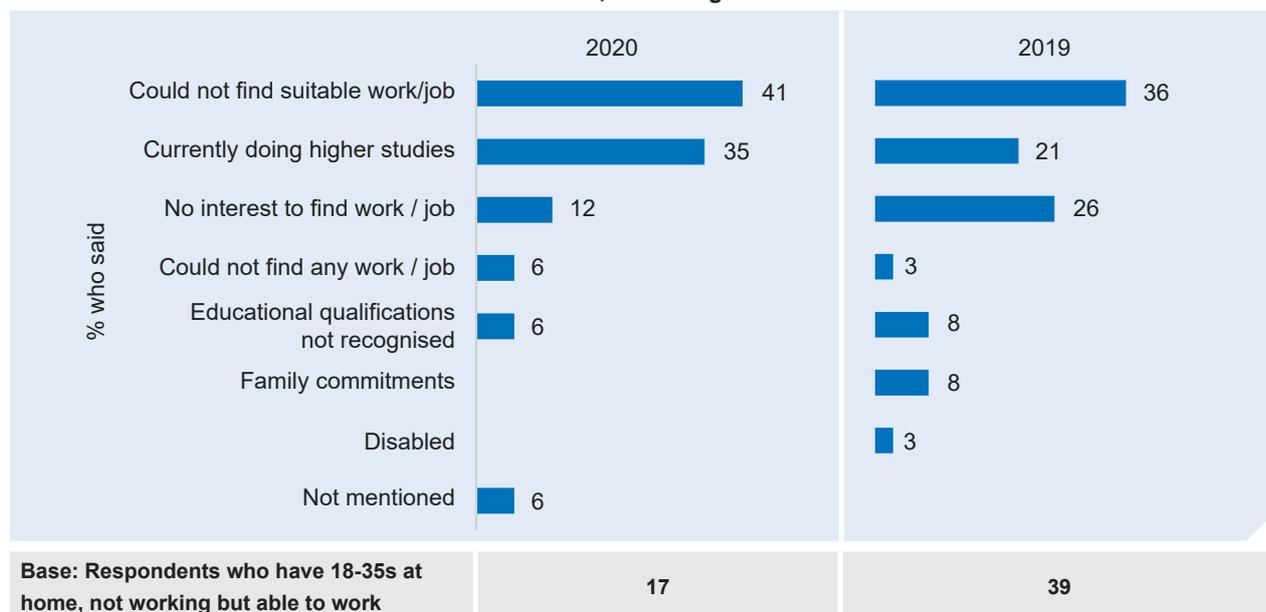
- ▶ The vast majority of the unemployed 18 to 35 year olds had more than 10 years of schooling. About half had passed their Advanced Level exams (equivalent), and of them, most had a degree or higher qualification (Chart F10). Of the rest, a substantial proportion has passed their Ordinary Levels or equivalent.

**Chart F10: Education levels of unemployed 18-35s who are able to work**



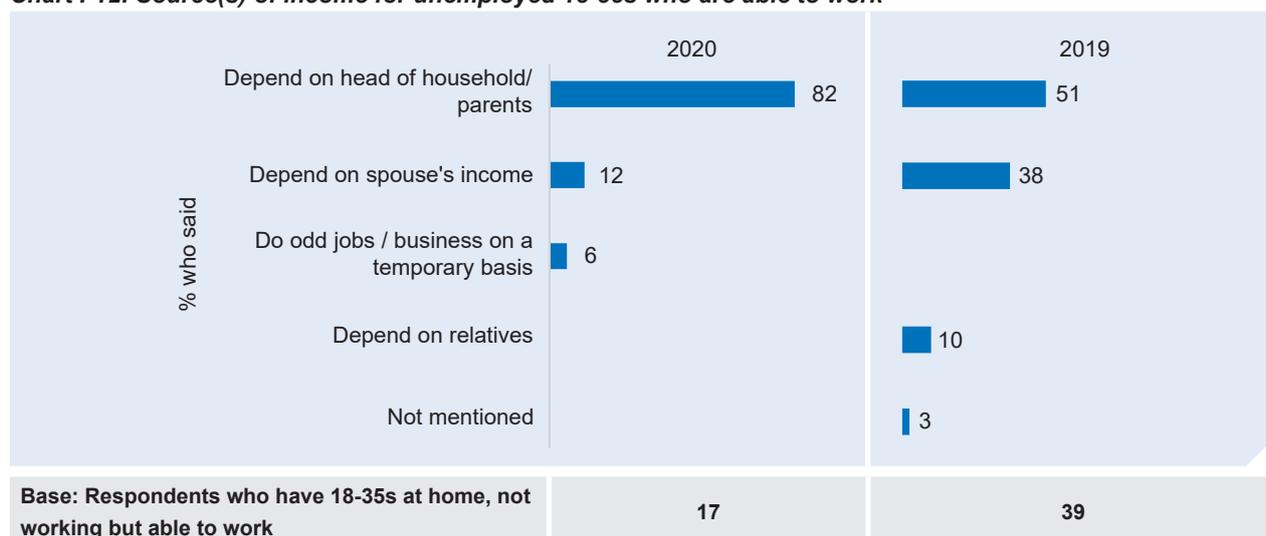
- ▶ Respondents were asked why the unemployed young adults in their home were not working. While about half the young adults were not looking for work (due to undertaking higher studies or not being interested in looking for a job), the other half were looking for work but could not find the right job, with some saying they couldn't find any job (Chart F11).

**Chart F11: Reasons for 18-35s who are able to work, not doing so**



- ▶ Respondents were asked how these non working 18 to 35 year olds have an income since they were not working. Almost all responded that these young adults depend on income support from their parents (including head of household) and their spouses (Chart F12).

**Chart F12: Source(s) of income for unemployed 18-35s who are able to work**



# G

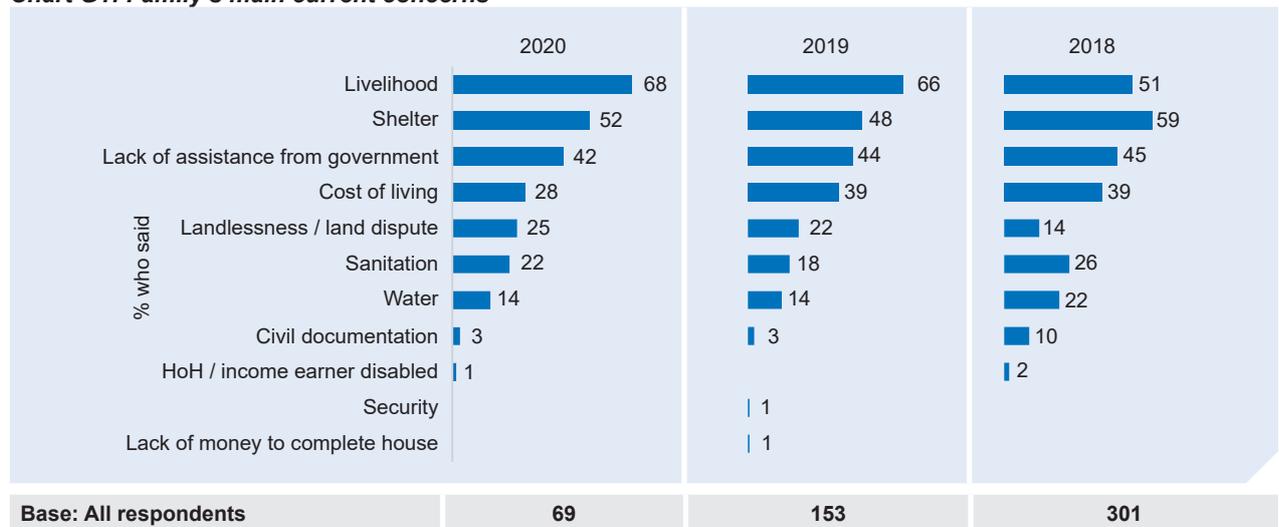
## RETURNEE SENTIMENTS ON RETURN AND REINTEGRATION

*Intent of queries: To collect data regarding the overall satisfaction with return and reintegration, including the intent to remain in the area of return or in Sri Lanka, and to assist in providing recommendations to other refugees, still in countries of asylum.*

### Concerns

- ▶ Respondents were asked to state their main current concerns with respect to their family, if they have any. Among 2020 returnees 88% (62 respondents) had at least one concern and among 2019 returnees the corresponding number was 93% (142 respondents),
- ▶ Overall, the top three concerns have remained the same: livelihood, shelter and lack of government assistance (Chart G1). The cost of living was also a concern for many.

**Chart G1: Family's main current concerns**



- ▶ Among 2020 and 2019 returnees, while concerns regarding livelihood were high in all districts, concerns about shelter were highest in Vavuniya district, and those about the cost of living and the lack of government reintegration assistance were highest in Kilinochchi and Mannar districts (Table G1).

**Table G1: Family's current concerns – notable differences by district**

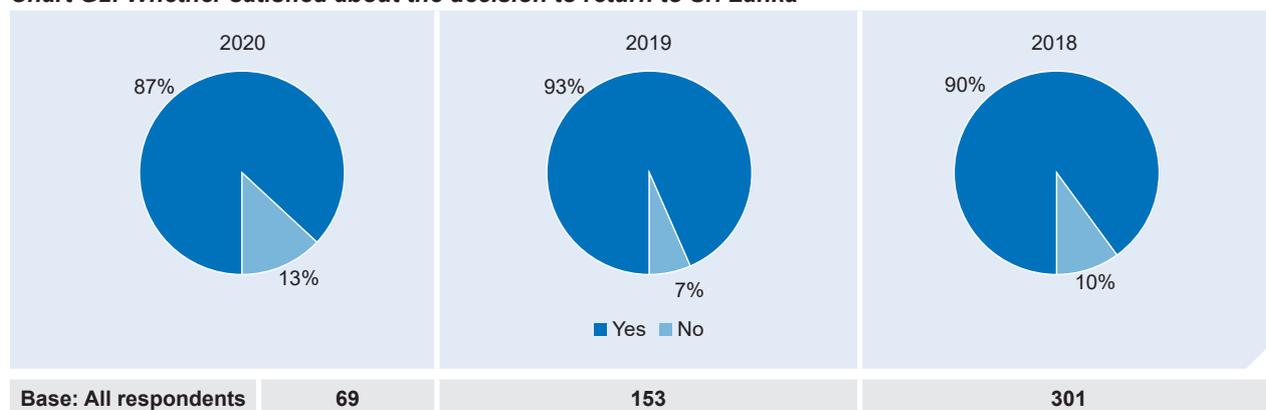
District	2020				District	2019			
	Base	% who said				Base	% who said		
		Shelter	Lack of govt. assistance	Cost of living			Shelter	Lack of govt. assistance	Cost of living
Jaffna	18	55	50	40	Jaffna	34	49	43	30
Vavuniya	13	86	43	0	Vavuniya	24	56	48	28
Kilinochchi	5	38	50	13	Kilinochchi	9	50	70	40
Mullaitivu	2	0	67	100	Mullaitivu	10	33	17	42
Mannar	10	27	27	45	Mannar	33	38	59	59
Trincomalee	13	54	31	15	Trincomalee	32	40	49	34
All districts	61	52	42	28	All districts	142	44	48	39

**Base: Those who mentioned they have at least one concern**

## Whether satisfied in returning back to Sri Lanka and intention to stay for good

- ▶ Across all three years of return, about 90% of respondents said their family was satisfied with their decision to return to Sri Lanka (Chart G2).

**Chart G2: Whether satisfied about the decision to return to Sri Lanka**



- ▶ The main reasons for being satisfied were the ability to return to their country of birth and to be reunited with their family / families. Among the few respondents who were not happy to return, the main reasons were not having livelihood opportunities and the high cost of living in Sri Lanka (Tables G2 and G3).

**Table G2: Reasons for being satisfied to return to Sri Lanka**

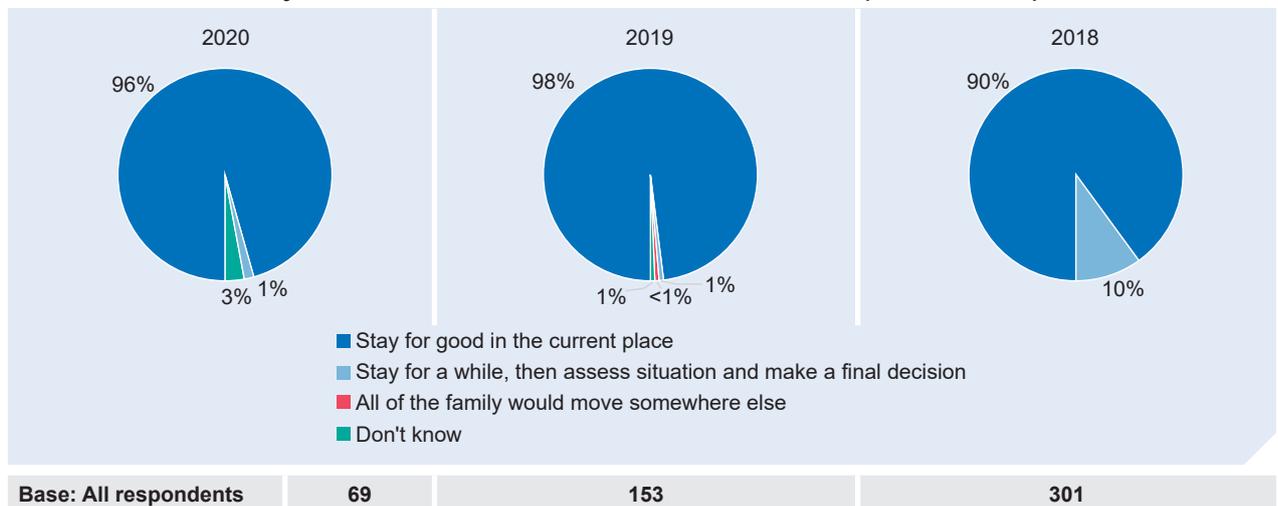
Main responses (% stating)	2020	2019	2018
Reasons for being satisfied:			
Able to return to our place of origin	65	71	43
Reunited with the family	48	48	
Peaceful situation in Sri Lanka	22	15	
<b>Base: Those satisfied to return</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>271</b>

**Table G3: Reasons for not being satisfied to return to Sri Lanka**

Main responses (% stating)	2020	2019	2018
Reasons for not being satisfied:			
No livelihood opportunities	78	70	76
Cost of living in Sri Lanka is high	56	80	
No assistance from the authorities	44	30	
<b>Base: Those not satisfied to return</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>29</b>

- ▶ Almost all the 2020 and 2019 returnees intended to stay for good in the current area (Chart G3), slightly higher than the 90% of 2018 returnees who said so. Just three 2020 and 2019 returnees said they would either stay for a while and decide, or move elsewhere, because they are unable to have their own land and a house.

**Chart G3: Whether family intends to remain in the area or move elsewhere (in or out of SL)**



- ▶ All respondents were asked what information would be useful to know before returning to Sri Lanka. How peaceful or not the country is and the security situation were mentioned by most, followed by information on livelihoods, housing and government assistance (Table G4).

**Table G4: Information considered useful to know before returning to Sri Lanka**

Main spontaneous responses (% mentioning)	2020	2019
Situation re. how peaceful (or not) Sri Lanka is	74	73
Safety and security situation	38	31
Information on livelihood opportunities	13	13
About housing opportunities	6	4
About government assistance	4	5
<b>Base: All respondents</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>153</b>

- ▶ Almost all the 2020 returnees and all 2019 returnees would advise other refugees to return to Sri Lanka, with almost a universal recommendation to return with UNHCR assistance (Table G5).

**Table G5: Information considered useful to know before returning to Sri Lanka**

Type of recommendation (% mentioning)	2020	2019	2018
Yes, with UNHCR assistance	96	100	92
Yes, spontaneously	3	-	2
No, would not recommend	1	-	6
<b>Base: All respondents</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>301</b>

- ▶ The main reasons stated for advising to return with UNHCR assistance continued to be to return safely and to receive financial assistance (Table G6).

**Table G6: Reasons for the type of advice given**

Main reasons for each choice of type of return	2020	2019	2018
Reasons for recommending to return with UNHCR support			
<b>To return safely</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>To receive financial assistance</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>35%</b>
Able to bring more goods (baggage)	-	1%	-
<b>Base: Those recommending to return with UNHCR support</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>277</b>
Reasons for recommending to return spontaneously (No. stating)			
To return quickly	2	-	-
<b>Base: Those recommending to return spontaneously</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
Reasons for not recommending to return (No. stating)			
No livelihood opportunities	1	-	-
<b>Base: Those not recommending to return to Sri Lanka</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

# H

# REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES: UNHCR AND OTHERS

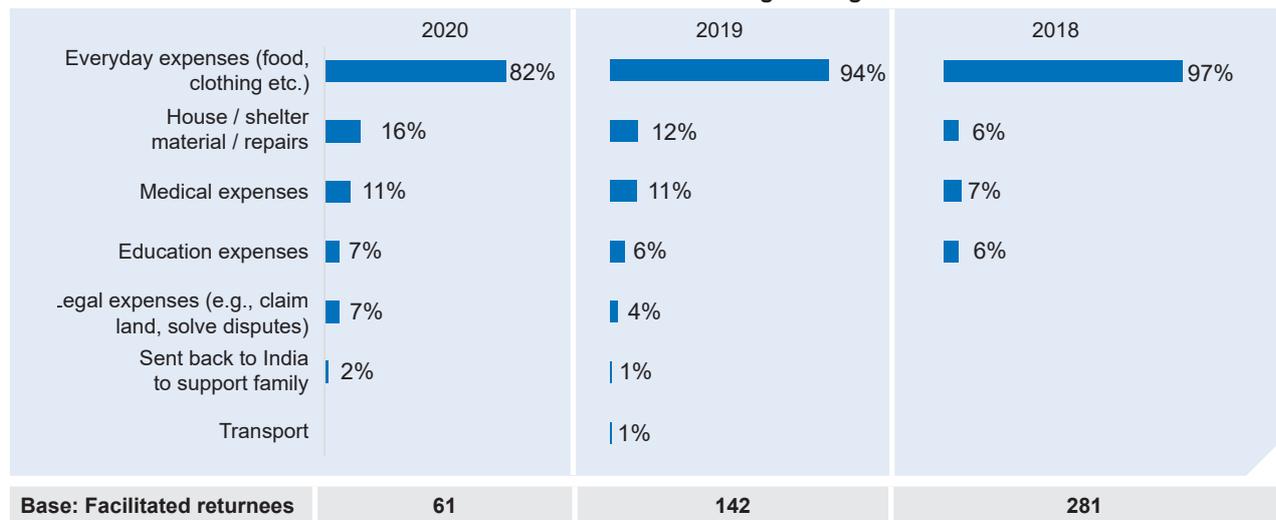
**Intent of queries:** To identify how returnees used financial and material assistance, to gather information about returnees preferred other items of programme alternatives, and to verify that intended beneficiaries received programme entitlements. This theme of queries is useful to UNHCR (and others) for programme design and monitoring purposes, in addition to the underlying value in protection monitoring.

Note: Data regarding UNHCR assistance was collected and relevant only to those who returned with UNHCR facilitation<sup>6</sup>.

## UNHCR assistance among facilitated returnee households

- ▶ While the vast majority of the facilitated returnees used the reintegration grant for everyday expenses, among 2020 returnees, more respondents said they used the grant for other expenses than returnees from the previous two years (Chart H1).

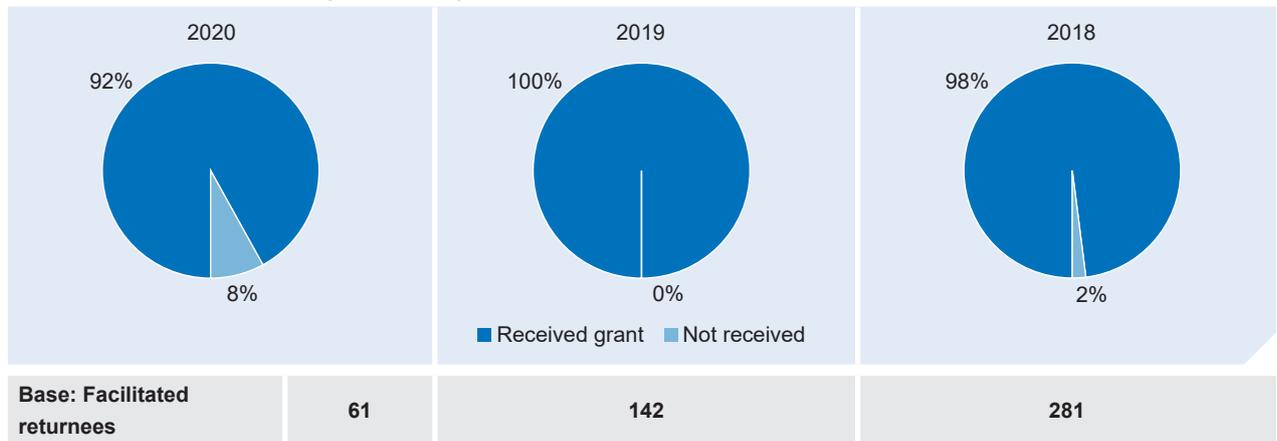
**Chart H1: How facilitated returnee households used the UN reintegration grant**



<sup>6</sup> As mentioned in section A, 88% of 2020 returnees (represented by 61 respondents) and 93% of 2019 returnees (142 respondents) were facilitated returnees. Among 2018 returnees, 93% were facilitated returnees.

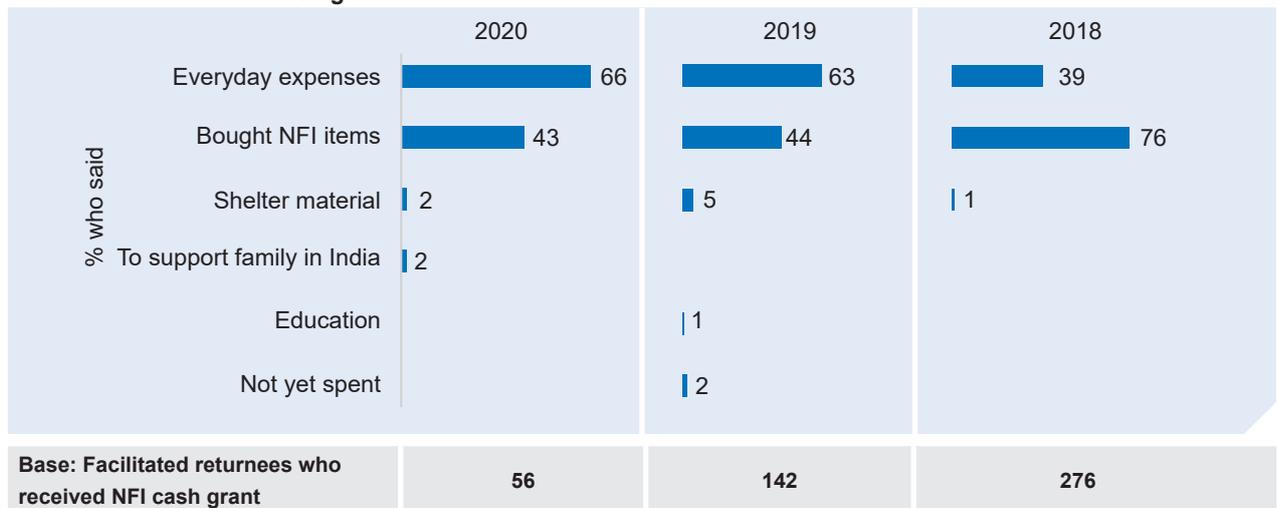
- ▶ 92% of facilitated returnee households in 2020 received the NFI cash grant, while among those who returned in 2019 and 2018, 100% and 98% respectively received it (Chart H2). However, 17% of facilitated returnee households in Jaffna district (three households) did not receive this grant.

**Chart H2: Extent of receiving NFI cash grant from UNHCR**



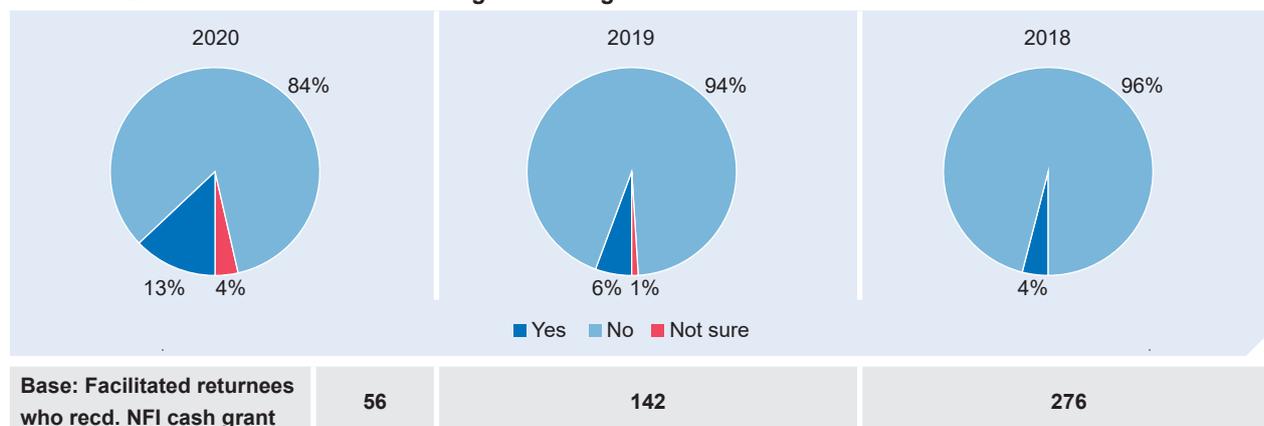
- ▶ 2020 and 2019 facilitated returnees mostly used the Non Food Item (NFI) cash grant for daily expenses, followed by purchasing NFIs, a reversal of the usage pattern in 2018 when most bought NFIs and some used it for daily expenses (Chart H3). The pattern of expenditure did not differ significantly by district.

**Chart H3: How the NFI cash grant was used**



- ▶ In 2020, twice as many recipients than in 2019 of those who received the NFI cash grant (in percentage terms) experienced some obstacle(s) in receiving it (Chart H4). In absolute numbers however it was 7 out of 56 recipients (in 2020).

**Chart H4: Extent of obstacles in receiving NFI cash grant**



- ▶ Among these few respondents, the main obstacles in receiving the NFI cash grant were identification issues, distance too far to the bank, and timelines (Table H1).

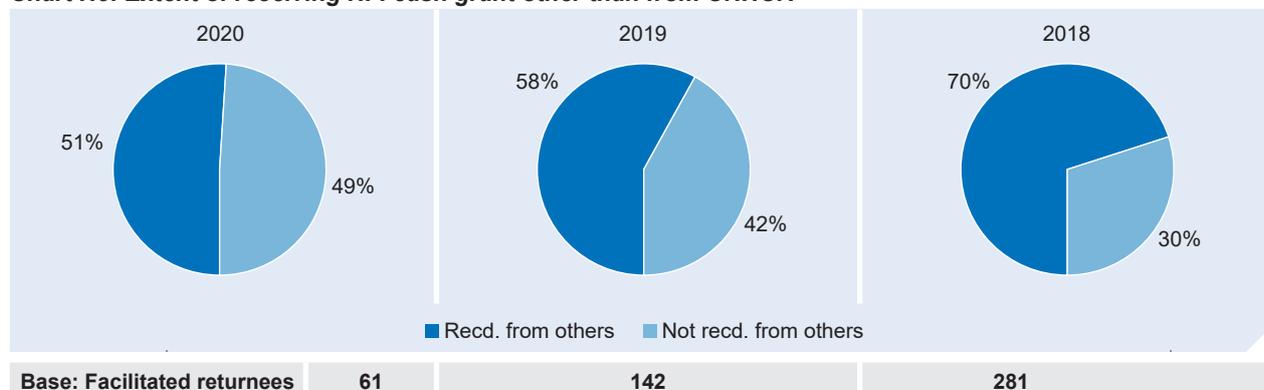
**Table H1: Types of obstacles experienced in receiving NFI cash grant**

No. who said	2020	2019	2018
Identification issues	4	4	6
Distance to the bank too far	2	-	-
Timelines	-	3	4
Still not received cheque	1	-	-
<b>Base: No. experiencing obstacles in receiving NFI cash grant</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>

- ▶ Among the facilitated returnees, about half (51% and 58% among 2020 and 2019 returnees respectively) received reintegration assistance other than from UNHCR (Chart H5). Among 2018 returnees 70% received such reintegration assistance. The reintegration assistance was solely given by the government (DS office) as cash, averaging Rs 38,000 per recipient household in 2020 and Rs 25,000 in 2019.

In the Trincomalee district, very few said they received this assistance: 8% of households in 2020 and 0% in 2019. Yet in 2018, 69 % in the Trincomalee district said they received such assistance.

**Chart H5: Extent of receiving NFI cash grant other than from UNHCR**



- ▶ Almost all facilitated returnees had approached UNHCR staff (Table H2) mostly once and a few, mainly twice. and very few thrice or more often.

**Table H2: Whether UNHCR office / staff were approached and the no. of times approached**

Extent of approaching UNHCR staff	2020	2019	2018
Approached UNHCR office / staff	100%	99%	100%
No. of times approached:			
Once	93%	92%	98%
Twice or more often	7%	7%	2%
<b>Base: No. of facilitated returnees</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>281</b>

- ▶ All who approached UNHCR staff did so to register (Table H3).

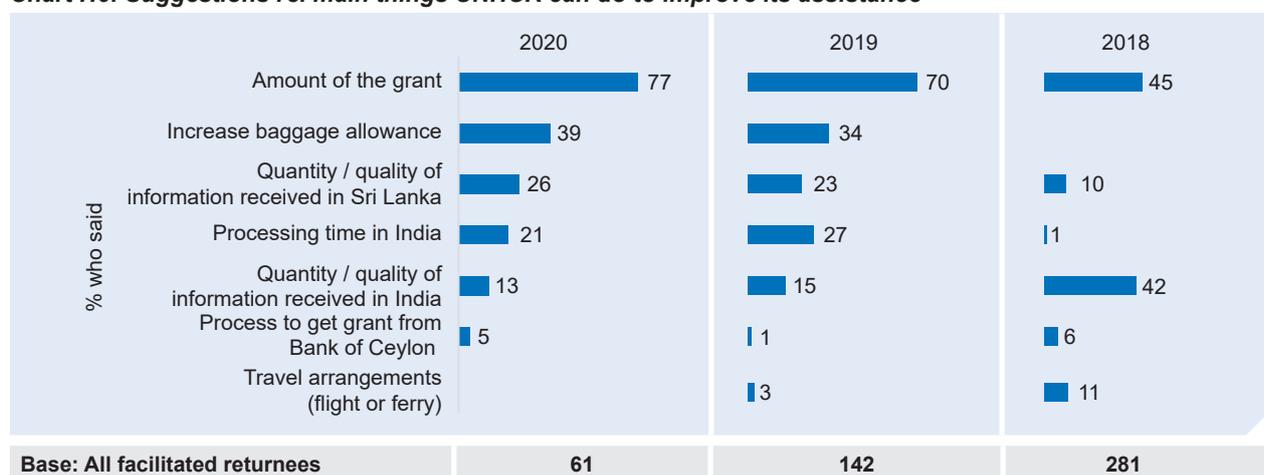
**Table H3: Reasons for approaching UNHCR office / staff**

Reasons for approaching UNHCR staff	2020	2019	2018
To register	100%	99%	100%
To get information	3%	2%	-
To receive assistance	2%	-	-
<b>Base: No. who approached UNHCR office / staff</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>281</b>

- ▶ When asked what was the main thing UNHCR could do improve its assistance, about three fourths suggested that the grant should be enhanced, followed by a third saying the baggage allowance should be increased (Chart H6).

Among the 2020 and 2019 returnees, there were less suggestions to improve the quality / quantity of information received in India, but more requests on improving the quality / quantity of information received in Sri Lanka.

**Chart H6: Suggestions re. main things UNHCR can do to improve its assistance<sup>7</sup>**

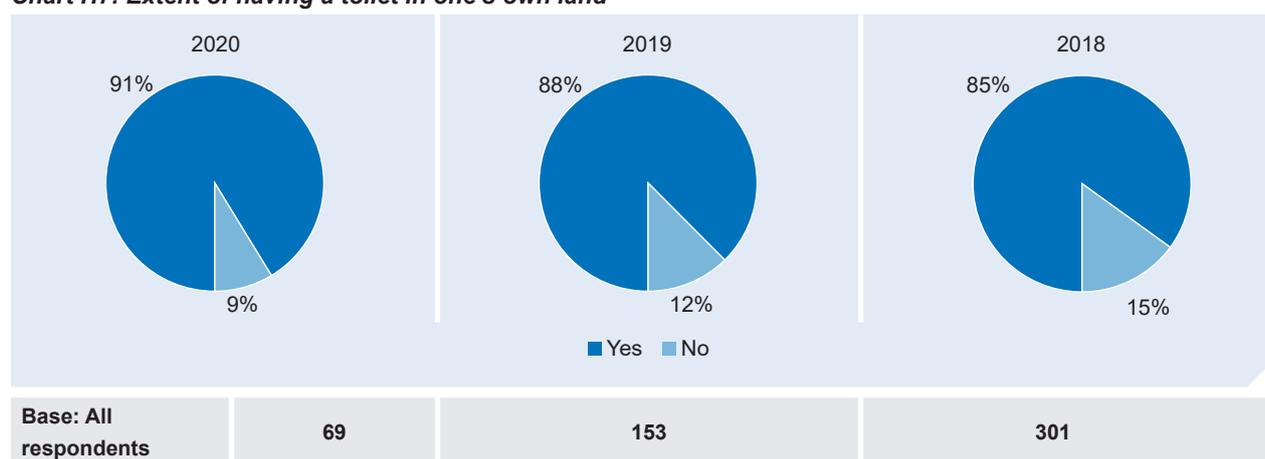


<sup>7</sup> The response on increasing baggage allowance was not included in the survey among 2018 returnees.

## Sanitation and water

- Overall, the percentage of households having a toilet in their land had increased to 91% among 2020 returnees, up from 88% among 2019 returnees and 85% among 2018 returnees (Chart H7). The percentage of households having a toilet was lowest in the Kilinochchi district, at 75% among 2020 returnees.

**Chart H7: Extent of having a toilet in one's own land**



- Among those having a toilet, almost all had a permanent toilet (61 out of 63 in 2020 returnees and 130 out of 134 in 2019 returnees), i.e., 97% in each group.
- Among the few households not having a toilet, most used their neighbour's toilet, followed by going to the bush / open ground (Table H4).

**Tablet H4: If there is no toilet in own land, what is used instead**

No. who said	2020	2019	2018
Neighbour's toilet	4	11	21
Communal toilet	0	2	3
Bush / open ground	2	5	21
Beach	0	1	0
<b>Base: No. not having a toilet on their land</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>45</b>

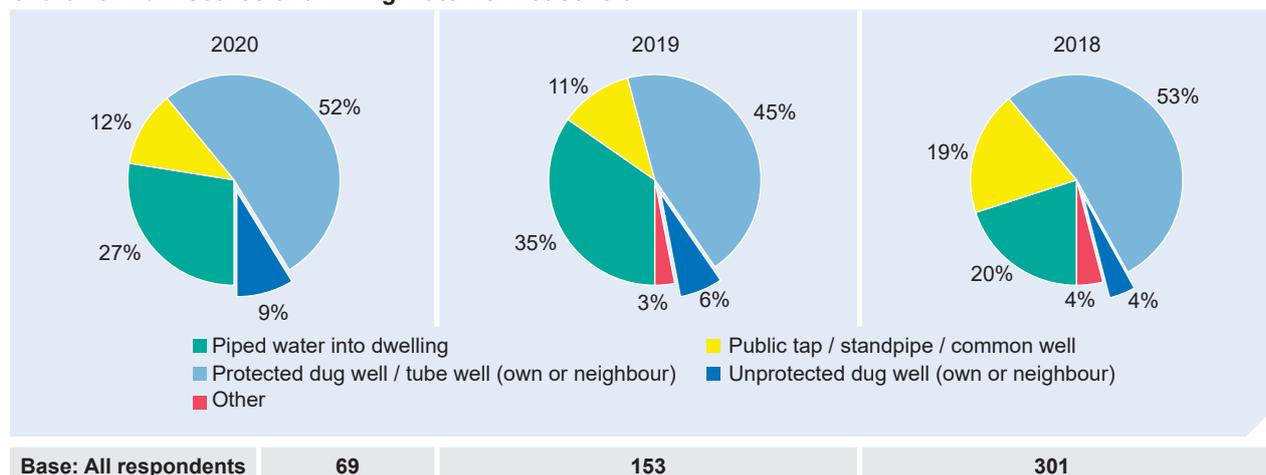
- Among those sharing the neighbour's toilet, there was a shift towards a smaller number of individuals sharing this toilet (Table H5).

**Table H5: Number of individuals sharing neighbour's toilet**

No. who said neighbour's toilet was shared by:	2020	2019	2018
1 – 5 individuals	2	8	6
6 – 10 individuals	2	4	11
More than 10 individuals	0	1	7
<b>Base: No. using the neighbour's toilet</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>24</b>

- ▶ For about half the 2020 and 2019 returnees, the main source of drinking water was from a protected dug well or tube well. Between a quarter and a third had piped water into their dwellings and about a tenth obtained their water from a public source (public tap / standpipe or common well). About a tenth obtained water from unprotected / contaminated / other sources among 2020 returnees (Chart H8).

**Chart H8: Main source of drinking-water for household**



- ▶ The district wise analysis below shows that the proportion of households consuming water from unprotected sources was higher in the Kilinochchi and Vavuniya districts (Table H6).

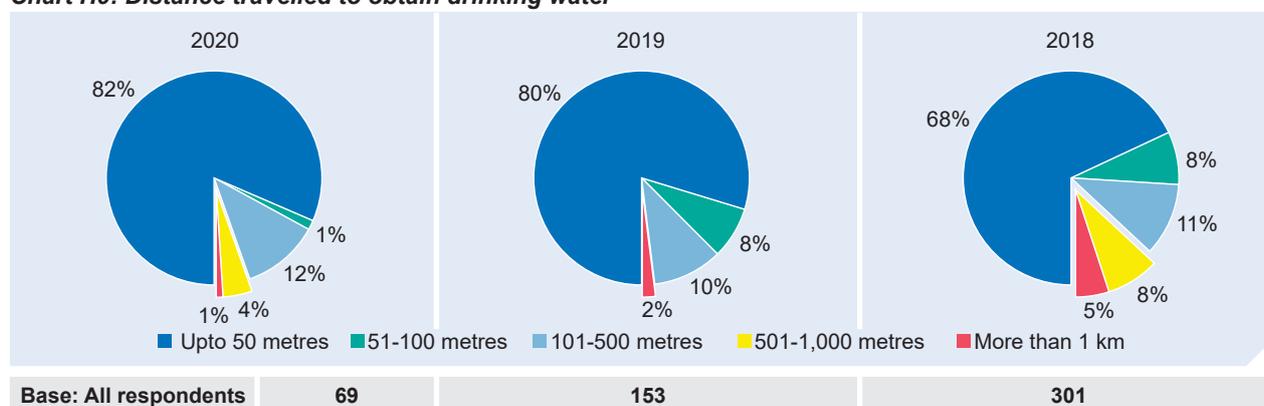
**Table H6: Main source of drinking-water for household – by district**

District	2020						2019						
	Base	% who said					Base	% who said					
		Piped water to dwelling	Public tap / standpipe / common well	Protected dug / tube well	Unprotected dug well	Other		Piped water to dwelling	Public tap / standpipe / common well	Protected dug / tube well	Unprotected dug well	Other	
Jaffna	20	35	10	50	5	-	Jaffna	37	38	24	27	8	3
Vavuniya	14	7	21	50	21	-	Vavuniya	25	16	12	64	8	-
Kilinochchi	8	-	13	75	13	-	Kilinochchi	10	30	-	30	20	20
Mullaitivu	3	-	-	67	33	-	Mullaitivu	12	17	-	75	8	-
Mannar	11	45	18	36	-	-	Mannar	34	38	6	56	-	-
Trin'malee	13	46	0	54	-	-	Trin'malee	35	49	9	31	6	6
All districts	69	28	12	52	9	-	All districts	153	35	11	45	6	3

Base: All respondents

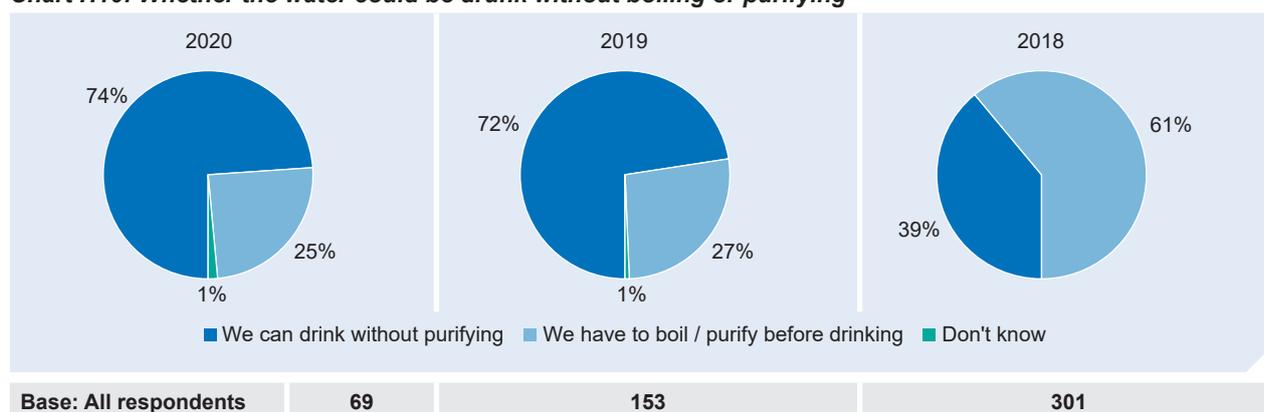
- ▶ 80% of households had access to drinking water a distance of 50 meters or less from their dwelling. However, 5% of 2020 returnees and 2% of 2019 returnees had to go more than 500 meters: nevertheless, an improvement from the 13% who had to do so among the 2018 returnees (Chart H9).

**Chart H9: Distance travelled to obtain drinking water**



- ▶ When asked if the water they drink can be consumed without purifying or boiling, almost three fourths said 'yes' (Chart H10), a substantial improvement compared to the 39% saying yes among 2018 returnees. However, particularly in Jaffna, Vavuniya and Mullaitivu districts, a third or more stated the water has to be boiled (Table H7).

**Chart H10: Whether the water could be drunk without boiling or purifying**



**Table H7: Whether the water could be drunk without boiling or purifying - by district**

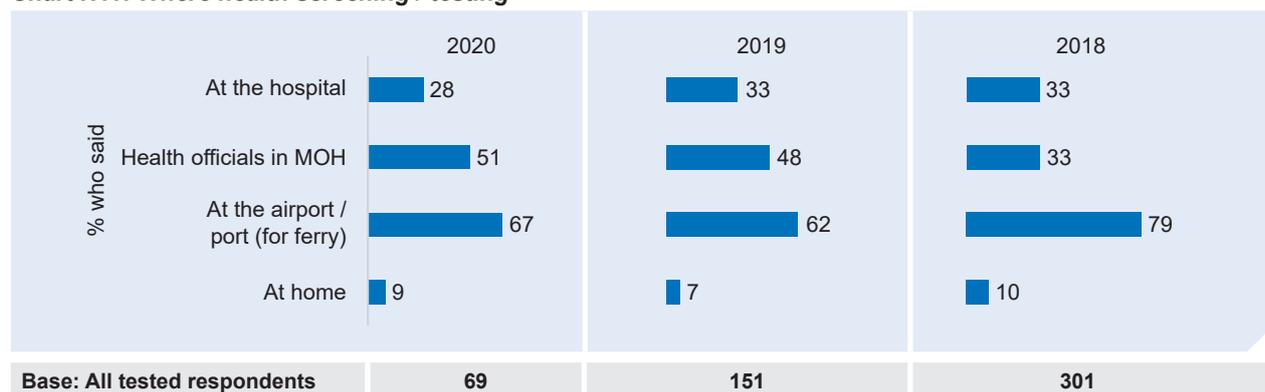
District	2020				District	2019			
	Base	% who said				Base	% who said		
		Yes	No	Not sure			Yes	No	Not sure
Jaffna	20	60	40	0	Jaffna	37	65	35	0
Vavuniya	14	86	14	0	Vavuniya	25	68	32	0
Kilinochchi	8	75	25	0	Kilinochchi	10	80	20	0
Mullaitivu	3	67	33	0	Mullaitivu	12	58	42	0
Mannar	11	73	27	0	Mannar	34	79	18	3
Trincomalee	13	85	8	8	Trincomalee	35	80	20	0
All districts	69	74	25	1	All districts	153	73	27	1

Base: All respondents

## Health screening or testing

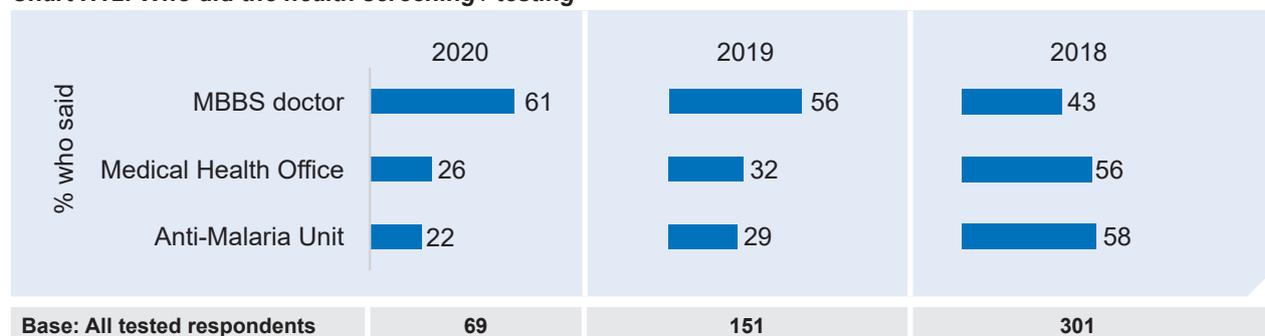
- ▶ Almost all respondents (99%) said that they / members of their family were subjected to health screening or testing on their return to Sri Lanka. Exceptions were two respondents from 2019, who had settled in the Trincomalee district.
- ▶ Multiple testing centres were mentioned, with the most mentioned being the airport (by about 70%), followed by health officials from Ministry of Health and hospitals (Chart H11).

**Chart H11: Where health screening / testing**



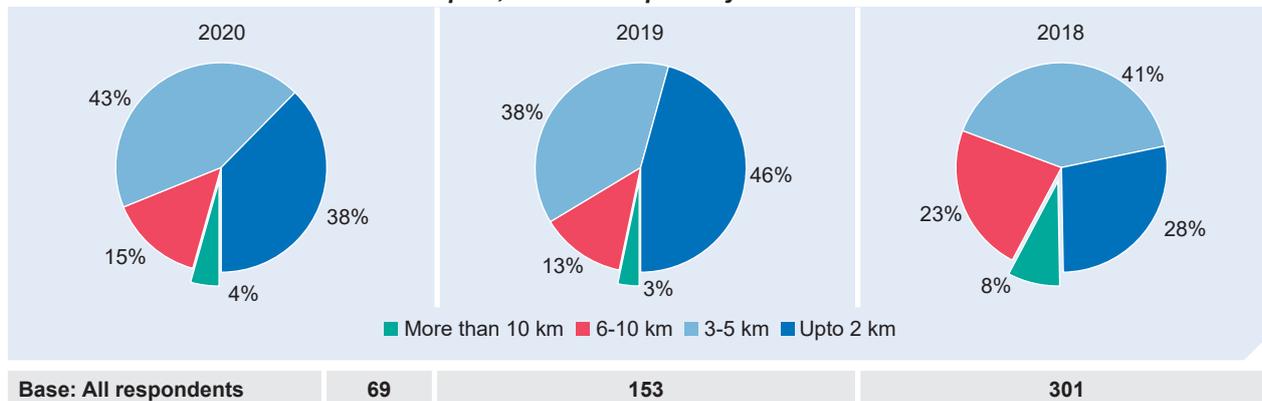
- ▶ The screening / testing mostly undertaken by an MBBS doctor, and to a lesser extent by the medical health office and the anti-malaria unit (Chart H12).

**Chart H12: Who did the health screening / testing**



- ▶ In terms of distance to the closest hospital, clinic or dispensary, less than 5% of 2020 and 2019 returnees had to travel more than 10km to get to the nearest hospital, clinic or dispensary, and about 15% had to travel 6 to 10 km (Chart H13). These percentages are substantially less than among 2018 returnees. There were no major differences in the percentages that need to travel these distances across districts.

**Chart H13: Distance to the closest hospital, clinic or dispensary**



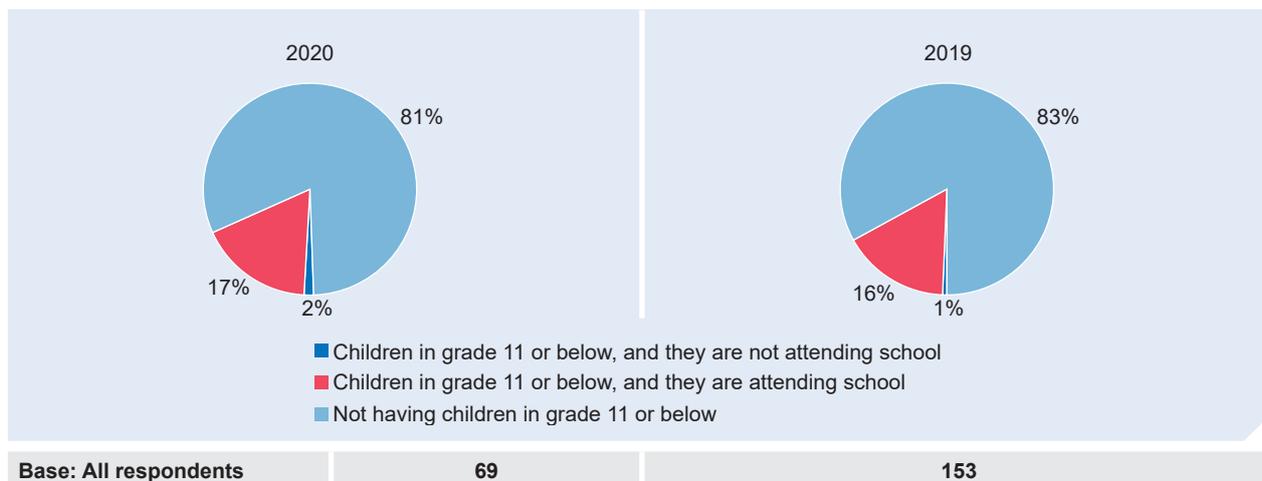
## Education

- ▶ Respondents were asked how many of their children (that are in school) in grade 11 or below, are currently not attending school. (In the Tool Two research among 2018 returnees, the school grade considered was grade 8 and below and therefore the comparison is not shown below).

Just under 20% of households had children in grade 11 or below, and 90% of these children were in school (Chart H14).

Among the 10% of households where children were not in school (3 households) the reasons were that the children need to work to support the family and that they didn't have enough money to meet the expenses of sending the children to school.

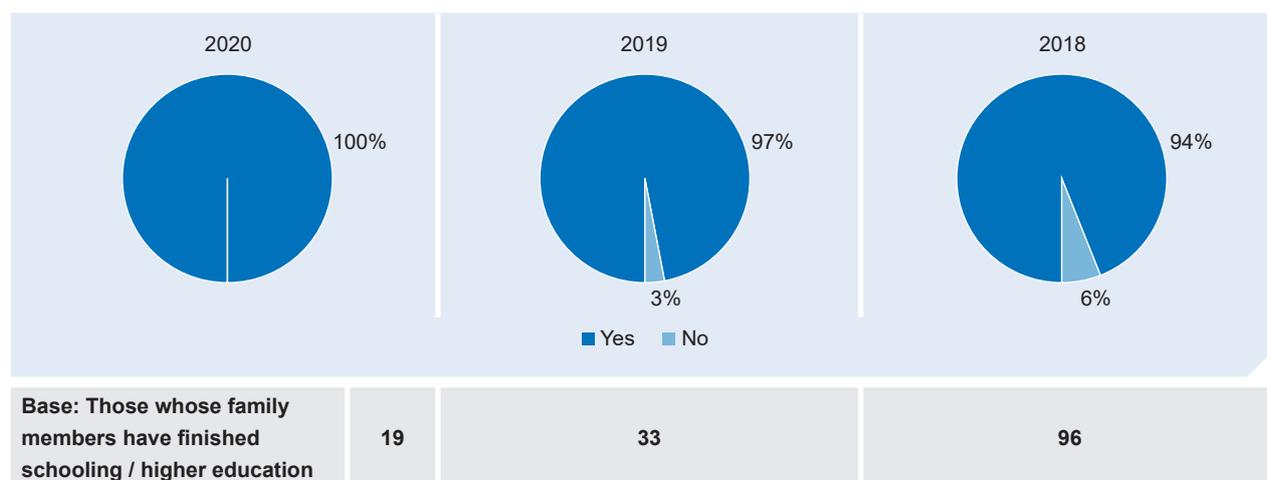
**Chart H14: Households with children in grade 11 or below sending children to school**



- ▶ 19 out of 69 returnee families in 2020 (28%), 33 out of 153 returnee families in 2019 (22%) and 96 out of 301 returnee families in 2018 (32%), had family members who finished schooling (upto a certificate level) and / or higher education in India, the country of asylum. Among these households, almost all respondents said the relevant school or higher education certificates / records were accepted by Sri Lankan education authorities (Chart H15).

Among 2019 returnees, just two respondents said the education records were not accepted, and the reasons given were that the degree was not recognized by the University Grants Commission and that they were waiting for supporting documents.

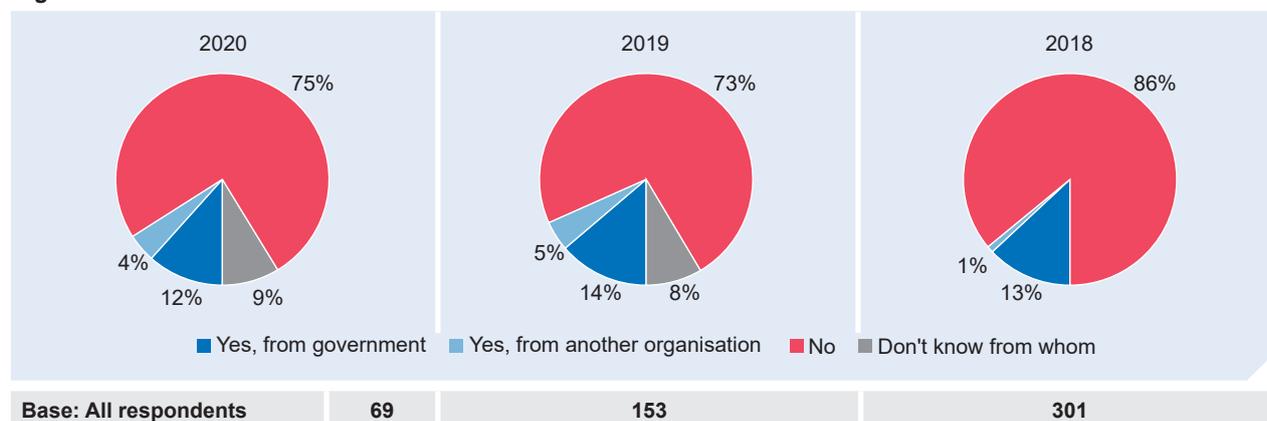
**Chart H15: Whether all relevant school /diploma / university certificates / records from country of asylum accepted by SL education authorities**



## Food security

- ▶ Almost all had three meals a day during the period under reference (last one week). Among 2020 returnees, all had three meals a day, and among 2019 returnees, 96% had three meals a day, and among 2018 returnees, 92%. 3% (four respondents) said they had two meals daily, but 1% (two respondents, one each from Jaffna and Mannar districts) said they did not eat daily.
- ▶ About three fourths of 2020 and 2019 returnees did not receive food rations or allowances from anyone, and only a quarter had received these (Chart H16). Most of those who received these items mentioned they got them from the government with some saying the donors were other organisations. Organisations mostly mentioned were OfERR and NHO.

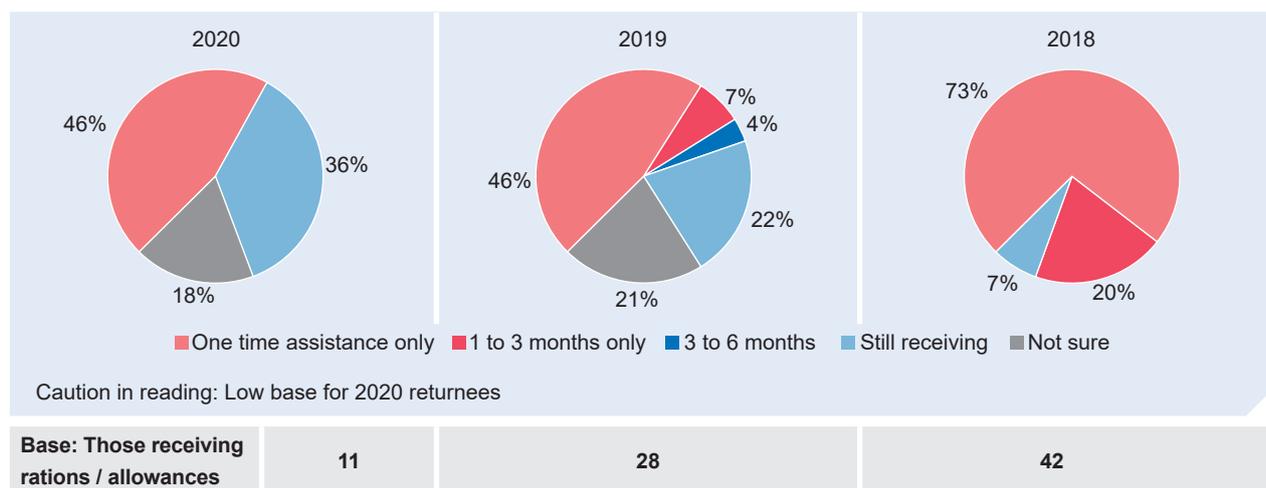
**Chart H16: Upon arrival, percentage who received food rations / allowances from the government or any other organization**



- ▶ Among the quarter of 2020 and 2019 returnees who received rations / allowances, almost half received them only once. Between a quarter (2019) and a third (2020) said they were still receiving them (Chart H17). One time assistance was substantially higher among the 2018 returnees than in the other two groups.

The returnees in 2020 and 2019 have had a higher percentage receiving rations / allowances as well as being recipients of multiple rounds of such support than those who returned in 2018.

**Chart H17: Period for which food rations / allowances were received**



## Respondents' comments

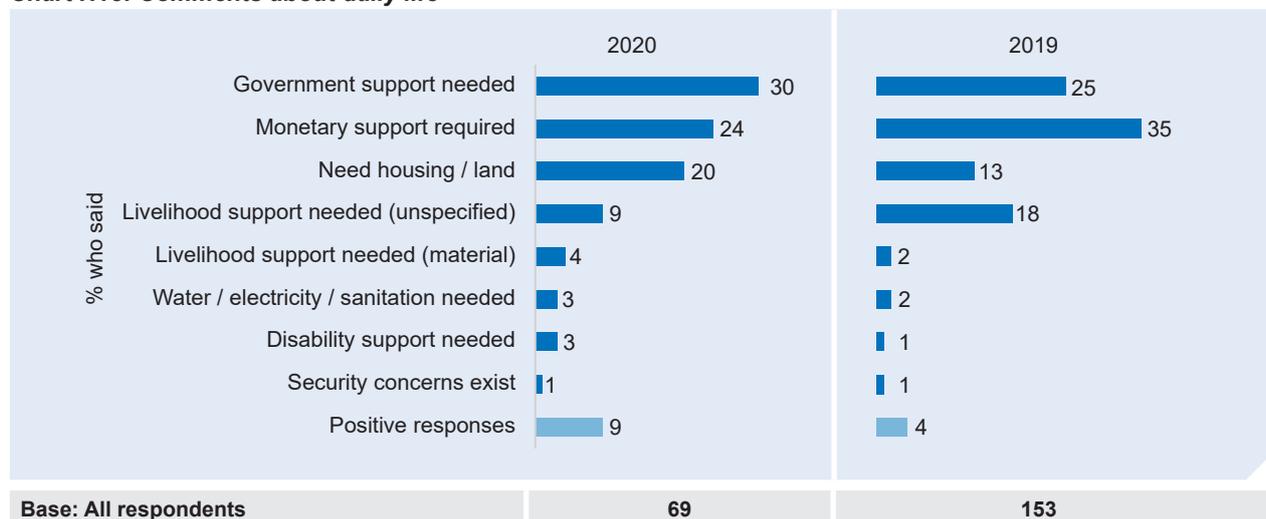
At the end of the Tool Two survey, respondents were asked whether they had any other comments about their daily lives that they wished to talk of. The feedback to this open-ended question has been grouped into broad areas which would encapsulate salient feelings that the returnees had about their current circumstances.

- ▶ About 75% of those surveyed responded to this question. Most feedback pertained to (1) the need for financial support i.e., government assistance / support, monetary / cash and (2) the requirement for housing and / or land (Chart H18).

Positive responses were limited, and pertained to the following options:

- Happy to return back to Sri Lanka
- Peaceful situation now / Security situation is good
- Children are reunited with parents
- Can earn daily

**Chart H18: Comments about daily life**



# COVID-19 IMPACT

**Intent of queries:** To determine the impact of covid-19 in terms of incidence of vaccination, rate of infection (if any), attitudes towards those infected with covid-19, and types of assistance received and from whom. Questions on covid-19 have been included for the first time in the Tool Two research among refugee returnees to Sri Lanka.

## Vaccination

- ▶ Almost 95% said they and their adult family members received the covid-19 vaccines (Chart I1).

**Chart I1: Incidence of adult family members receiving the covid-19 vaccine**



- ▶ Only a couple of respondents didn't want to take the covid-19 vaccine, the main reasons being due to medical conditions and not having the opportunity to be vaccinated (Table I1).

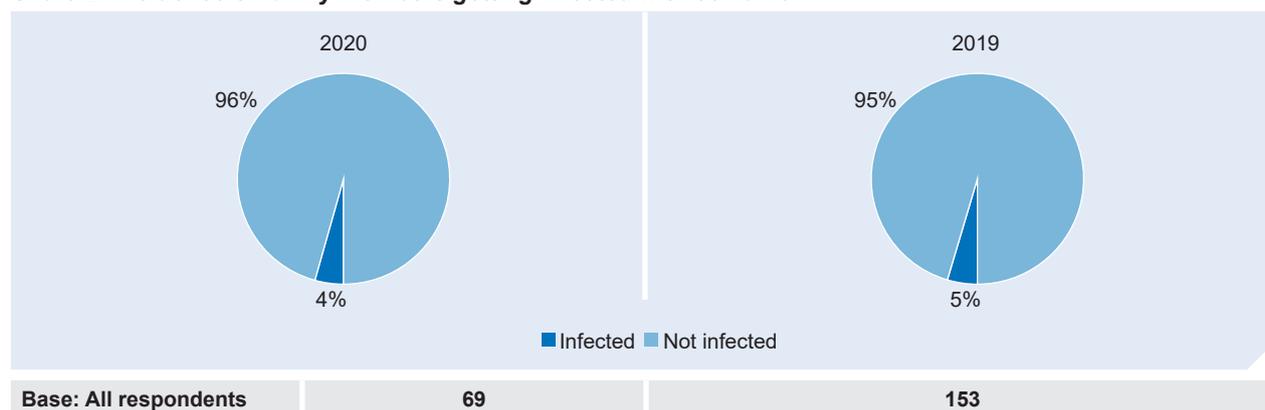
**Table I1: Reasons for not having the vaccine**

No. who said:	2020	2019
Due to medical conditions	3	3
They didn't get the opportunity to get it in India or Sri Lanka	-	3
Didn't want to take the vaccine	-	2
Living alone (No care giver if there are side effects of the vaccine)	-	1
Not eligible due to age	1	1
<b>Base: Those who said some adults did not receive covid-19 vaccine</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>

## Incidence of being infected with covid-19 and whether treated

- ▶ 4% of 2020 returnee households (three households) and 5% of 2019 returnee households (seven households) had at least one family member infected with covid-19 (Chart I2). An average of about 2 family members in all were infected in each such household (Table I2). Respondents said that all infected persons received treatment for covid-19 and that no one perished from the disease.

**Chart I2: Incidence of family members getting infected with covid-19**



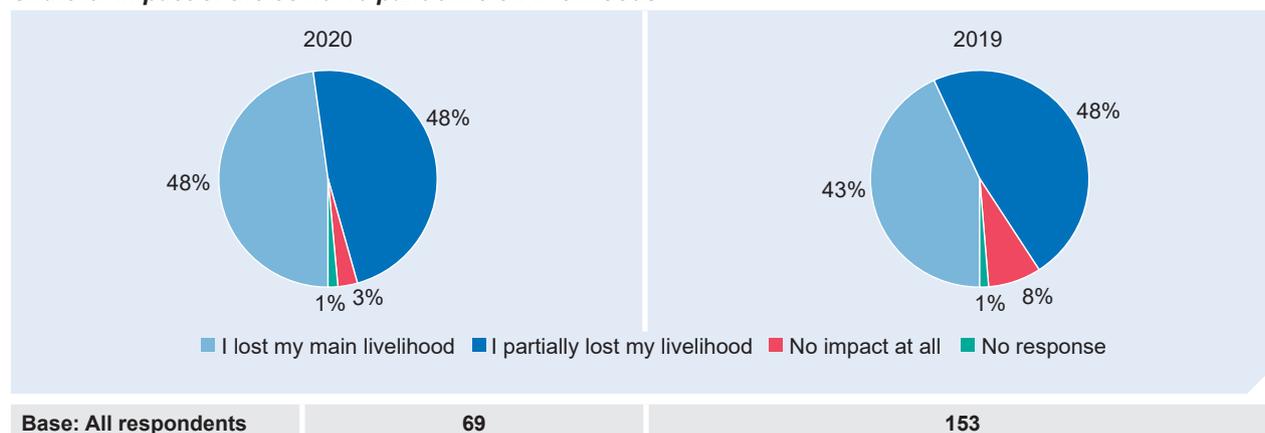
**Table I2: No. of family members infected with covid-19 per infected household**

No. who said:	2020	2019
Households which had a covid-19 infection	3	7
No. of family members infected	6	11
Average no. infected with covid-19 per infected household	2.0	1.6

## Impact on infected households from the community and impact of the pandemic on livelihoods

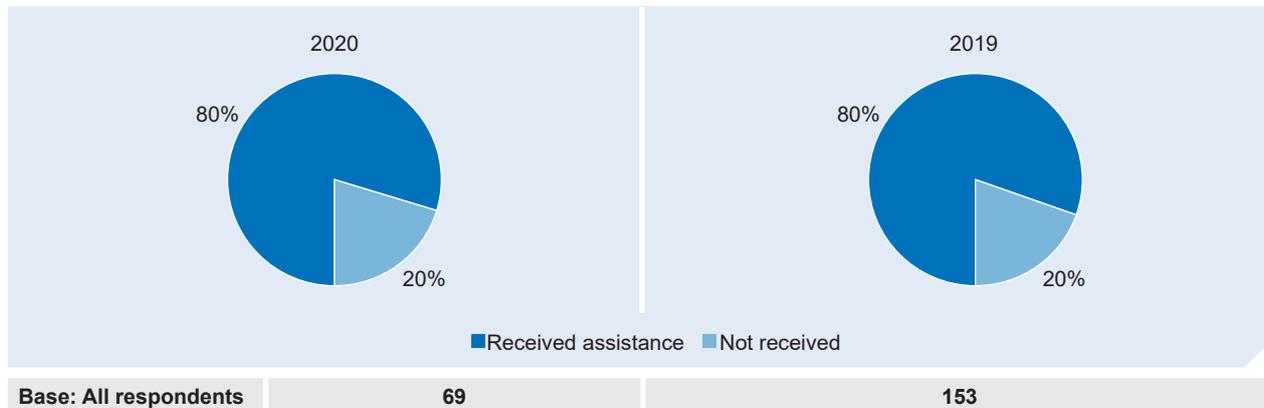
- ▶ Seven out of the ten respondents whose family members were infected with covid-19 said they received hostile reactions from the community following the infections. Two respondents did not comment and just one respondent said there was no hostile reaction from the community.
- ▶ Among all households, the impact of the pandemic on livelihoods was severe with almost all respondents saying they either completely or partially lost their main livelihood (Chart I3).

**Chart I3: Impact of the covid-19 pandemic on livelihoods**



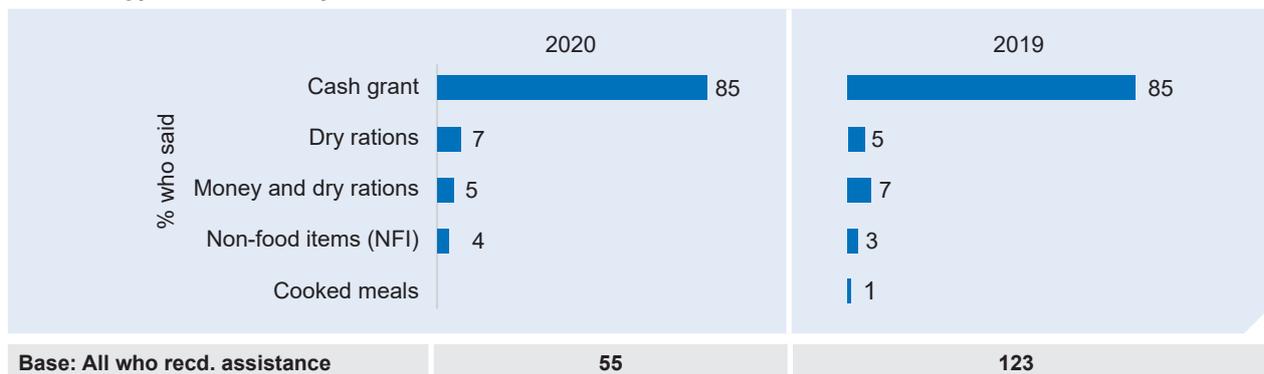
- ▶ Overall, about 20% of all households did not receive any assistance related to covid-19 (Chart I4). In Vavuniya district over 40% of 2020 and 2019 returnees (43% and 44% respectively) said they did not receive any assistance.

**Chart I4: Extent of receiving any assistance related to covid-19**



- ▶ Of those who received pandemic assistance the vast majority received cash. A few received dry rations, cash plus dry rations and non-food items (Chart I5). As shown below in chart I6, the government was the provider of pandemic assistance for about 95% of the households. Less than 10% of respondents mentioned an NGO or another institution as a provider of pandemic assistance.

**Chart I5: Types of covid-19 pandemic assistance received**



**Chart I6: Providers of pandemic assistance**

