

Delivering government services to the BOP in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh: Telecenters, mobile or both?

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Both Sri Lanka and Bangladesh have embarked on ICT-enabled development initiatives

- e-Sri Lanka and Digital Bangladesh both aim to deliver public services via ICTs, both include large components on reforming government processes via re-engineering and automation
 - Large telecenter projects included to support BOP connectivity
 - Nenasalas in Sri Lanka - 632 Nenasalas since 2005
 - Union Information and Service Centers (UISCs) in Bangladesh - 4,495 UISCs since 2009

Survey conducted in Q3 2012 in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka

- Target population
 - BOP (SEC D & E) living within 5km of a telecenter, aged 15-40
 - (SEC or socio-economic classification is based on the highest education level and occupation of household chief wage earner)
- Sampling
 - Stratified random sampling of telecenters: representation of provinces (Sri Lanka) and division (in Bangladesh)
 - 90 telecenters, 1800 respondents in Sri Lanka
 - 275 telecenters, 2750 respondents in Bangladesh
- Screening question
 - Have you had any “interaction” with the government in the last 12 months?
 - Obtain information: To obtain information on the government and its services
 - Obtain/access services: To use a government service, or “get something done”

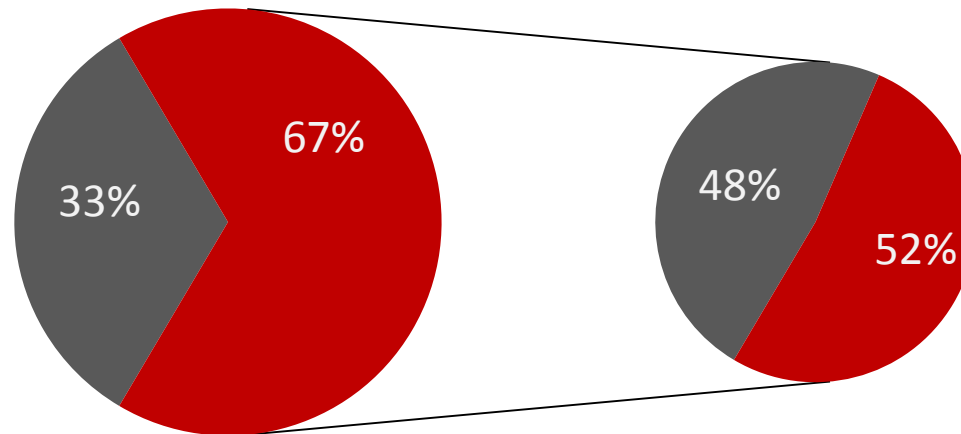
Aware of telecenters

(% of catchment area residents)

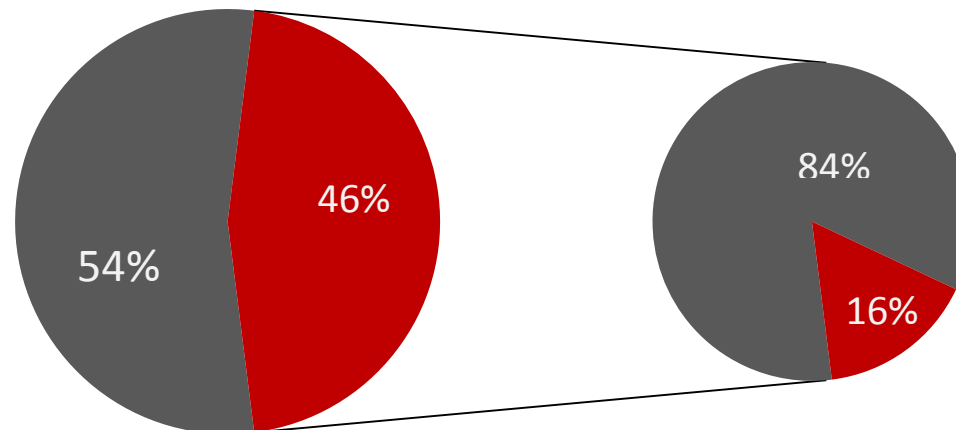
Have used a telecenter

(% of residents who have heard of telecenters)

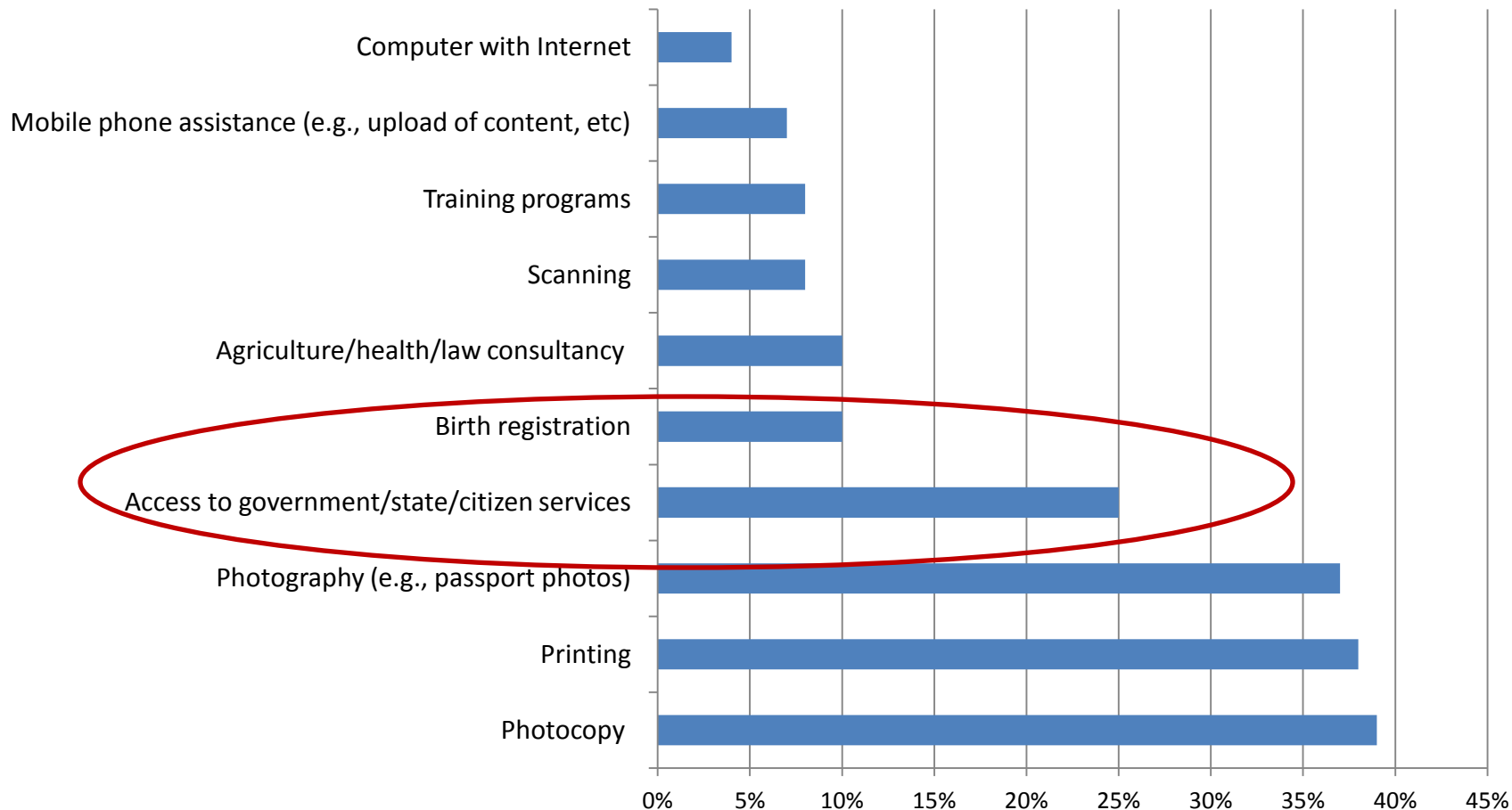
Bangladesh



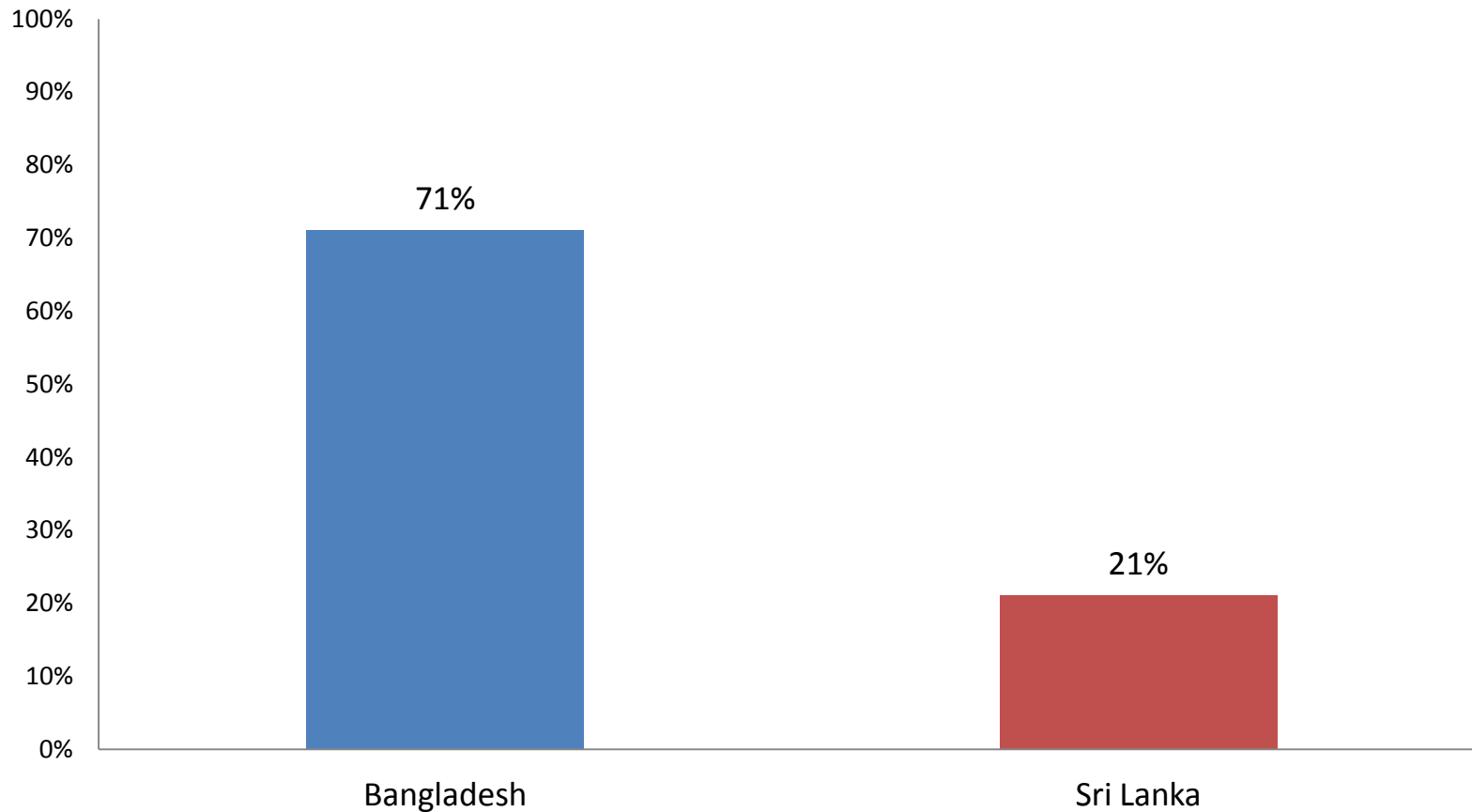
Sri Lanka



In Bangladesh, some government services are on the top 10 list of services accessed (% of telecenter users)



More Bangladeshi users obtained information on government services through information and contacts accessed at the telecenter



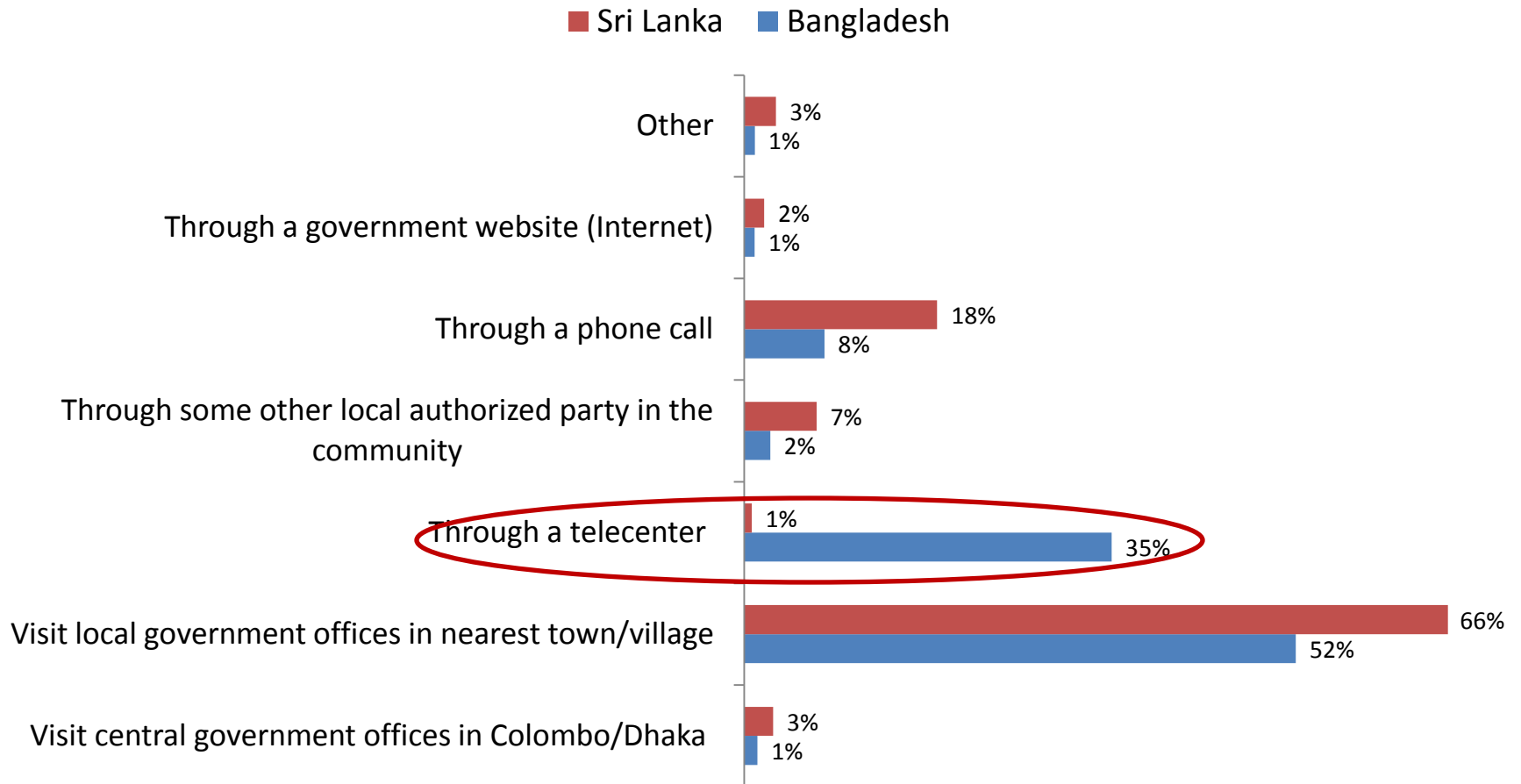
Location may be a key reason for low use in Sri Lanka

- More competition for telecenters in Sri Lanka
 - 28% of telecenter users in Bangladesh used other alternatives (Internet cafe) to telecenters while it was 56% in Sri Lanka
- Telecenters located within religious establishments in Sri Lanka
 - Use higher amongst residents living near a telecenter located in non-religious establishments (26%) compared to those residing near telecenters located in a religious establishment (8%)
- Some telecenters in Bangladesh are situated at or adjacent to the local government office (Union Parishad office)
 - Improve the perception of legitimacy of the telecenter

Range of services offered and greater need in Bangladesh may also explain the high use of it

- The telecenter operators have access to government forms and relevant information through a log-in system
 - Equipped to assist citizens in filling up relevant forms and submitting them online. These services are not available in Sri Lanka
- Greater need for telecenters in Bangladesh?
 - Lower literacy/education → need for assistance
 - Lower income and ICT ownership
 - Household access to a computer- 14% in Sri Lanka vs 3% in Bangladesh
 - Government info/services are easier to access in Sri Lanka

Best way to obtain information on government and its services (% of catchment areas residents)

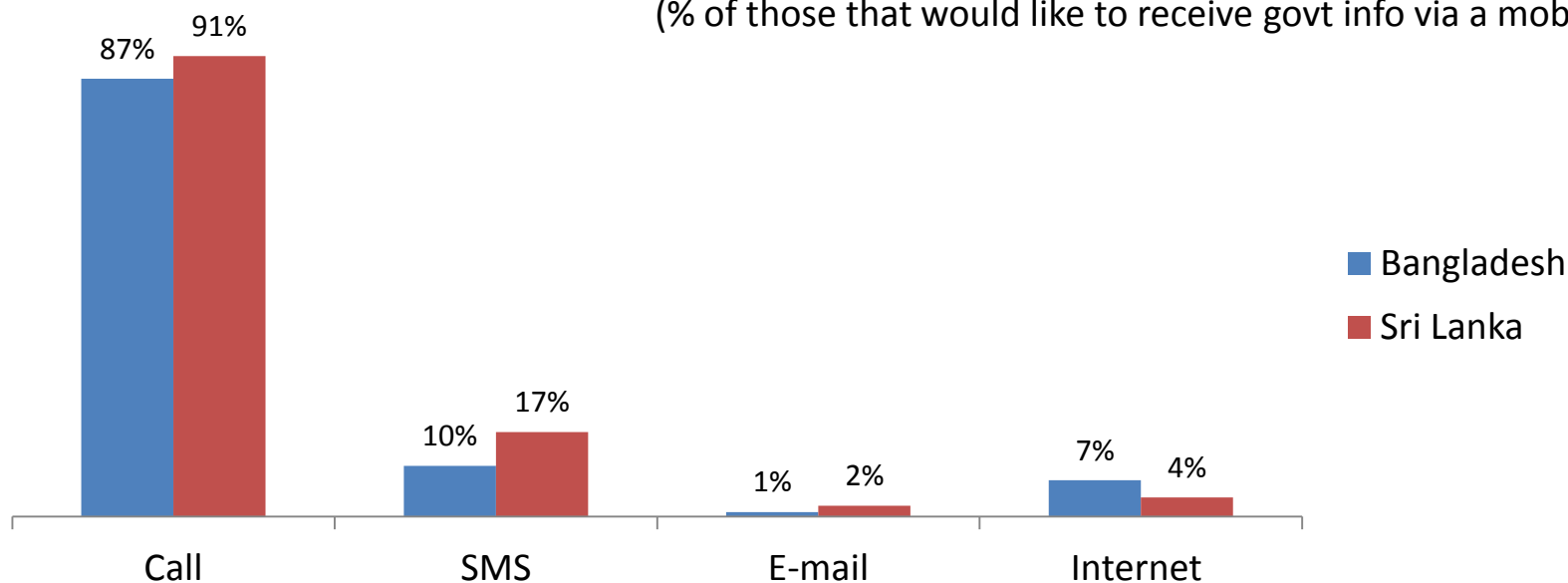


Openness to receiving government services through mobiles

- 52% of survey respondents in Bangladesh and 77% in Sri Lanka are open to receiving government information via a mobile

Preferred way of receiving information on government and its services is via calls

(% of those that would like to receive govt info via a mobile)



Recommendations

Sri Lanka

- Co-locate telecenters near or inside local government offices
- Avoid locating telecenters in areas where other commercially-provided public Internet access is already available or inside religious institutions
- Empower telecenter operators to submit forms online on behalf of others
- Engage in awareness programs to promote the use of telecenters to poor citizens

Bangladesh

- Establish a call center where they can obtain information about how to access government services
 - Can be modelled on Sri Lanka's Government Information Center