



BUILD BHUTAN PROJECT as an employment response to COVID-19 pandemic

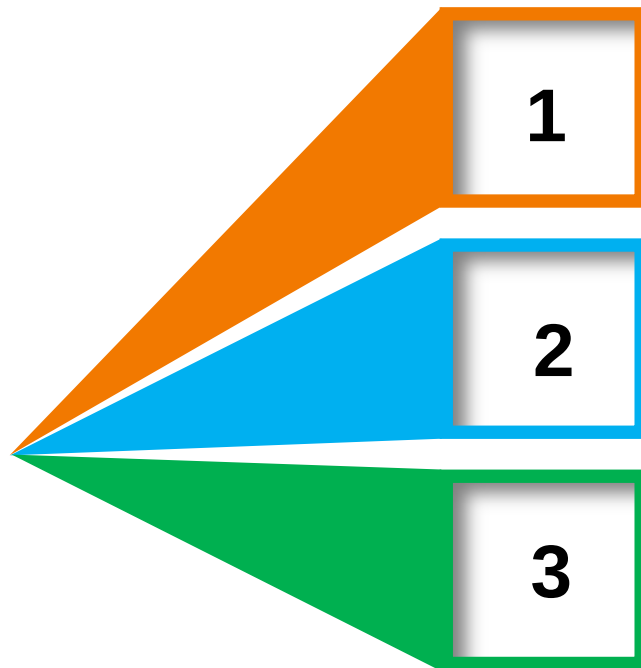


Introduction

- COVID-19 has affected not only employment sector of a country but also other income generating business and related developmental works.
- Build Bhutan aims to curve such issues in a country by creating employment opportunities for both skilled and unskilled unemployed and laid off citizens.
- The project was designed as a response to COVID-19 global pandemic and to offset workforce shortages in the construction sector created by restriction on import of foreign workers to redeploy those affected by the pandemic who can potentially enter the construction.



Objectives



Take stock of the progress of the project based on the workplan

Understand the perception of the employers and employees

Recommend changes to the implementation modality of the project



Literature review

- The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is surging like wildfire. The pandemic has posed challenges to governing and governance across the world.
- The COVID-19 pandemic is having a tragic effect on working hours and earnings, globally where two billion people work in the informal sector worldwide (mostly in emerging and developing economies) and are particularly at risk, ILO (1).
- Globally, the South Asian region is one of the swiftest growing, having an average GDP growth of around 7% in 2018; however, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is supposed to contract by 7.7% in 2020, The World Bank (3).



Methodology **used**

01



Progress of the BBP is reviewed against the targets proposed

02



Developed Structured online Survey Questionnaires

03



Online Survey
A online Survey from was sent to all Participants of the BBP (Employer and Direct Engagement)





Target Achievement

Target Indicators	Target 2019-20	Achieved	Percent
Candidates Placed in TTI's for skilling through BBP	1000	591	59.1
BBP candidates assessed and certified through RPL	500	173	34.6
Candidates engaged under BBP with Construction Firms	500	623	124.6
Specialized Firms Formed	25	36	144

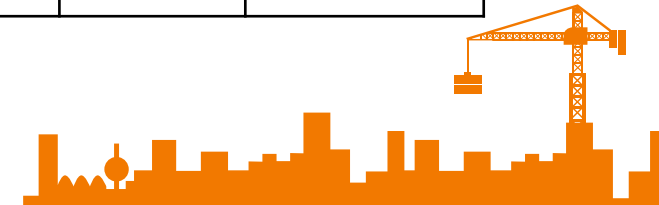




Employer Perception

Types of Employer and workers employed

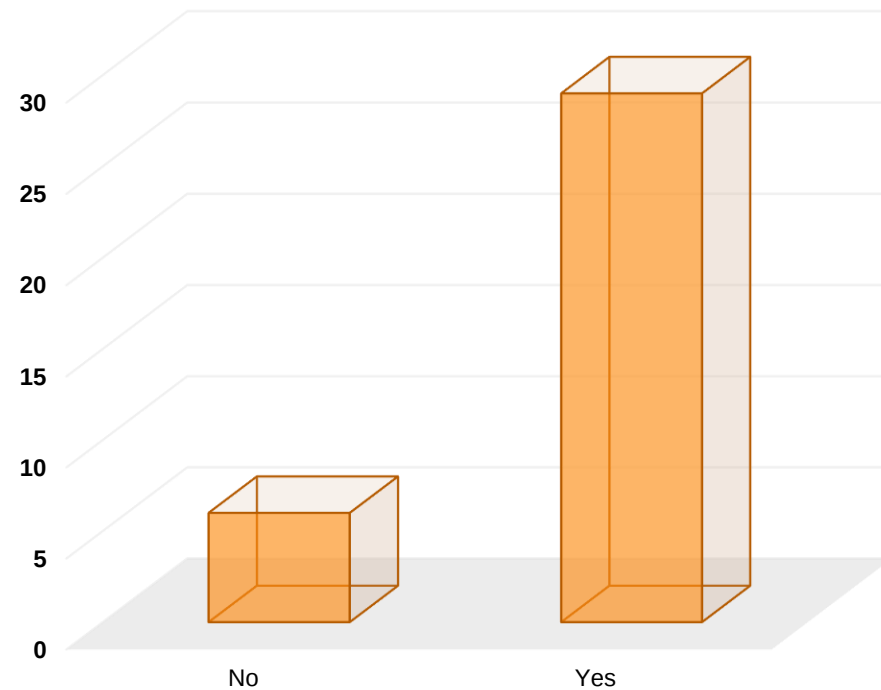
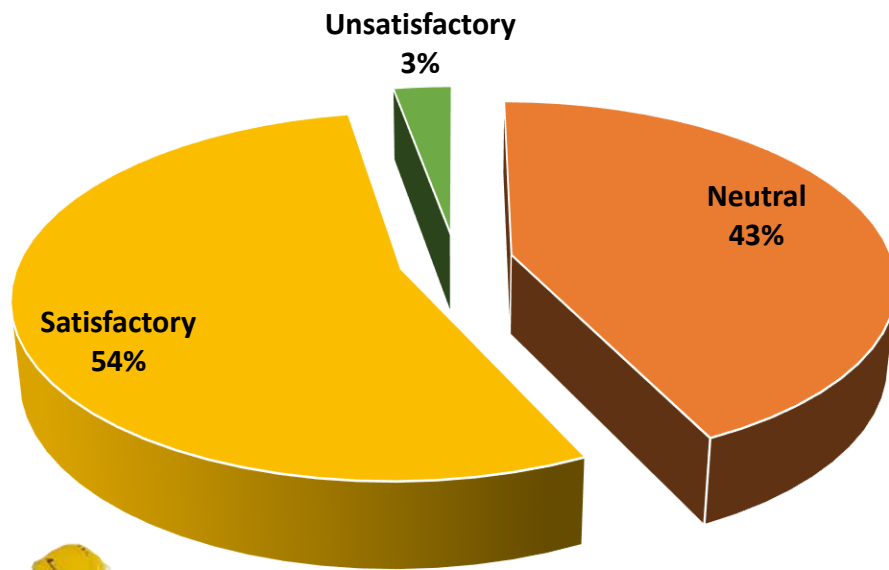
Employer	Number	Percent	BWs	FWs	BBP
Construction firm	4	11.4	67	32	32
Private House/Resort/Hotel Construction	2	5.7	18	9	6
Specialized Firm	29	82.9	573	22	302
Grand Total	35	100.0	658	63	340





Employer Perception

Performance Rating by the Employer



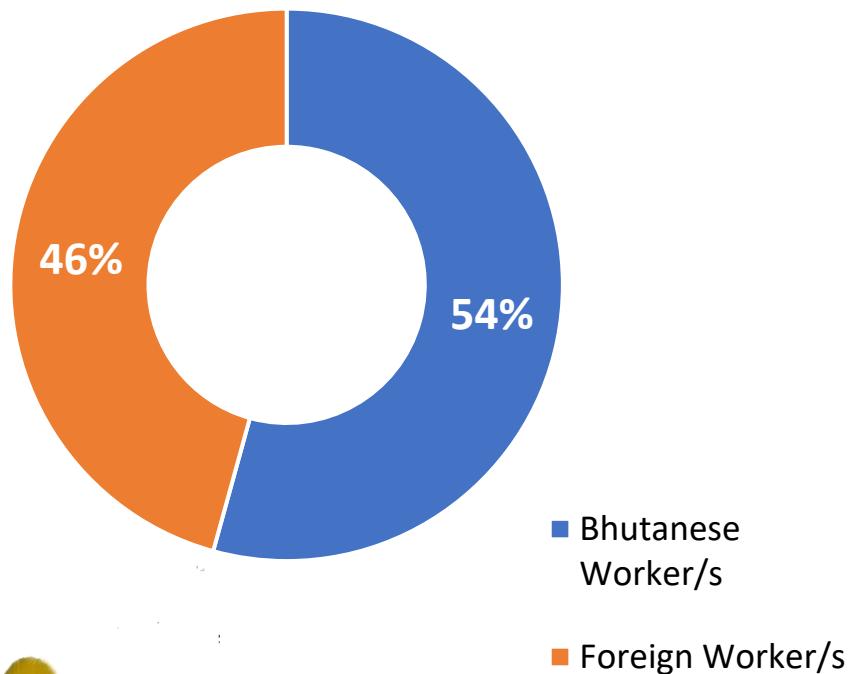
82.9% of employer wish to employ more Bhutanese workers





Employer Perception

Preferences between FWs and BWs



Reasons for Preference of FWs

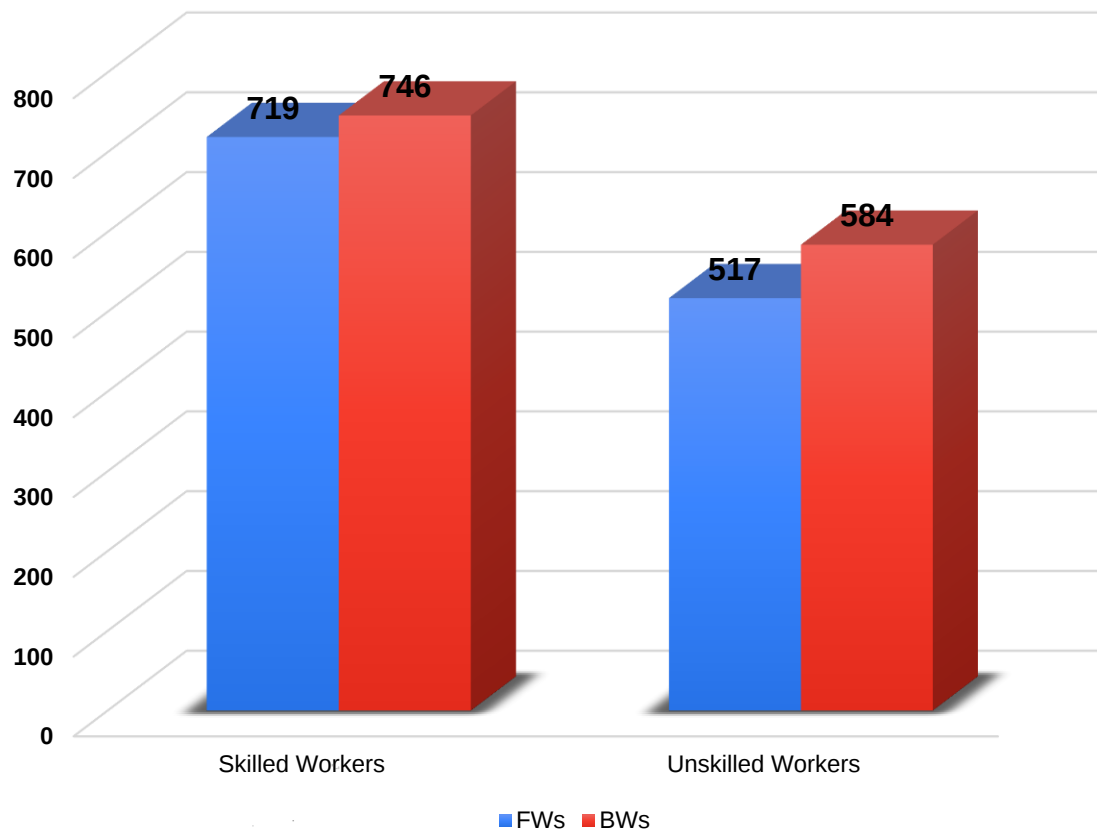
74.3%

- Cheaper
- Easy to Manage
- Competent





Employer Perception



Cost comparative between FWs and BWs

94.3% indicated Bhutanese Workers are Expensive

71.4% Indicated difficult to manage

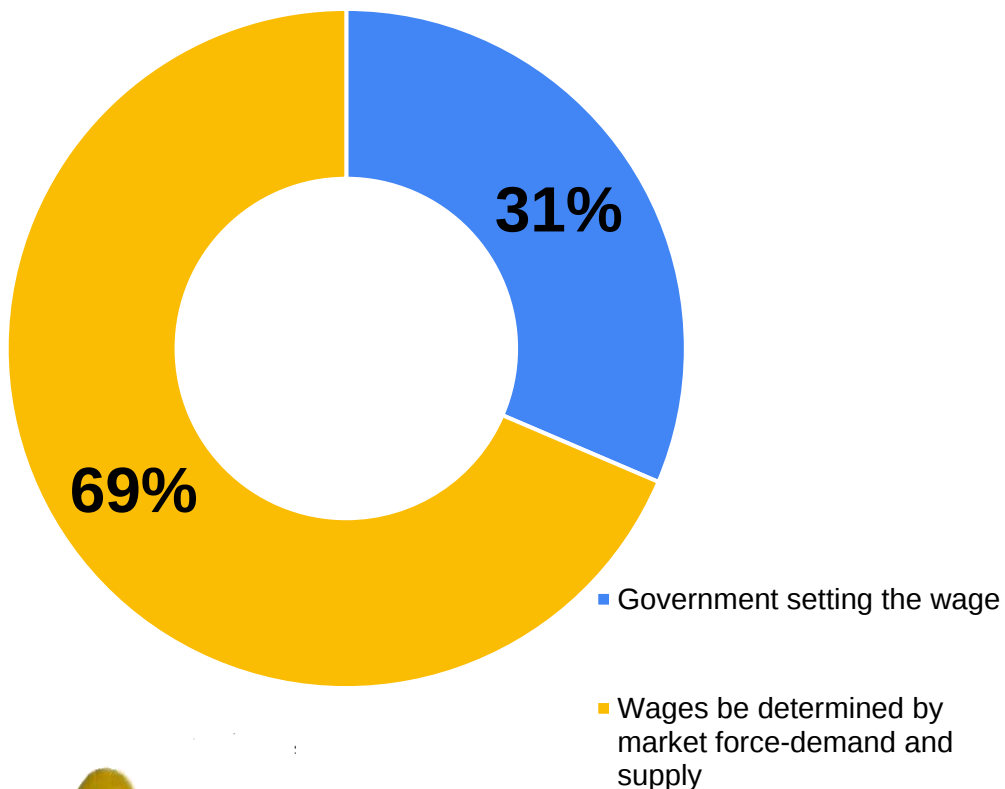
65.7% Indicated incompetent





Employer Perception

Wage determination (or fixation) in the construction sector



94.3% indicated Bhutanese Workers are Expensive

71.4% Indicated difficult to manage

65.7% Indicated incompetent





Employer Perception

Suggestion & Recommendation

- Lack of skilled workforce in the market,
- Cost escalation and BSR during pandemic,
- Lack of understanding of labour laws,
- Tax exemption on construction equipment and machineries,
- Nonpayment of bills on time by the client and
- High wage





Employee Perception

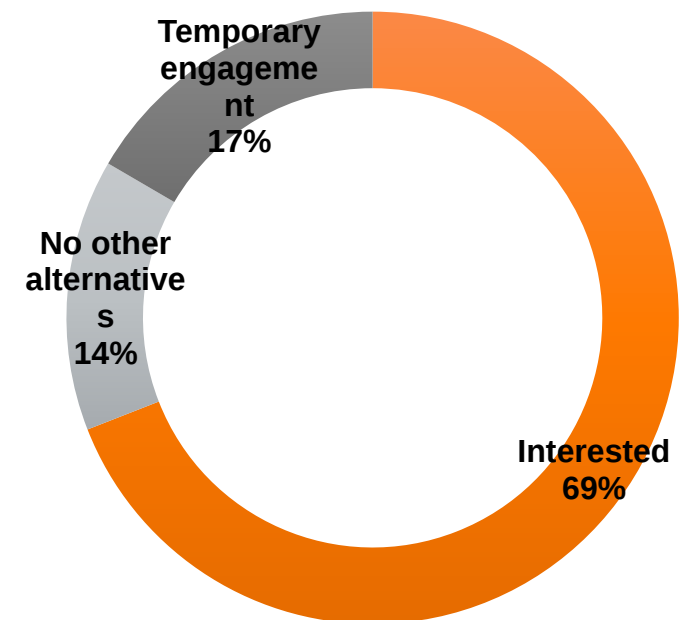
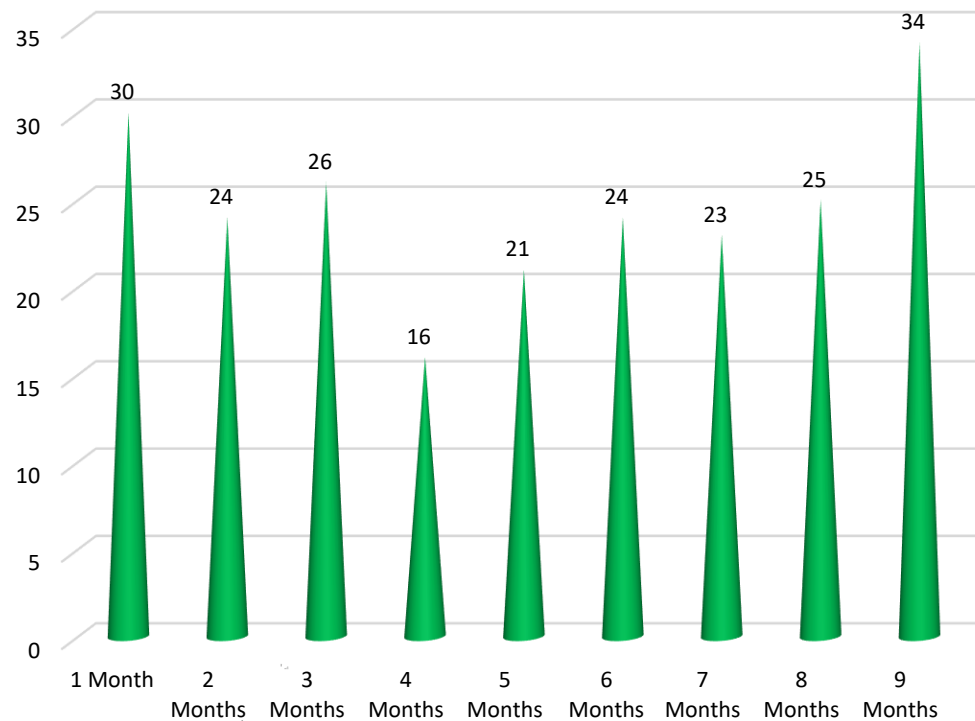
Status	Number	Percent
Jobseeker	169	75.8
Kidu recipient	6	2.7
Laid off	38	17.0
Oversea returnee	10	4.5
Total	223	100.0





Employee Perception

Engaged in Construction Sector Through BBP



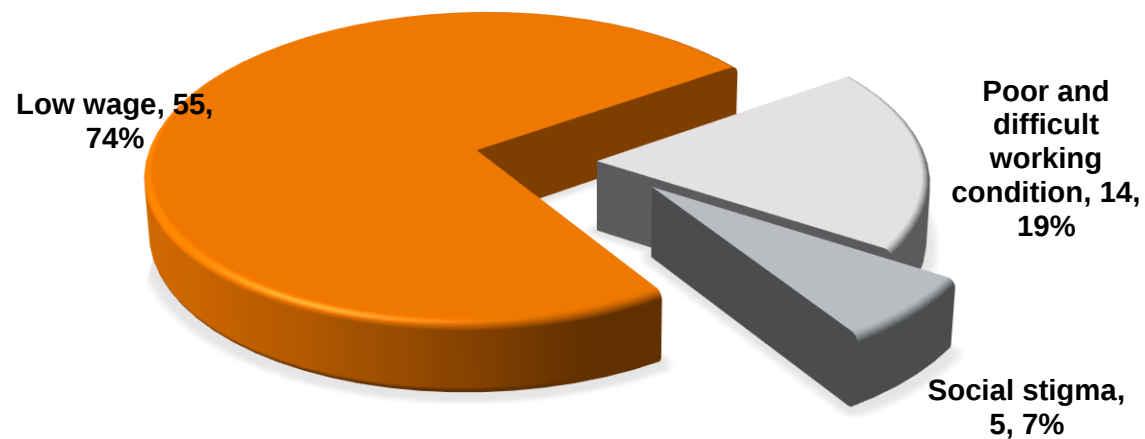
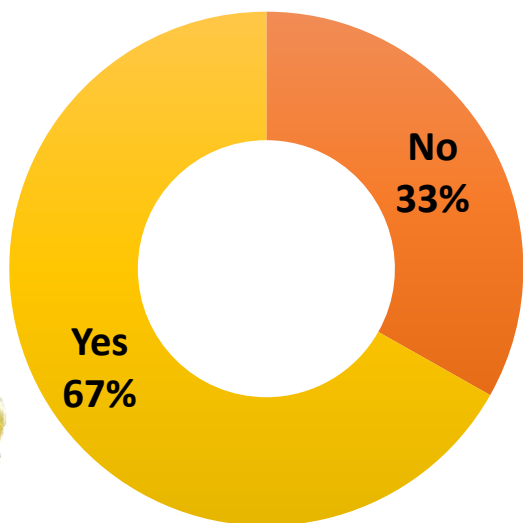
Interested
Temporary engagement
No other alternatives





Employee Perception

Happy to work in construction sector



Reason for being not Happy





Employee Perception

Wages and working condition

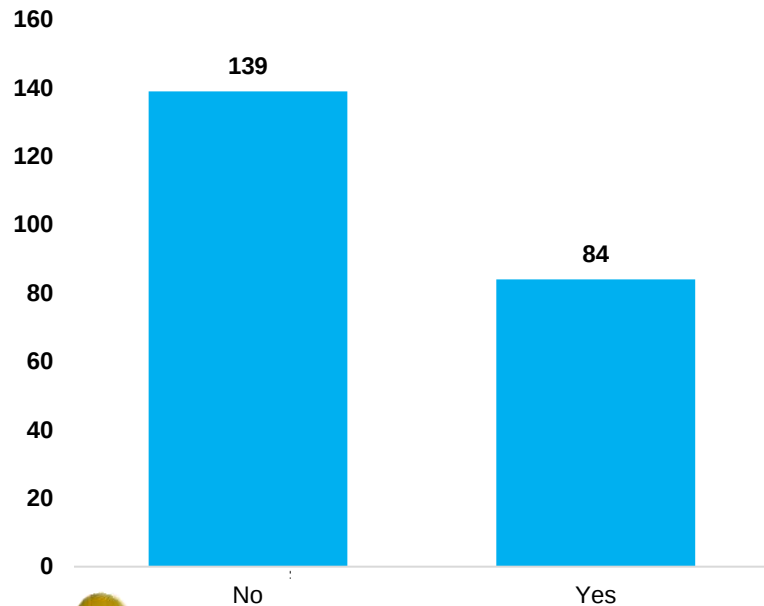
- 86% - Received wage on time
- 75.3% - Received Wage top up on time
- 90% - received the agreed wage based on the level of skills
- 92.8% were provided with weekly rest





Employee Perception

Workplace accident



37.7%- experienced workplace accidents

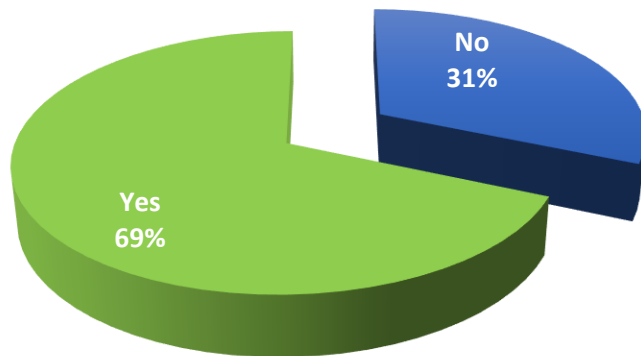
39 - of them were referred to hospital

26 - of them were provided with first aid treatment.



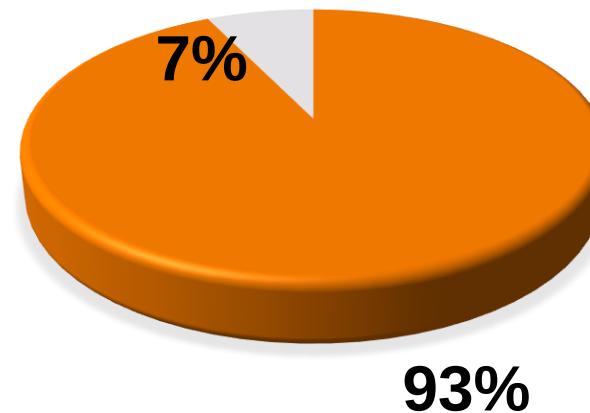


Employee Perception



Able to acquire any practical skill

BBP is a good initiative and should be continued





Employee Perception

Issues and Suggestion

- Need for improving safety and health at workplace
- Increase wages and wage top up
- Frequent monitoring visits by BBP officials
- Additional set of work dress and Safety shoes
- Provide decent accommodation





RECOMMENDATION

- Considering the dominance of foreign workers in the sector and preference for foreign workers, Foreign workers policy is critical to regulate the sector.
- Provide additional set of work dress and Safety shoes for those engaged for more than 3 months in the construction sector and for skilling participants after completion of RPL if the participants continue to work in the sector.
- Educate both employers and employees on the provisions of Labour law and Health and safety at workplaces.





RECOMMENDATION

- Constant Monitoring from the MoLHR
- The BBP must continue to train more workers to meet the demand for skilled workforce.
- The current skilling programs are mostly for building construction (explore alternative mode of training especially in Road and Hydropower construction)
- The assessment found out that wage determination should be left to the forces of the market.



Thank You

