



IOM International Organization for Migration



BANGLADESH

MAPPING EXERCISE
LONDON, JUNE 2006

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The aim of this Mapping Report is to guide IOM's outreach activities and communications strategies. The report does not purport to be exhaustive. The mapping consultant who conducted the exercise and wrote the report on behalf of IOM has taken every effort to ensure accuracy in his/her reporting and the views expressed in this report are his/hers. IOM cannot be held responsible for any omissions or inaccuracies.



INTRODUCTION

AIM OF THE MAPPING EXERCISE, TARGET GROUP AND METHODOLOGY

The aim of the mapping exercise is to identify the main channels of information and the location of potential beneficiaries of IOM's voluntary return programmes, which are open to asylum seekers and irregular migrants. The objective of the mapping exercise is to help IOM to improve its communications with foreign language communities in the United Kingdom through media articles, advertisements and presentations to community groups.

In order to carry out the mapping exercise, IOM designed a questionnaire with twenty questions divided into two sections. The first section asks about media channels and other sources of information that are available to Bangladeshis in the UK (e.g. voluntary organisations, religious institutions and festivals). It also asks about the geographical location and size of the Bangladeshi communities across the UK. The second section of the questionnaire requests specific baseline data from each respondent, such as age, gender and length of stay in the UK.

A Bangladeshi national was recruited on a part-time basis as a mapping consultant to engage directly with the Bangladeshi community and gather the necessary information.

The mapping exercise was conducted using multiple approaches to data collection. Data was gathered using in-depth interviews with multipliers¹, and by disseminating and analysing questionnaires.

Extensive networking was carried out to identify media, organisations and religious centres, as well as individuals, which interact with Bangladeshis. The field work took place between March and May 2005. During this period the mapping consultant collected 113 questionnaires. These completed questionnaires do not just represent the view of 113 individuals but the overall views of various groups and communities.

This report includes tables and charts with all the questionnaires' results. In addition, IOM has created an extensive list of contacts, which merges data gathered directly from completed questionnaires with information provided by the multipliers during in-depth interviews. This will be used by the Information team at IOM to disseminate information on the voluntary return programmes to Bangladeshis across the country².

It is important to emphasise that the mapping exercise relied on networks and that the questionnaire was completed by those who selected themselves to be part of this small study.

¹ This term is used to indicate individuals or organisations, which are well known amongst diaspora groups and could, therefore, play a key role in delivering information.

² This document contains confidential information and will therefore be used as an internal IOM document only.

1 MAPPING EXERCISE OUTCOMES

INFORMATION CHANNELS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

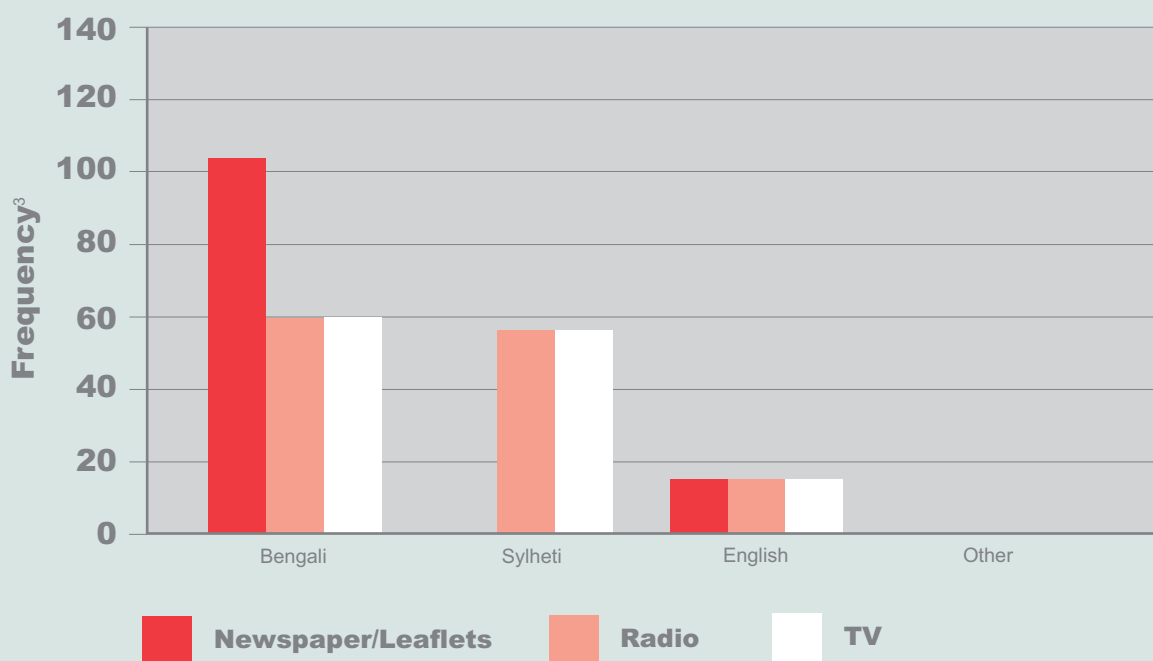
The first section of the questionnaire was designed to identify the main channels of information used by Bangladeshis in the UK. The questions were divided into four categories: media; access to information; information on other community groups and other sources of information. It has been necessary to group the answers for all of these categories: the frequency of the answers was often single and therefore not useful for the purpose of the mapping exercise. The contact details identified by the respondents to the questions about media, community centres, schools, shops and religious institutions were merged and organised in a structured way with the contact details provided by the multipliers. This list of contacts constitutes an action plan for IOM. It contains details of organisations and agencies with which IOM should liaise among the Bangladeshi community in the UK to increase awareness of the voluntary return programmes.

One of the immediate results of the extensive networking conducted within the mapping exercise was to attract the attention of the Bangladeshi media and community to IOM's activities. Details of the responses received from various media sources are contained in the next section. On many occasions, the interviews with community leaders and media representatives proved to be a valuable outreach tool. A number of community organisations are keen to have IOM give a presentation at their various meetings and gatherings.

1.2 MEDIA

Respondents were asked in which language they can best understand information material such as newspapers, leaflets, radio and television. Figure 1 shows that the majority of respondents feel more confident understanding different kinds of information in Bengali.

Figure 1: Preferred Language

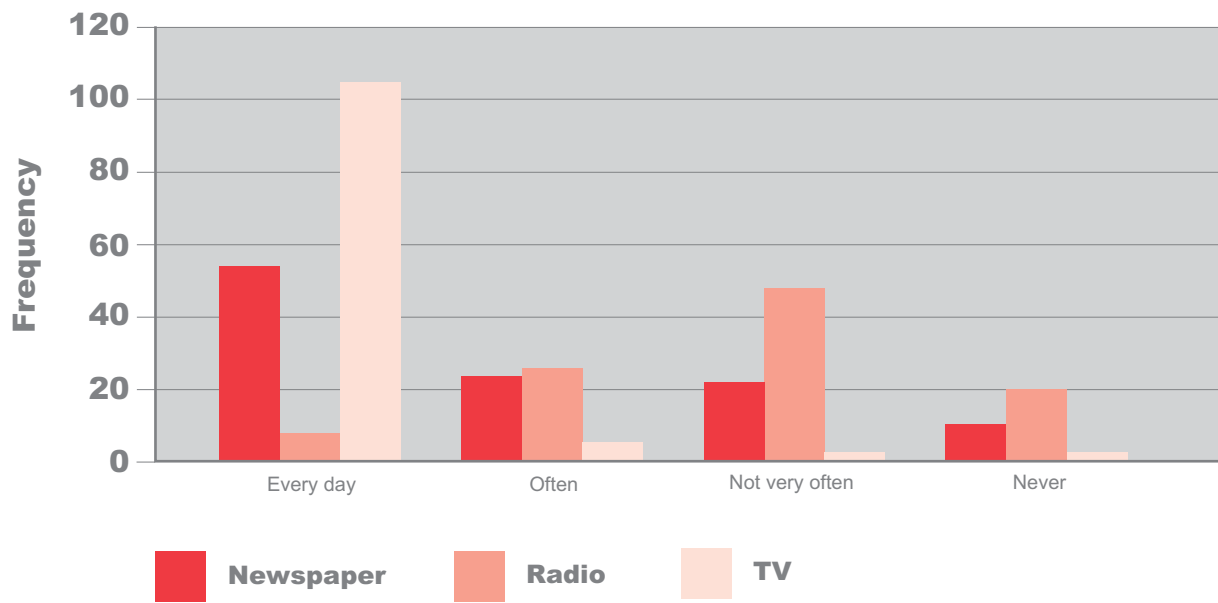


Radio and television are also most easily understood in Sylheti by many. This language does not have its own letters but uses the Bengali alphabet. English does not appear to be one of the preferred languages.

Figure 2A shows that the great majority of respondents watch TV every day. The number of respondents who said that they read newspapers every day was also high.

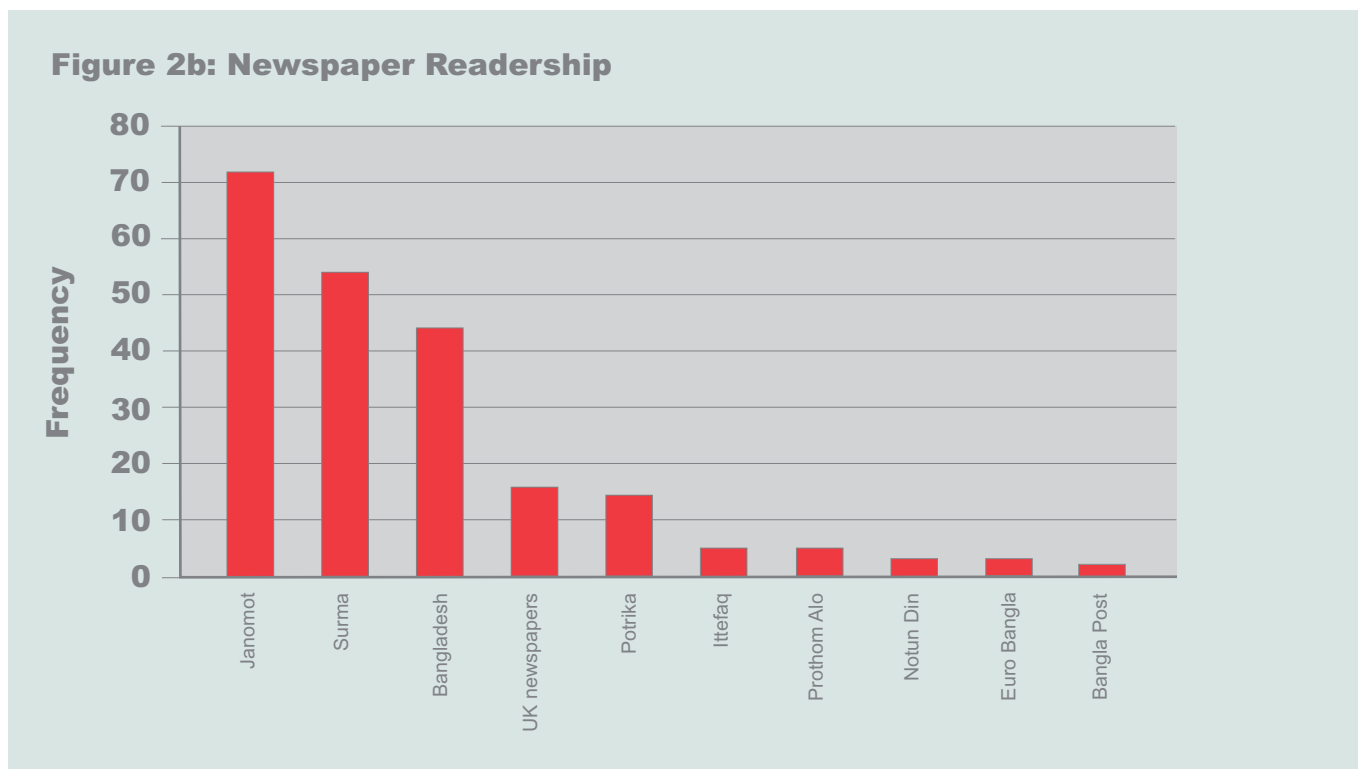
³ Frequency: This term used throughout the report is often used in statistical analysis.
Eg.: Respondent A says: Bangladeshis live in London, Coventry and Birmingham
Eg.: Respondent B says: Bangladeshis live in London, Manchester and Leicester
This will be noted as 6 'frequencies'.

Figure 2a: Media Consultation



Newspapers and Publications Readership

Respondents were asked which newspapers they read the most. Most of the respondents indicated more than one option. Although 51% of respondents said that they read newspapers every day, there appears to be no daily Bengali-language newspaper published in the UK.



The results in figure 2B show that, within the Bengali community, *Janomot* is the most widely read newspaper (34% of respondents). *Surma* is read by 25% of the respondents and *Bangladesh* by 20%. They are published weekly. During the fieldwork, copies of *Janomot* and *Surma* were found almost everywhere, from restaurants and community organisations to religious centres. IOM should advertise in these papers.

Bangladesh is the largest free Bengali newspaper and for this reason it may be worthwhile for IOM to advertise in it. Most irregular migrants are economic migrants and are unlikely to buy personal copies of newspapers, making *Bangladesh* a potentially effective advertising outlet.

Other Bengali newspapers such as *Potrika*, *Prothom Alo*, *Notun Din*, *Euro Bangla* and *Bangla Post*, were identified by respondents. *Potrika*, although not read as widely as *Janomot* or *Surma*, is a well known weekly newspaper which has published an article on IOM's voluntary return programme, following an interview with the editor.

British newspapers, such as the *Guardian*, *Metro*, *The Times*, *The Independent* and the *Evening Standard* were highlighted by 7% of the respondents (the results have been grouped into UK newspapers overall).

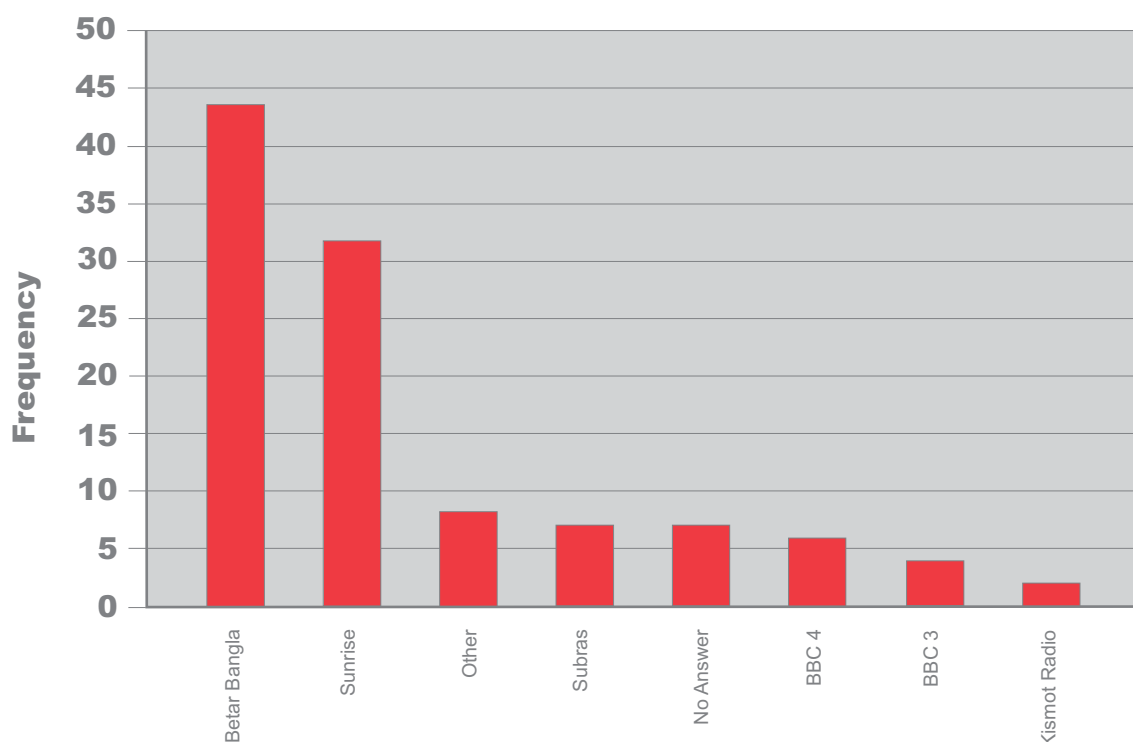
All the Bengali newspapers that were mentioned by respondents are based in Tower Hamlets and available throughout the UK.

Respondents were asked which magazines and other publications they read. The research reveals the lack of a popular Bengali magazine.

Radio and Television

In-depth interviews with the multipliers revealed that radio is a popular choice amongst Bengali irregular migrants and asylum seekers, even if figure 2A might suggest that radio is not as popular as other media. Multipliers pointed out that economic migrants, especially those who work in restaurants, Asian supermarkets or on construction sites, are able to listen to the radio at their work places.

Figure 3a: Radio

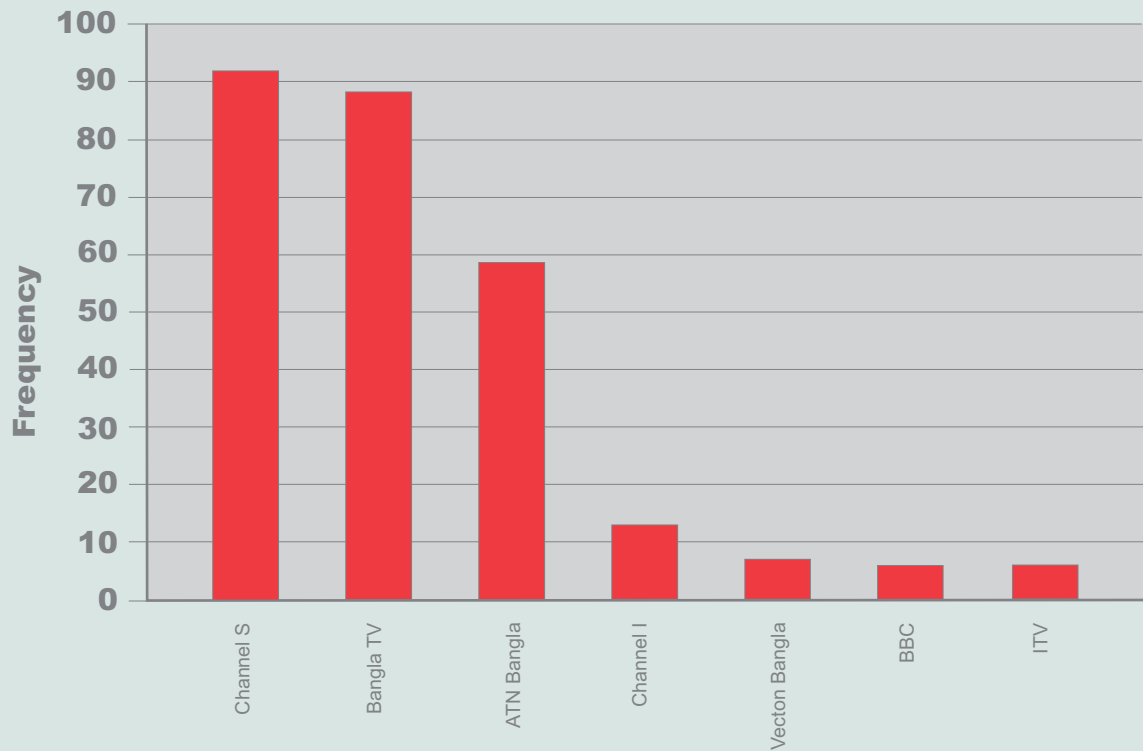


Respondents were asked about the radio stations they listened to most. A fair number of respondents ticked more than one box. Figure 3A shows that respondents' favourite radio station was *Betar Bangla Radio*. This is a very well established and successful Bengali radio station in the UK. An interview was carried out with the Executive Director of Betar Bangla, who was keen to arrange discussions on the issues of migration and IOM's voluntary return and reintegration project.

Sunrise radio is the second most popular radio within the Bangladeshi community. This Asian radio station caters for all the main Asian languages spoken in the UK (this includes Bengali, Punjabi, Gujarati, Hindi, Urdu and Tamil).

In the Midlands, *Subras* radio, a branch of the ethnic radio service Spectrum, is the main Asian radio station. It broadcasts in all major Asian languages.

Figure 3b: TV



Respondents were asked which television channel they watched the most. Figure 3B shows that *Channel S* is the most popular channel amongst the Bengali community in UK, followed by *Bangla TV* and *ATN Bangla*. *Channel S* is the first TV channel to use the Sylheti language in their programmes. It is highly vocal and broadcasts a number of debates on current issues. It broadcasts 24 hours a day, seven days a week. *Bangla TV* is more popular amongst Bengali women than men. *ATN Bangla* was as popular as *Channel S* or *Bangla TV* but, from May 2006, it stopped broadcasting. A few respondents mentioned the satellite channels *Channel I* and *Vecton Bangla*.

Internet

The results show that 47% of respondents are not able to use the Internet, compared to the 51% who are able to do so and access information from it. Of those who can use the Internet, 44% access it at home, 37% at the office, 11% at an Internet cafe and 8% at the library. The most popular websites and search engines include *Google* (33%), *MSN* (20%), *Yahoo* (18%), News-related sites(17%) and voluntary sector sites(12%).

Conclusions and Recommendations

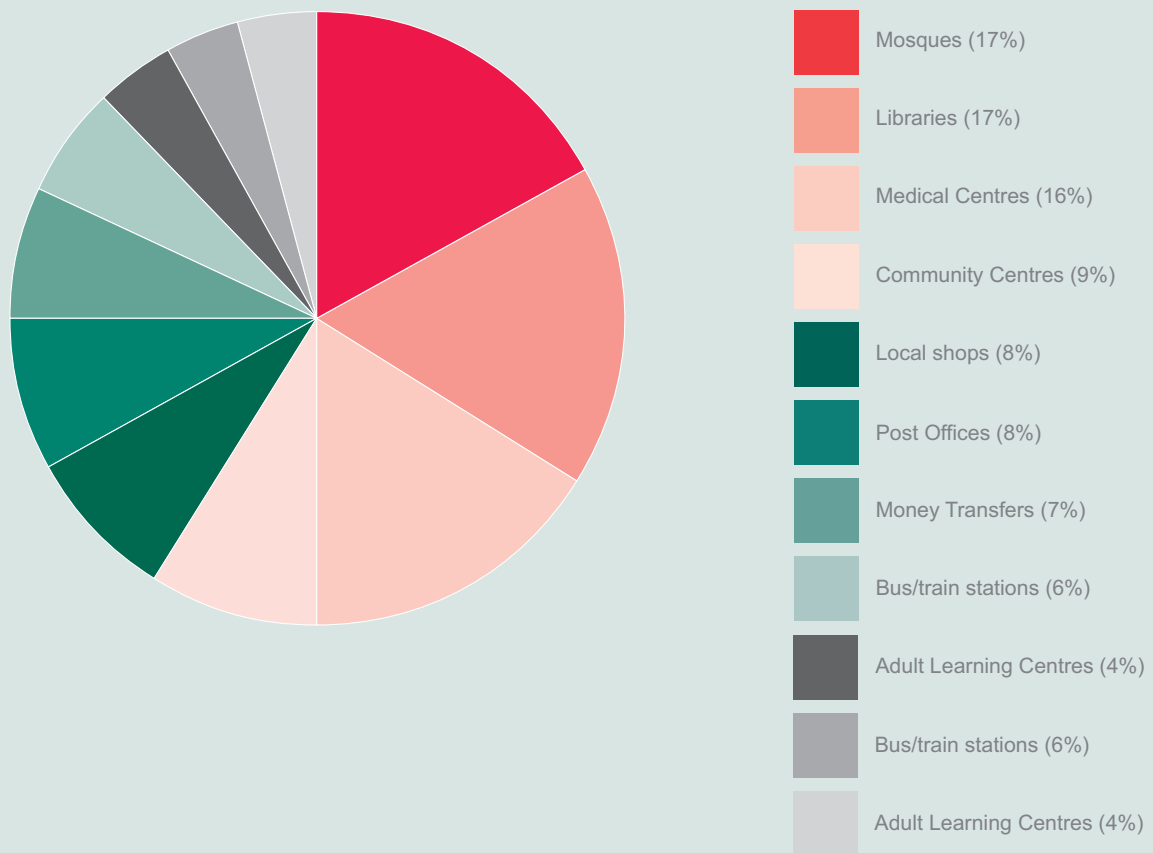
- IOM should consider advertising in the following newspapers: *Janomot*, *Surma*, and *Bangladesh*.
- IOM should arrange to be interviewed by *Betar Bangla Radio*
- IOM should contact *Channel S* and *Bangla TV* to investigate the costs and feasibility of advertising the voluntary return programmes in the UK only.

1.3 ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Preferred Channels of Information

Respondents were asked where information should be displayed to make it easier for them to access it. Almost every respondent ticked more than one box. Figure 4A shows that mosques, libraries and medical centres are recommended by a large majority of respondents as the best places to access publicity material. Other recommended locations are indicated in the diagram below.

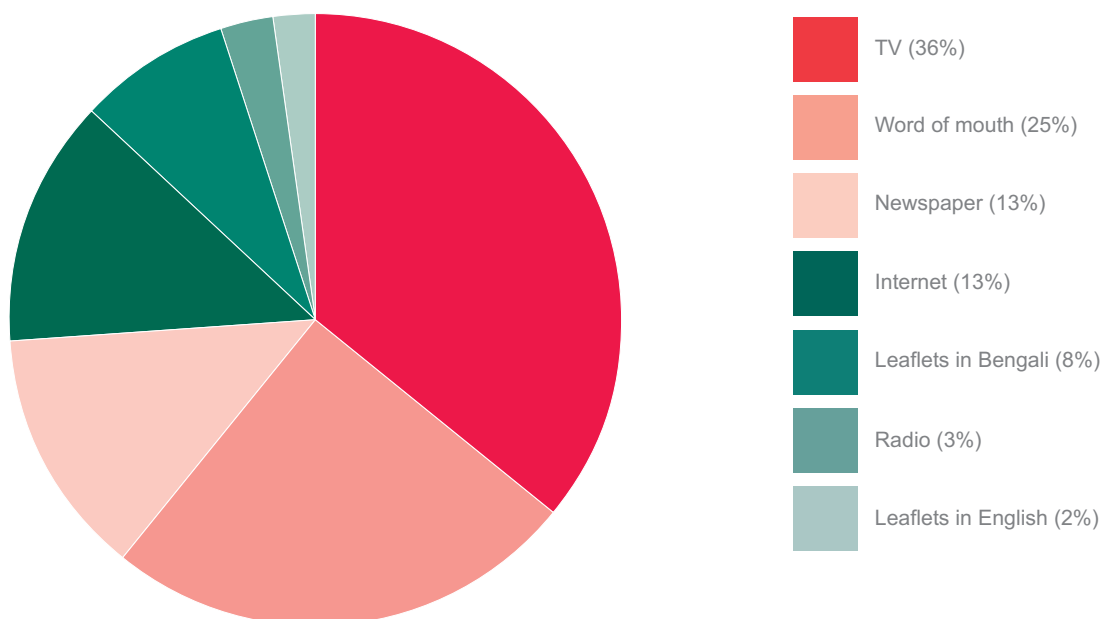
Figure 4a: Recommendation for Location of Publicity Material



Common Source of Information

Respondents were asked about how they usually received information. As indicated in the diagram below, 36% of respondents relied on television and 17% relied on word of mouth. Other sources are newspapers, the Internet and leaflets in Bengali.

Figure 4b: Common Source of Information



Preferred Format of Information

55 of community leaders interviewed said that they prefer leaflets and text translations; 54 preferred video translations. IOM has started the production of Bengali leaflets.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- Once the leaflets in Bengali are finalised, they should be displayed at mosques, local libraries, medical centres (mainly GP surgeries), local community centres and local Bengali grocery shops.
- IOM should liaise with the main multipliers identified during the mapping exercise to implement outreach activities, especially in view of the fact that word of mouth is one of the most common ways respondents obtain information. The list of contacts constitutes an essential tool for this purpose.
- IOM should also produce video translations in Bengali to distribute through community organisations and multipliers. They should be made more widely available because they appear to be the preferred format for information material.



1.4 OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The findings from the Bangladeshi mapping exercise, notably from in-depth interviews with multipliers, show that the Bangladeshi network in the UK is very large with many organisations having a Bangladeshi regional, cultural and religious aspect.

Community Organisations

Respondents were asked to share information about Bangladeshi community organisations in the UK and their contact details. The majority of respondents were able to provide the names of organisations but not their contact details.

A large number of Bangladeshi organisations come under the umbrella of the Confederation of Bangladeshi Associations (CBA). A significant number of interviews were conducted with key representatives from prominent Bangladeshi community organisations around the UK, and were visited during the fieldwork period. A list of community organisations is included in the appendix.

Religious Centres

Respondents were asked about religious centres they attended regularly. Most respondents go to a mosque once a week. It emerged from the field work that a significant number of mosques in the UK host an Islamic Cultural Centre. The best way to approach these Islamic Cultural Centres would be via the Muslim Council UK.

Many religious centres were visited during the fieldwork period. These visits proved to be highly beneficial in confirming the view of community leaders. Religious centres provide other facilities, such as social and cultural activities. The London Muslim Centre (East London), one of the biggest community centres in Europe, offers many facilities as well as an attractive place for worshippers to socialise.

Help, Advice and Support

Respondents were asked where they would go for help, advice and support. Though this question was not clear to some respondents, most of them have answered, giving more than one answer. Relatives, Citizens Advice Bureaux, solicitors, the Internet and Council offices were the main answers.

Community Gatherings and Social Events

Respondents were asked about community gatherings. *Boishakhi Mela* (the Bengali New Year Festival) is the most important festival amongst Bangladeshi nationals in the UK. It was referred to by 86 out of 113 respondents. *Boishakhi Mela* takes place on 14 May every year in East London and is the biggest gathering for Bangladeshis outside Bangladesh. This year about 80,000 people gathered. The events attract many thousands of Bangladeshis as well as Asians. There is a vibrant community atmosphere and the event is covered live by *Channel 5*, as well as being extensively covered by local newspapers, radio stations and other TV stations. Some community leaders and multipliers suggested that an IOM stall at the event would be a very effective outreach strategy.

Other events mentioned were Eid, the main festival for Muslims around the world, apart from the holy month of Ramadan, and *Ekushe February* on 21 February. A full list of other festivals and social gatherings, with a time table, is in the appendix.

Conclusions and Recommendations

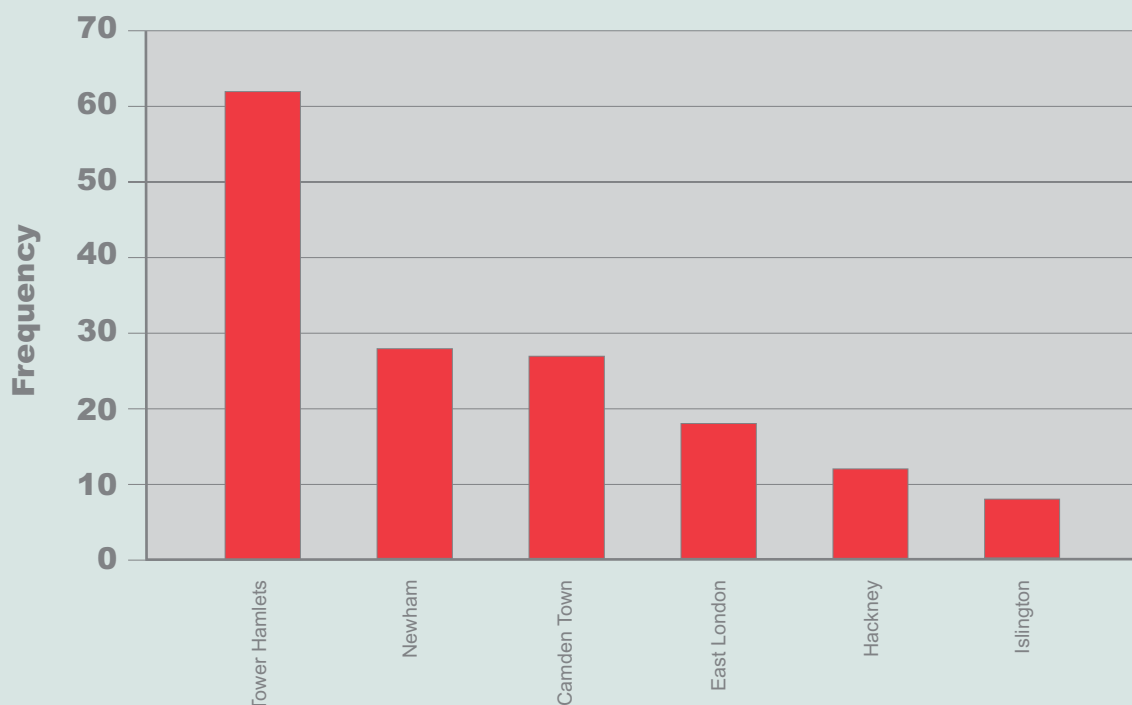
- IOM should engage with Bangladeshi community organisations to implement outreach activities, especially by setting up presentations and disseminating information material.
- IOM should engage with the Muslim Cultural Centres and mosques to set up presentations and information stalls.
- IOM should contact Citizen Advice Bureaux and law centres and should provide them with updated information on the voluntary return programmes on a regular basis.
- IOM should have a stall at *Boishakhi Mela*.


1.5 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION AND SIZE OF THE BANGLADESHI COMMUNITY IN THE UK

Gathering information on the exact size of the Bangladeshi community was difficult due to the number of Bangladeshis who have been settled in the UK for many generations now. Community and religious leaders collaborated in providing estimates for these figures where possible.

In London, Bangladeshi nationals are based in the following boroughs: Tower Hamlets (with the highest concentration); Newham; Camden Town; Hackney; Islington; and Lewisham. Figure 5A displays the distribution of respondents:

Figure 5: Bangladeshi Community in London





The IPPR report, *Behind Black and White*, analyses the Bangladeshi population in the UK, using the results of the 2001 Census to describe the Bangladeshi community as follows:

Bangladeshis in Britain are a largely young population, heavily concentrated in London's inner boroughs, which experiences a range of socio-economic problems. According to the most reliable national enumeration – the decennial Census – in 2001 283,063 Bangladeshis lived in the UK, i.e. 0.5% of the total population.

54% of the Bangladeshi population lived in Greater London area and a high proportion of these London inhabitants were located within the inner boroughs. Indeed, the “heartland” of the London Bangladeshi community is to be found in Tower Hamlets, which contained 65,553 Bangladeshi residents or 22.8% of the UK Bangladeshi population.

The third generation of Tower Hamlets' Bangladeshi population – those “born and bred” in the area - constitutes approximately half of the community. Bangladeshis, both here and in other parts of Britain, experience disproportionately high rates of unemployment, overcrowding, and certain types of health problems.

Tower Hamlets can be seen as part of an inner ring of London boroughs running from Westminster, Islington, Camden Town round to Hackney, Newham and Southwark. In 2001 118,346 Bangladeshis – 41.8% of the British Bangladeshi population – lived in this inner London ring.

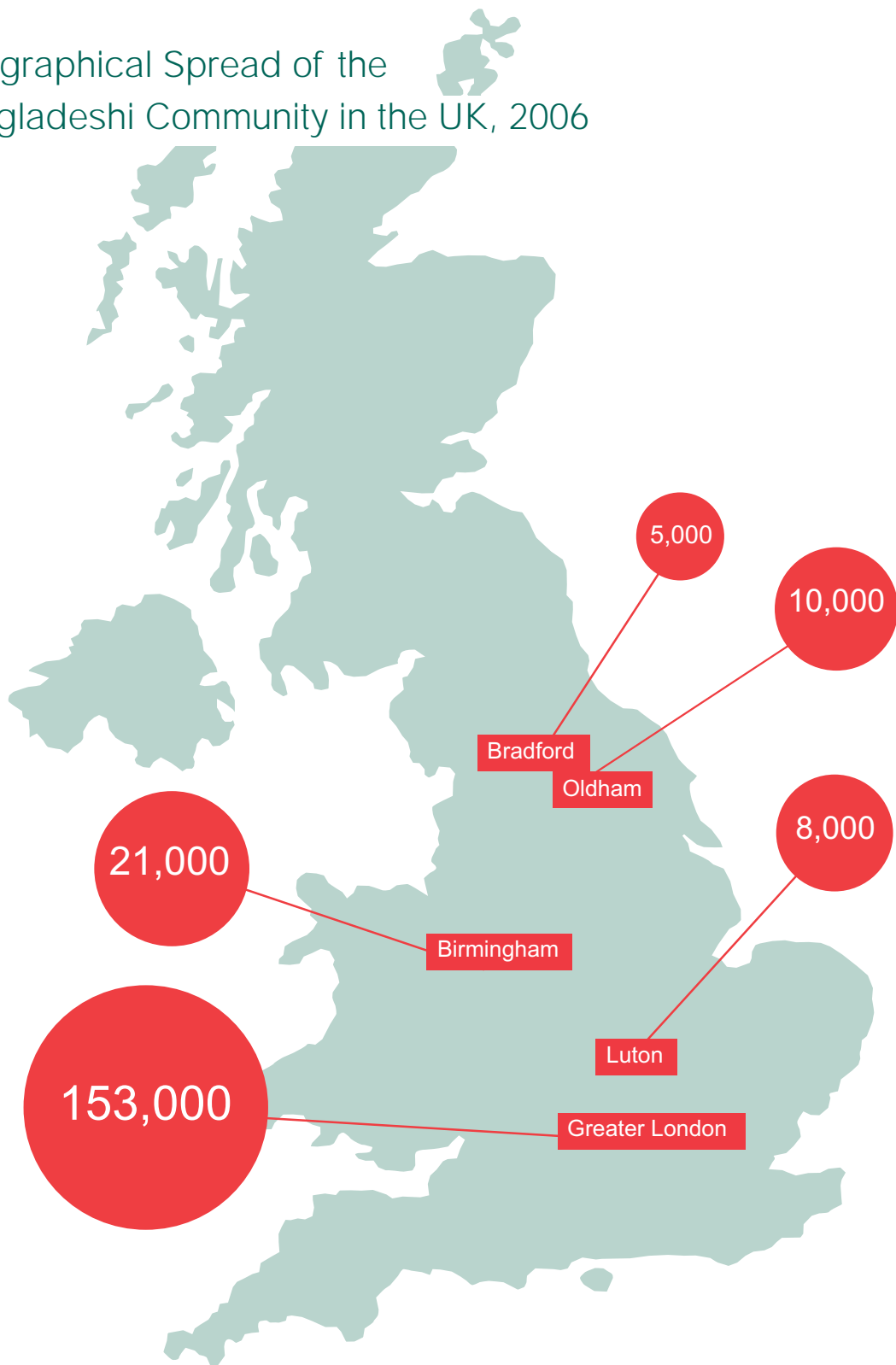
However, other concentrations should not be ignored. The largest Bangladeshi population outside London is located in Oldham – 9,817 in 2001 or 4.5% of the city's population, while 20,836 are scattered across Birmingham (2% of the city's population), 7,642 in Luton (4%) and 4,967 in Bradford (1%).

The map on the opposite page shows the distribution of the Bangladeshi population in the United Kingdom according to the 2001 Census.

Conclusions

It can easily be seen that data from different sources (Home Office, IPPR and IOM mapping questionnaires) presents the same picture: London and the Midlands have the highest concentration of Bangladeshis compared to the rest of the UK.

Geographical Spread of the Bangladeshi Community in the UK, 2006



Based on the 2001 Census



2 MAPPING EXERCISE OUTCOMES

CHARACTERISTIC OF RESPONDENTS

The second section of the questionnaire was designed to gather such baseline data from each respondent as age, gender, and length of residence in the UK. This chapter also gathers general information on respondents' use of transport, phones and local services in order to help IOM improve future information strategies.

2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Gender

Out of 113 respondents, 67 were men and 45 women (1 person made no response).

Age

It is evident from figure 6 that nearly 70% of the Bangladeshis interviewed were between 25 and 44 years old.

Figure 6: Age

AGE	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	% OF RESPONDENTS
Under 18	1	0.8%
18-24	13	11.5%
25-34	51	45%
35-44	28	24.7%
45-54	14	12.3%
55-64	3	2.6%
65 or over	2	1.7%
No answer	1	0.8%

Length of Residence in Britain

40% of the respondents had been in the UK for more than ten years and nearly 30% of respondents had been resident for between five and ten years. These results are influenced by the fact that many questionnaires were completed by community leaders and other multipliers, who tended to be amongst the longest established in the UK.

Figure 7: Length of residence in Britain

PERIOD IN THE UK	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	% OF RESPONDENTS
Less than 12 months	1	0.8%
1-3 years	8	7%
3-5 years	26	23%
5-10 years	32	28.3%
No answer	1	0.8%

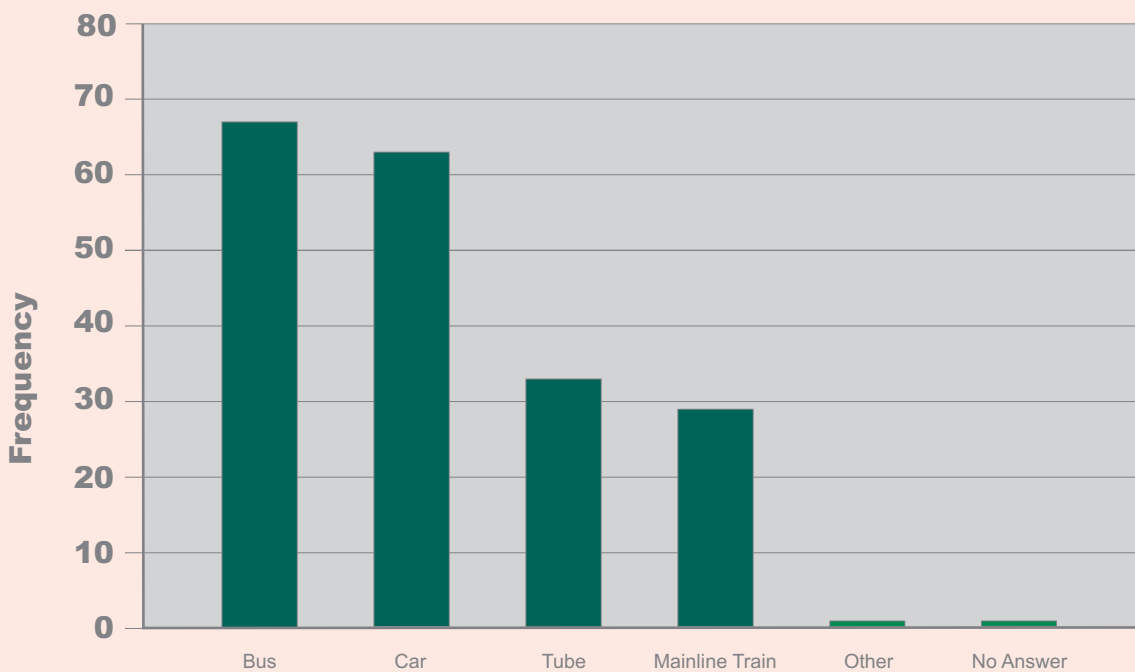
2.2 GENERAL INFORMATION ON USE OF TRANSPORT, PHONES AND LOCAL SERVICES

A number of questions were included in the questionnaire to investigate where IOM should advertise its voluntary return programmes so as to maximise their impact on the Bangladeshi community.

Means of Transport

Respondents were asked what kind of transport they used most often. Most of them ticked more than one option. Figure 8A shows that 67 of respondents used buses, 29 used mainline trains and 33 used the Underground. 63 respondents used a car as their main means of transport.

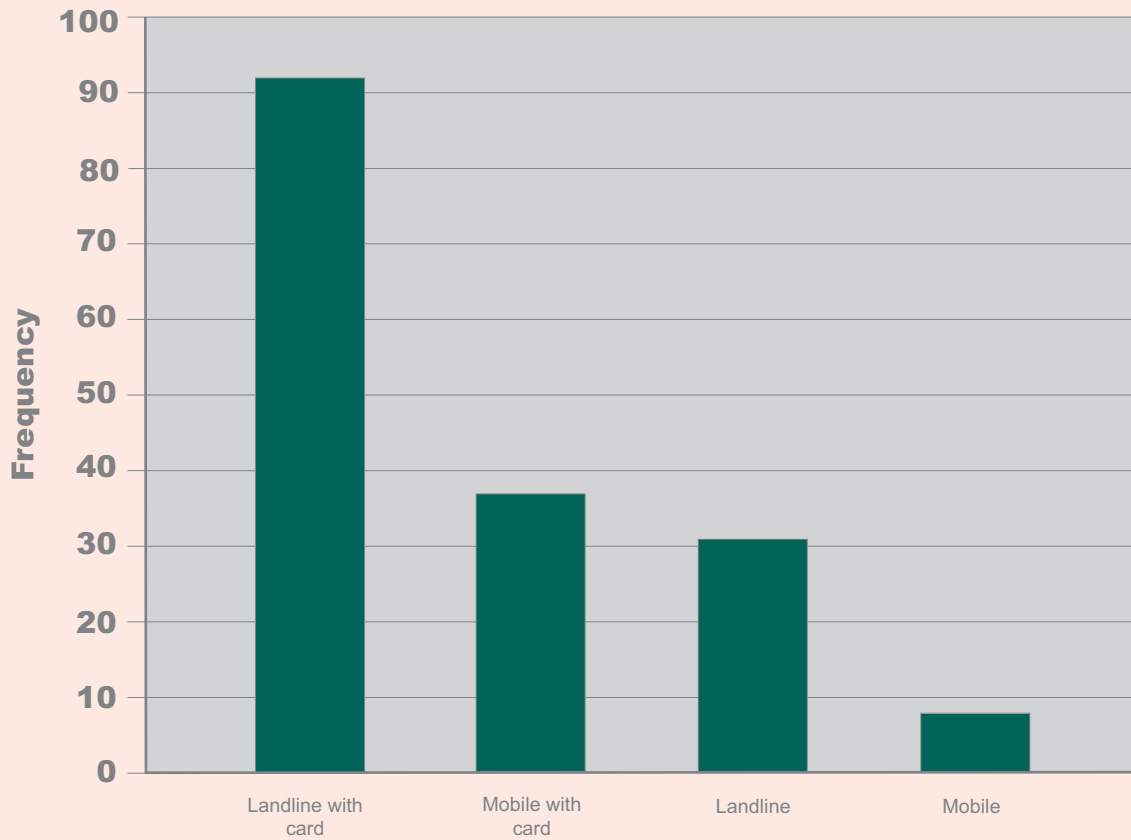
Figure 8a: Means of Transport



Phone Calls

Respondents were asked how they make phone calls to friends and relatives in Bangladesh. Most of the respondents chose more than one option. Figure 8B shows that the most common way of making phone calls to Bangladesh is by landline with an international calling card.

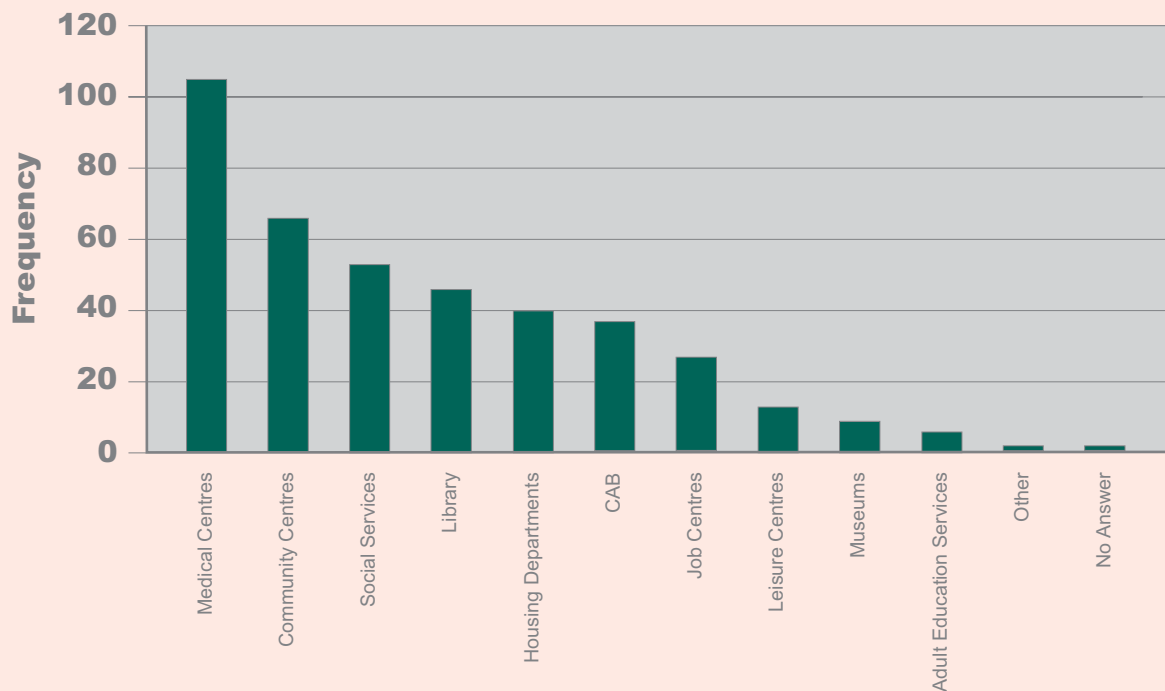
Figure 8b: Phone Calls



Local Services

Respondents were asked which local services they used. Most of the respondents referred to more than one. The results are shown in figure 8C. The majority of the respondents, 105 out of 113, used medical centres. Other local services extensively used are community centres, social services, libraries, housing departments and Citizens Advice Bureaux.

Figure 8c: Local Services



Conclusions and Recommendations

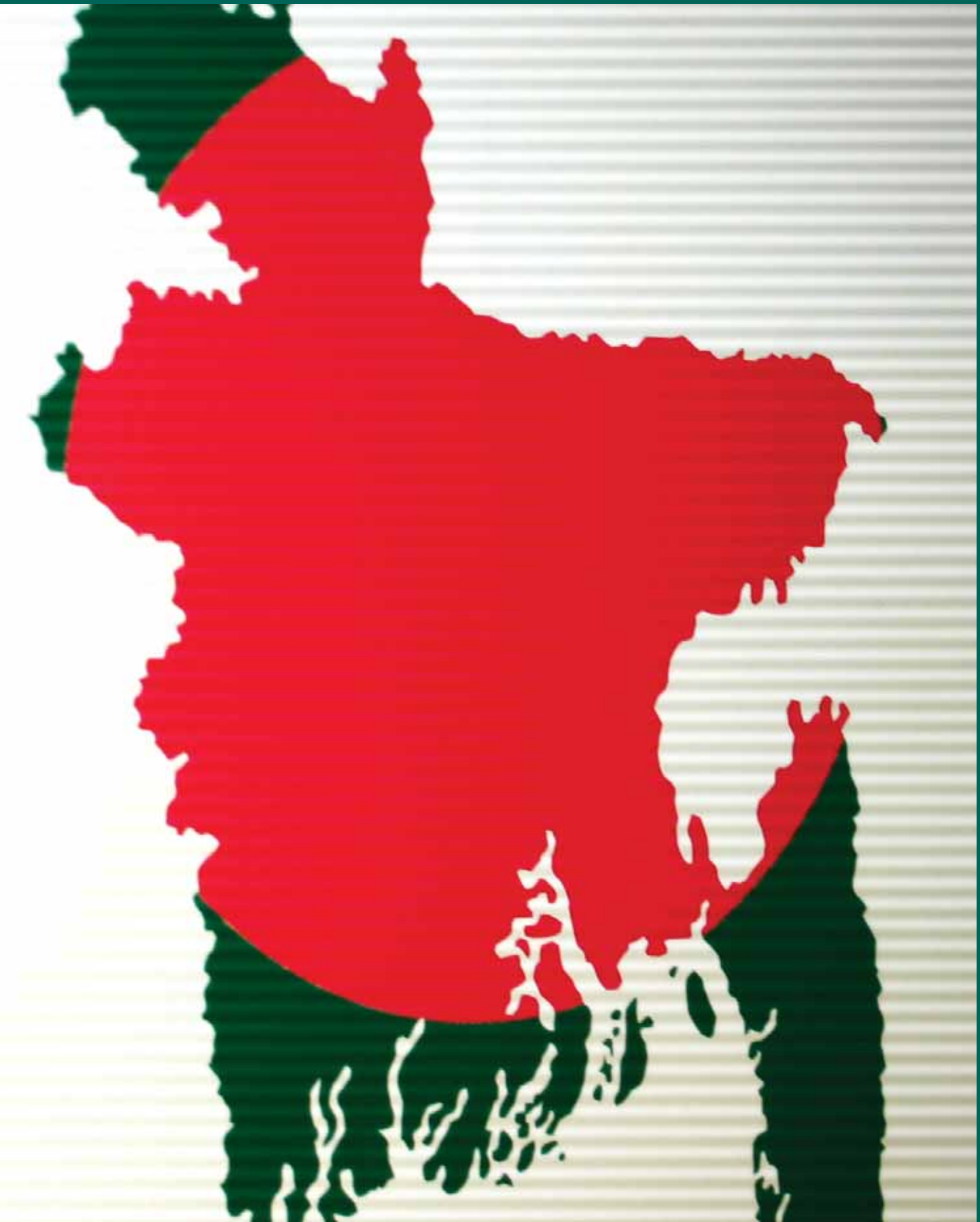
- IOM should continue advertising on buses, because it appears to be the most common means of transport. Recommendations of specific bus routes in East London will be provided to IOM in the contacts and recommendations list.
- IOM should consider advertising at train stations, especially Whitechapel and Aldgate East Tube stations.
- IOM should advertise on phone cards, both for mainline and mobile phones. There are a vast number of different brands of card available.
- IOM should consider advertising in libraries and other places that stock books and other texts in Asian languages, such as Idea Store, Whitechapel.
- IOM should disseminate leaflets in Bengali, especially to medical centres, community centres, housing department and job centres.

3 CONSTRAINTS

The Bangladesh mapping exercise ran very smoothly. With any type of survey, the risk is always of receiving too few responses to the questionnaire. But in this case 113 questionnaires were received, the highest number amongst the mapping exercises conducted so far.

Some people were reluctant to take part and it often took time and informal conversation to convince a respondent to take part. Often, they would leave some questions unanswered.

Finally, due to the extremely large number of Bangladeshi organisations in the UK, it was impossible to identify all the centres used by the community. This should be kept in mind when making assessments.





4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The mapping exercise achieved its aims by identifying the main channels of information used by Bangladeshis in the UK and their main location.

The following recommendations emerged from the mapping exercise.

- IOM should follow the recommendations included in the list of contacts. This constitutes an effective action plan for outreach activities throughout the Bangladeshi community in the UK.
- IOM should consider advertising in the *Janomot*, *Surma*, *Potrika* and *Bangladesh* newspapers.
- IOM should advertise on *Betar Bangla* radio and arrange a discussion of its voluntary return programme.
- IOM should advertise on *Channel S* and *Bangla TV* and should set up a live talk show on the voluntary return programme.
- IOM should disseminate leaflets in Bengali and produce a video translation to be distributed to the community organisations listed in the appendix .
- IOM should continue to advertise on buses because this was shown to be the most common means of transport.
- IOM should liaise regularly with the main multipliers to ensure a wide dissemination of information on the voluntary return programme.
- IOM should work closely with religious organisations and institutions, like the London Muslim Centre.
- IOM should advertise on phone cards.
- IOM should try to place its information material in libraries, religious centres, medical centres (GP surgeries), and community centres, as well as in Bangladeshi grocery shops.



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