

WORLD GIVING REPORT

GIVING IN SAUDI ARABIA

2025

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An aerial photograph of a large crowd of people participating in a marathon or triathlon. The participants are spread across a wide asphalt road and a grassy area. Many are wearing colorful athletic gear. A red banner with white text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

01 INTRODUCTION

Welcome

Introduction

This report reveals public attitudes and behaviours in Saudi Arabia towards giving and charity. It is the result of our partnership with the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), and part of the [World Giving Report 2025](#) (WGR).

The WGR is a global initiative that surveys over 55,000 people across 101 countries.

This report offers a unique window into Saudi Arabia's generosity, how its people give, why they give, and how their habits compared to the global community. It offers rare, data-driven insight into the Kingdom's civil society and giving culture, from religious influences and everyday kindness to how people view charities and volunteering opportunities.

Key findings

- People in Saudi Arabia gave generously in relation to their wealth, allocating 1.13% of their income, above the global average of 1.04%, although slightly below the regional norm of 1.28%.
- One quarter (26%) of Saudi interviewees volunteered during 2024, the same as the global average, but above the regional rate of 23%.
- People in Saudi Arabia do not see themselves as generous, ranking themselves 100th out of 101 countries for how much they think they give, yet ranked by their actual generosity their true position is 34th.
- Of those who donated to aid / disaster relief, just over half (53%) helped a cause in Saudi Arabia, while 90% donated to an overseas cause.
- Saudi donors want to know more about how charities spend their money and the impact they have.
- The data suggests a strong core of committed givers, but plenty of room to engage a broader swathe of the population in charitable activity.
- Non-profits should consider leveraging interest from volunteers to help build capacity within their organisations.



Louise Redvers
Managing Editor, Circle
MENA

“People in Saudi Arabia are natural givers, but there’s scope to increase that generosity even further...”

About us

Circle

Circle is a community platform committed to enhancing the impact and effectiveness of philanthropy throughout the Middle East and beyond. Our mission is to foster a more collaborative, strategic, and results-driven philanthropic ecosystem.

We connect donors, foundations, nonprofits, and social enterprises to build strong networks, share actionable knowledge, and generate insights that amplify giving across the region. By working together, we aim to unlock the full potential of philanthropy and create a powerful multiplier effect for social good.

The Circle website offers a trusted hub of curated resources—from practical how-to guides and real-world case studies to expert-led workshops and exclusive member events. All our content is available in English and Arabic.

We also have a podcast, called **Shaping Philanthropy**, and the **Circle Index**, a database profiling more than 170 regional donors and nonprofits.

Circle is a joint initiative by **Philanthropy Age** and the **Pearl Initiative**, with support from the **Gates Foundation**.

www.CircleMena.org

CAF

The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) exists to accelerate progress in society towards a fair and sustainable future for all. Over the last 100 years, we have led the way in developing innovative approaches to giving. Annually, we distribute over £1 billion to social purpose organisations around the globe.

As a leading charity operating in the UK, US and Canada, CAF works at the centre of the giving world. We partner with corporate and individual donors to enable them to give more effectively, strategically and impactfully. This includes connecting them to charities globally and providing access to our in-depth sector knowledge, governance expertise and innovative giving solutions.

We help social purpose organisations to strengthen their resilience and do more of their life changing work, through strategic advisory services from our Impact Accelerator, tools to support charities' fundraising activities, and charity financial services from CAF Bank Limited and CAF Financial Solutions Limited. Using our research, policy and campaigns work, we understand and influence the wider environment for charities and donors.

Together, we give more.

The World Giving Report (WGR) is a survey that captures the public's attitudes and behaviours around giving in 101 countries around the world.

- Access our global insights hub at: www.worldgivingreport.org
- This report is one of over 20 country-specific giving reports that uses the WGR data and is produced by CAF in partnership with leading social purpose organisations around the world.

Later this year, we are also publishing:

- Insights on the world charity landscape from partner-led surveys of social purpose organisations in over 20 countries (September).
- Country-specific charity insights reports (winter).

Our Methodology

The results described in this report were collected as part of the World Giving Report survey in January 2025.

All fieldwork was conducted online by our partners, Focaldata. The data was weighted, post-hoc to be representative of the population. All sample sizes are specified throughout the report, where relevant.

A note on 'Charity'

Across the report, we use the words 'charity' and 'charities' to represent any organisation that works to try and improve issues that are affecting individuals, communities, animals or the natural environment, and society as a whole.

In doing so, we recognise that these terms and their definitions differ around the world, with this type of organisation also described as: non-governmental organisations (NGOs), non-profit organisations (NPOs), community organisations, social purpose organisations, associations and other names.

You can find further details about our methodology at www.worldgivingreport.org



An aerial photograph of a crowded beach. The sand is a light tan color, and the water is a murky greenish-brown. Numerous people are scattered across the beach, many holding colorful surfboards. The surfboards are in various colors, including blue, yellow, red, and black. The people are mostly standing or wading in the shallow water. A red banner with white text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

02 THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

Giving money and giving time: Worldwide and within the continent.

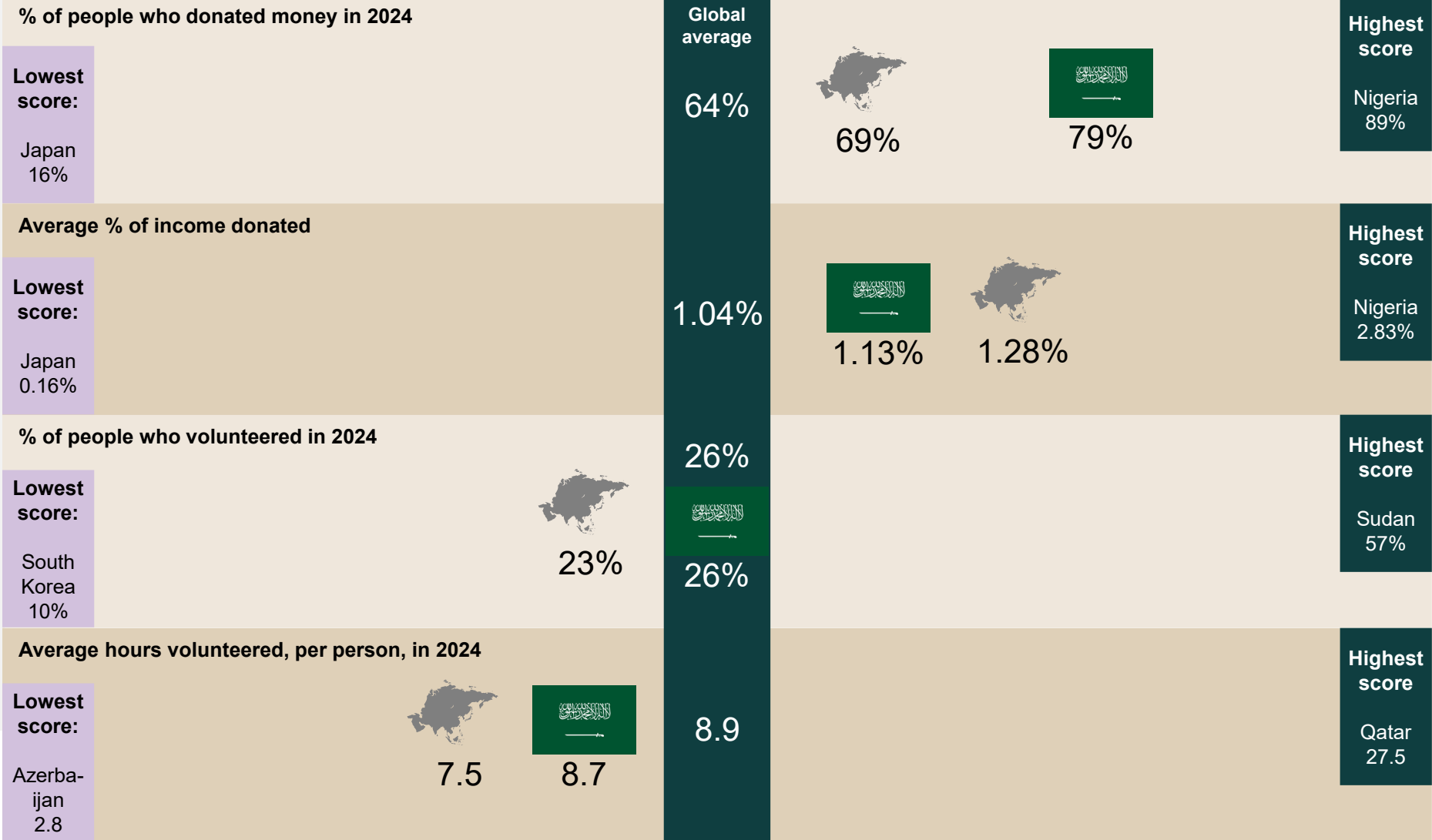
Regional leaders.

Nearly eight out of 10 (79%) Saudi respondents donated money during 2024, well above the Asia and global averages.

People in Saudi Arabia also gave generously in relation to their wealth, allocating 1.13% of their income, above the global average of 1.04%, although slightly below the regional norm of 1.28%.

One quarter (26%) of Saudi interviewees volunteered during 2024, the same as the national average, and above the regional rate of 23%.

These findings suggest a strong core of committed givers, but plenty of room to engage a broader swathe of the population in charitable activity.



Base: All (500)

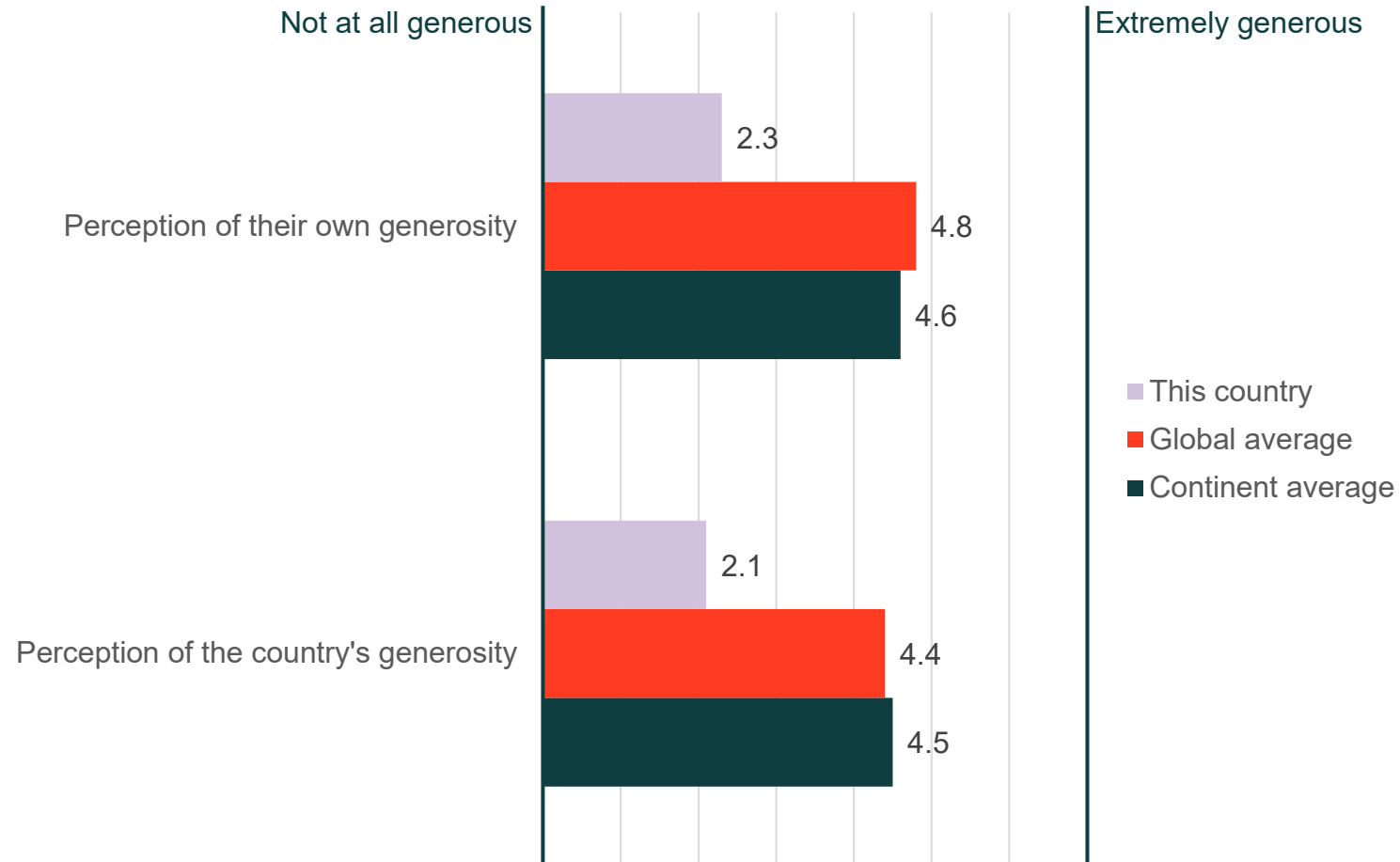
Perceptions of their own generosity.

Discrete giving the norm?

Despite ranking 100th out of 101 countries for how generous people perceive themselves to be, the reality tells a different story, with the Kingdom coming 34th globally for the proportion of income donated.

This disconnect between perception and reality may stem from cultural nuances in how generosity is expressed and understood. In Qur'anic teaching, "the right hand should not know what the left hand is giving," and, therefore, acts of charity are often performed quietly and without public recognition.

This presents an opportunity — and challenge — for charities and nonprofits to help individuals recognise and celebrate the impact they're already making, without compromising cultural values of humility and discretion.



Saudi Arabia ranks 100th out of 101 countries for how generous they think they are.

They are 34th in terms of the proportion of income they donate.

An aerial photograph of a community event on a concrete basketball court. A large group of people, mostly wearing blue shirts, are arranged in a circular formation in the center of the court. To the left and right of the circle are two white pop-up tents. The left tent has a basketball hoop and backboard attached to its side. The right tent also has a basketball hoop and backboard. Various items like chairs, bags, and boxes are scattered around the court. The court has yellow and red painted areas. A red banner with white text is overlaid across the middle of the image.

03 ASPECTS OF GENEROSITY

The proportion of people who give money in different ways.

Community giving.

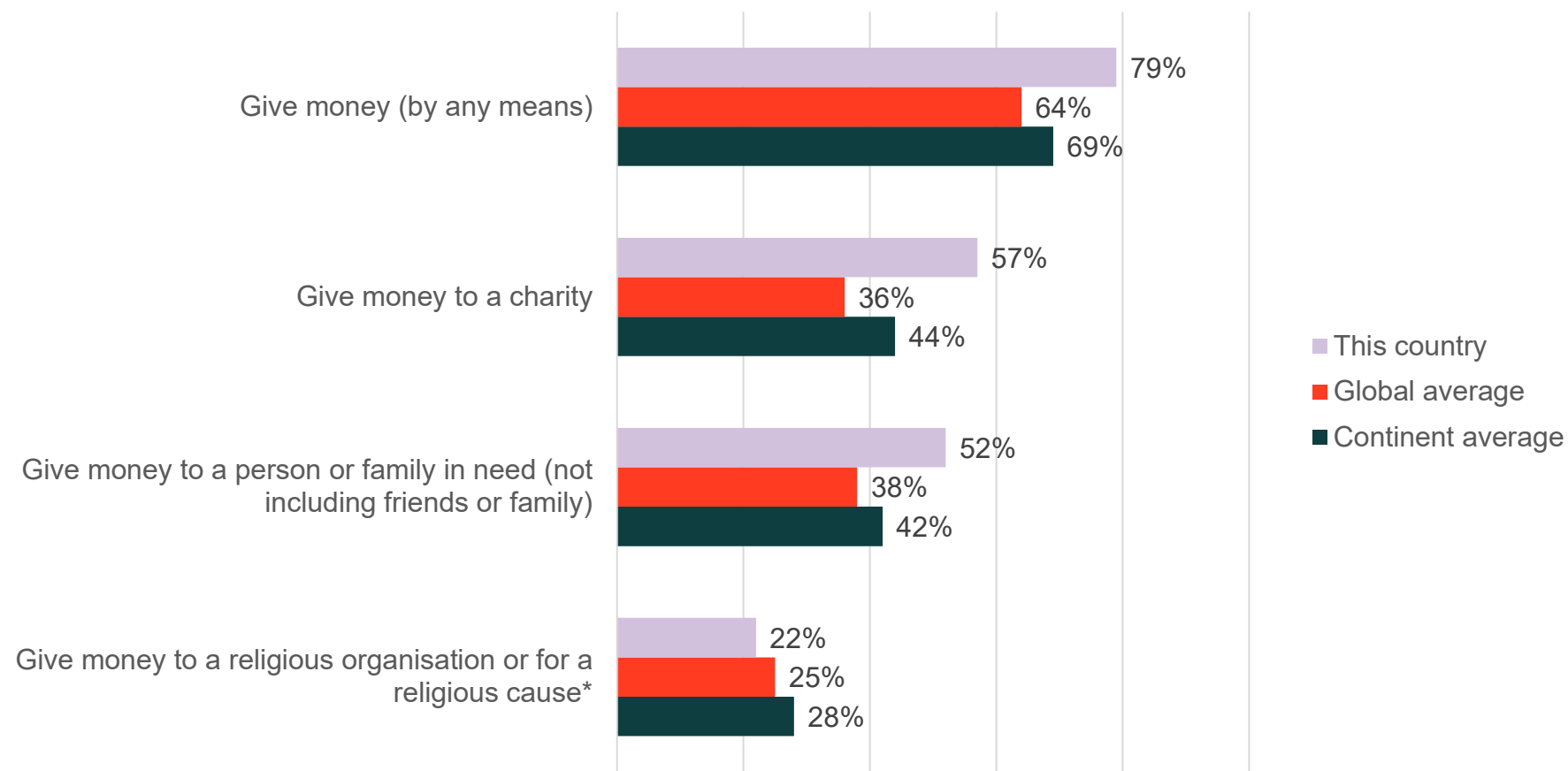
Giving in Saudi Arabia is shaped by tradition and community.

Most people give to charities (57%) and individuals in need (52%), reflecting how community giving is part of daily life.

Surprisingly, religious causes attracted just 22%, coming below the national and regional averages, despite Saudi Arabia being a country where Islam is prominent. An explanation for this might be that donations to religious causes do not always register as charity as they are natural act.

Saudi's sizeable cohort of expatriate workers who lead the way in responding to humanitarian appeals when their communities are affected, may be another explanation for the high levels of direct giving.

Q: During 2024, did you do any of the following? (All, n = 500)



The full answer code was worded, 'Give money to a religious organisation or for a religious cause' (for example: at church, through zakat, tithing, ma'aser or daana, etc.). This includes any money you give voluntarily, even if it is collected by your government.

How frequently people gave.

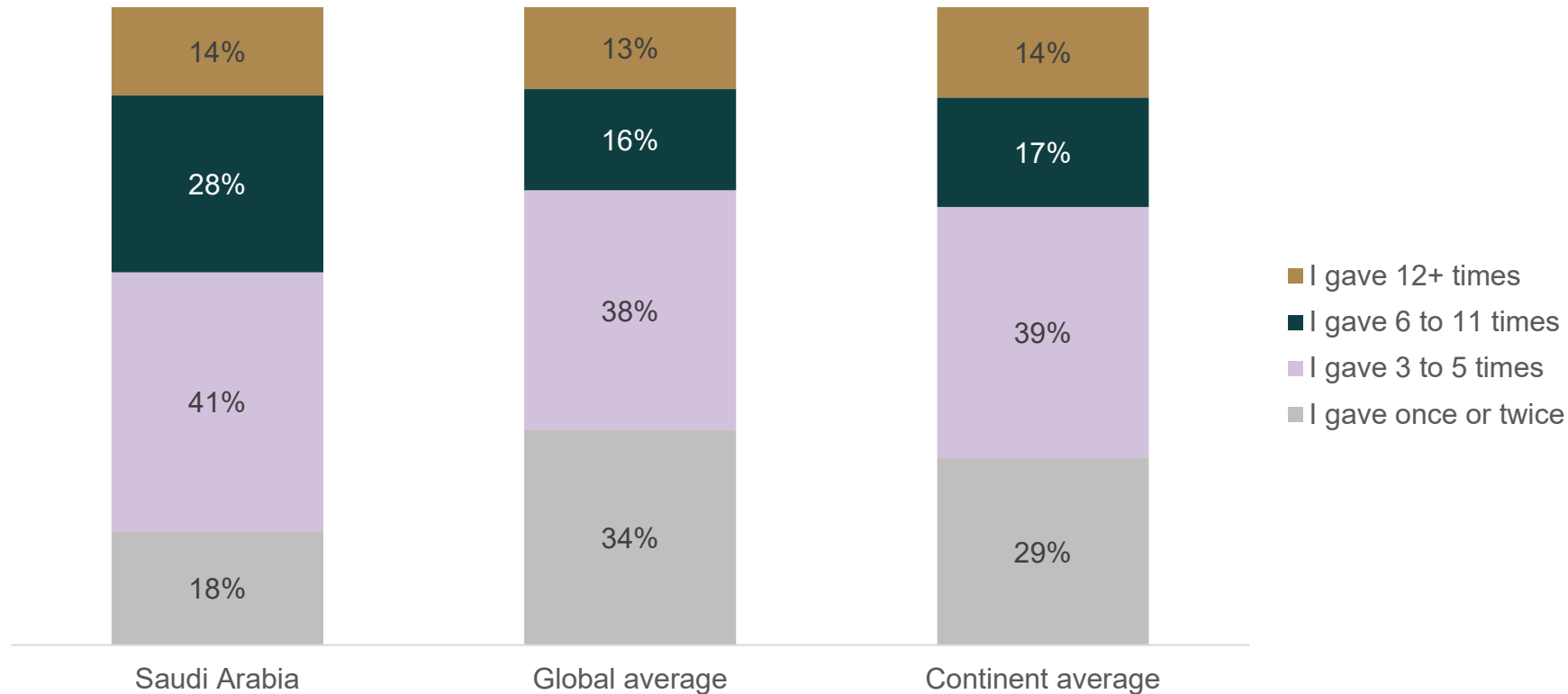
Regular giving.

Giving in Saudi Arabia tends to be occasional. Just over half of donors (59%) gave five times or fewer in the year, suggesting giving that occurs in reaction to need or specific cultural moments, rather than as a routine commitment.

Despite this, a quarter of respondents (28%) did give 6 to 11 times, well above the global average, and 14% make 12 or more donations through the year.

An important consideration here is how giving is defined and recorded, which may not be the same in Saudi Arabia where discretion is prized over promotion.

Q: How often did you give money away in 2024, either to charity, a person or family in need, or to a religious organisation? *(People who had given money, n = 396)*



Share of donations.

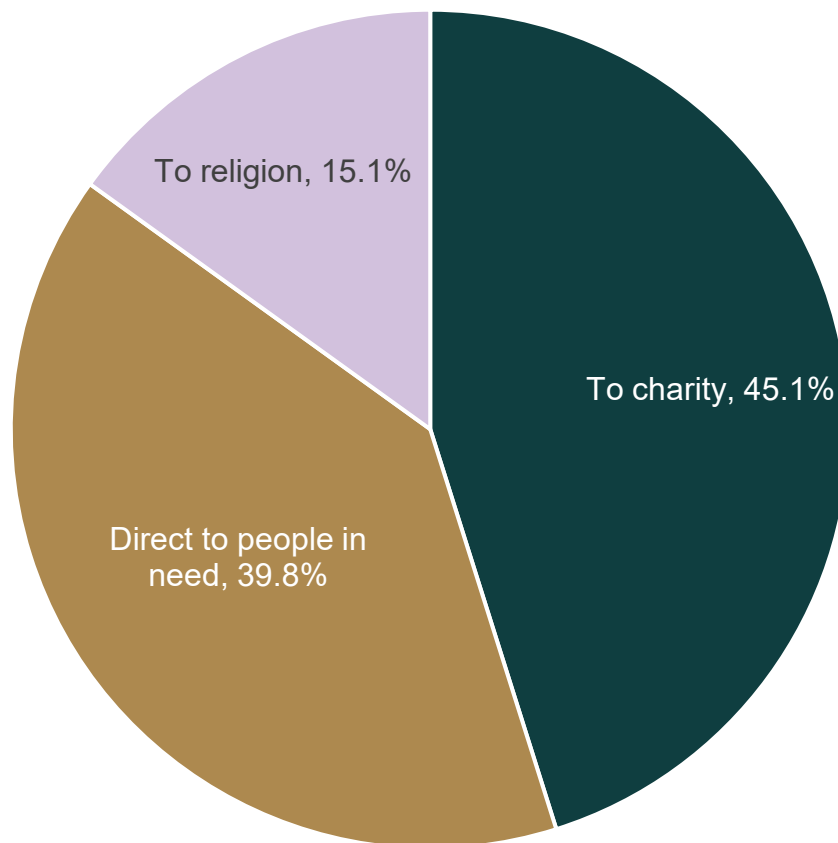
Charities receive the biggest share of donations.

Nearly half (45.1%) of donations made in Saudi Arabia went to charities, but close behind that, 39.8% went directly to people in need.

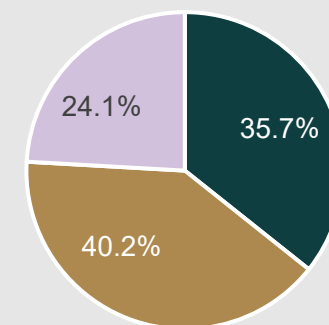
Religion and religious causes attracted just 15.1% of Saudi donations, which is surprising, given the importance of Islam within Saudi society.

An explanation for this might be that money given through zakat is regarded as a duty, rather than a charitable donation.

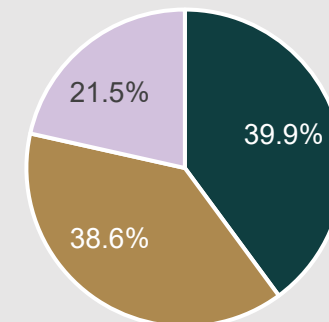
The share of the value of all donations made in 2024, across the three different routes. (People who had given money, $n = 396$)



Global average



Continent average



Donations as a proportion of income.

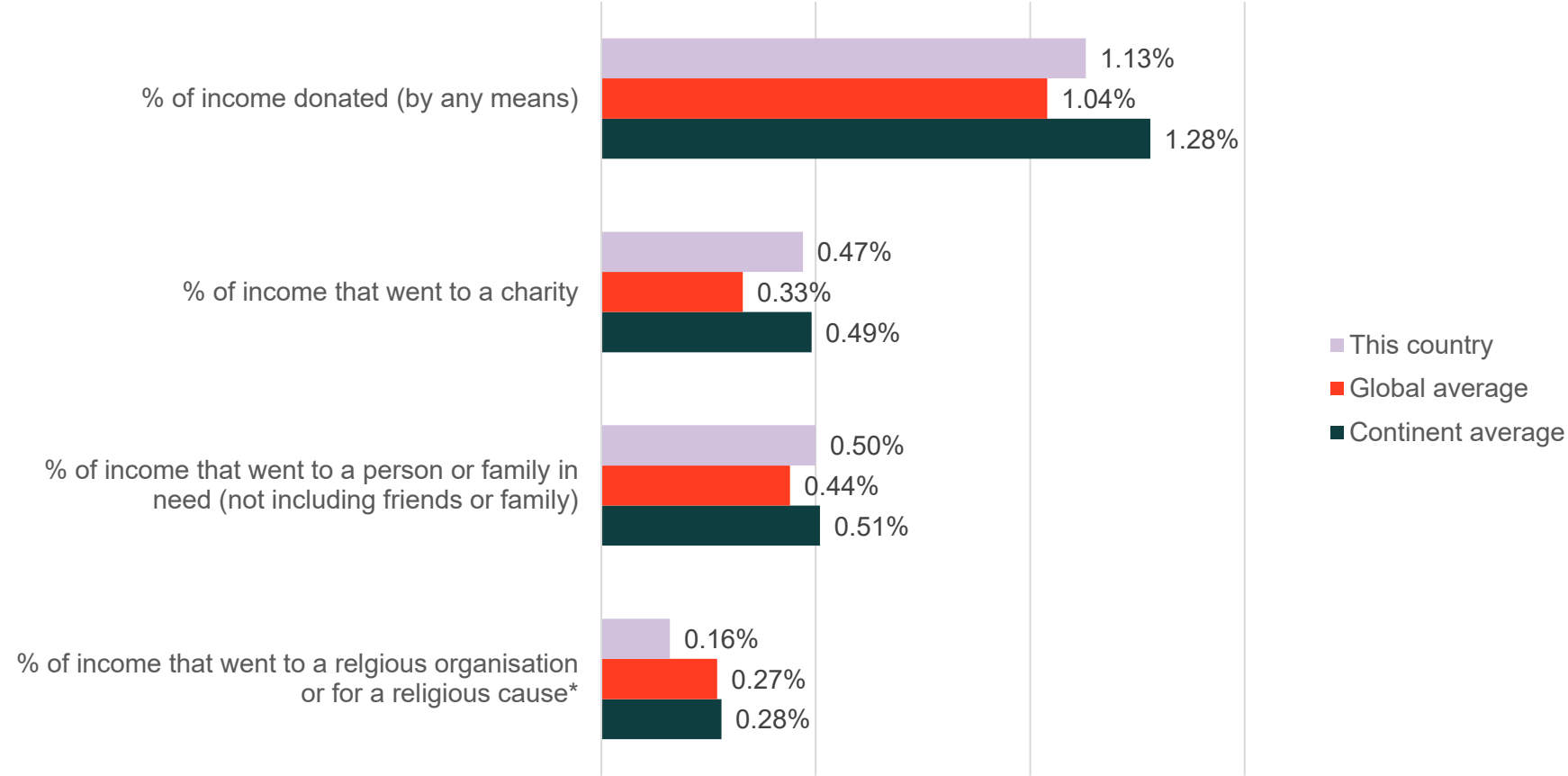
Saudis give generously.

People in Saudi Arabia donate an average of 1.13% of their income to others. This is above the global average of 1.04%, though slightly below the Asian regional benchmark of 1.28%.

Just 0.16% of income is directed towards religious causes, despite the Islamic obligation of zakat, which traditionally requires Muslims to donate 2.5% of their wealth to those in need.

This gap may reflect a distinction between income-based giving and wealth-based obligations, or it could point to underreporting of religious donations due to cultural norms around discretion in giving.

The average proportion of income people gave to each of the three donation routes, and overall. (All, including those donating zero, n = 500).



*The full answer code was worded, 'Give money to a religious organisation or for a religious cause, (for example, at church, through zakat, tithing, ma'aser or daana, etc.). This includes any money you give voluntarily, even if it is collected by your government'.

How people feel about giving money.

A mix of duty and choice.

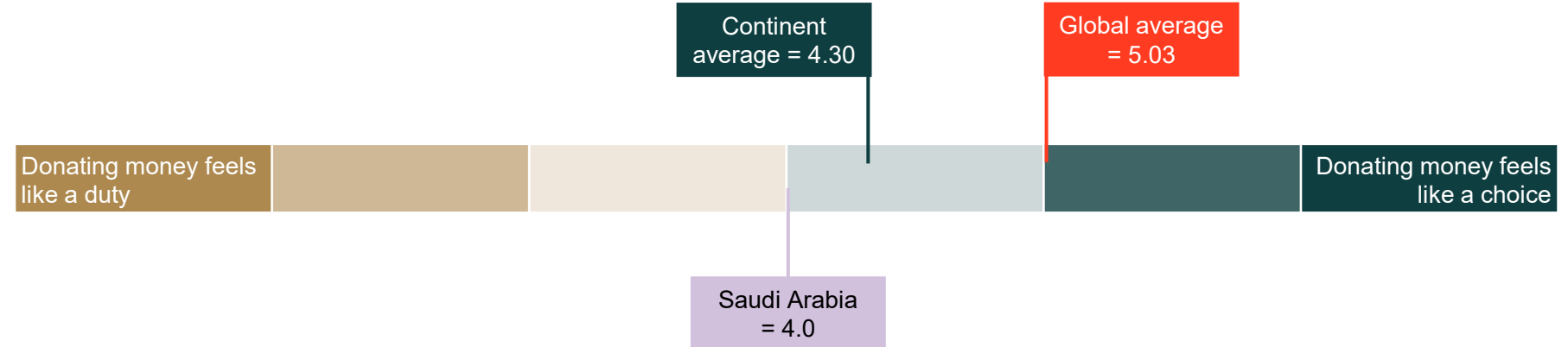
People were asked how they felt about giving money, on a scale of 1 (feeling like a duty) to 7 (feeling like a choice).

Saudi Arabia sits midway between obligation and altruism with a score of 4; donating feeling more like a duty in the Kingdom than elsewhere in the region.

Saudi Arabia's position on the spectrum reflects how deeply giving is ingrained within its culture and society.

The average score when people were asked how donating money feels.

(People who had given money, $n = 396$).



Reasons for giving money.

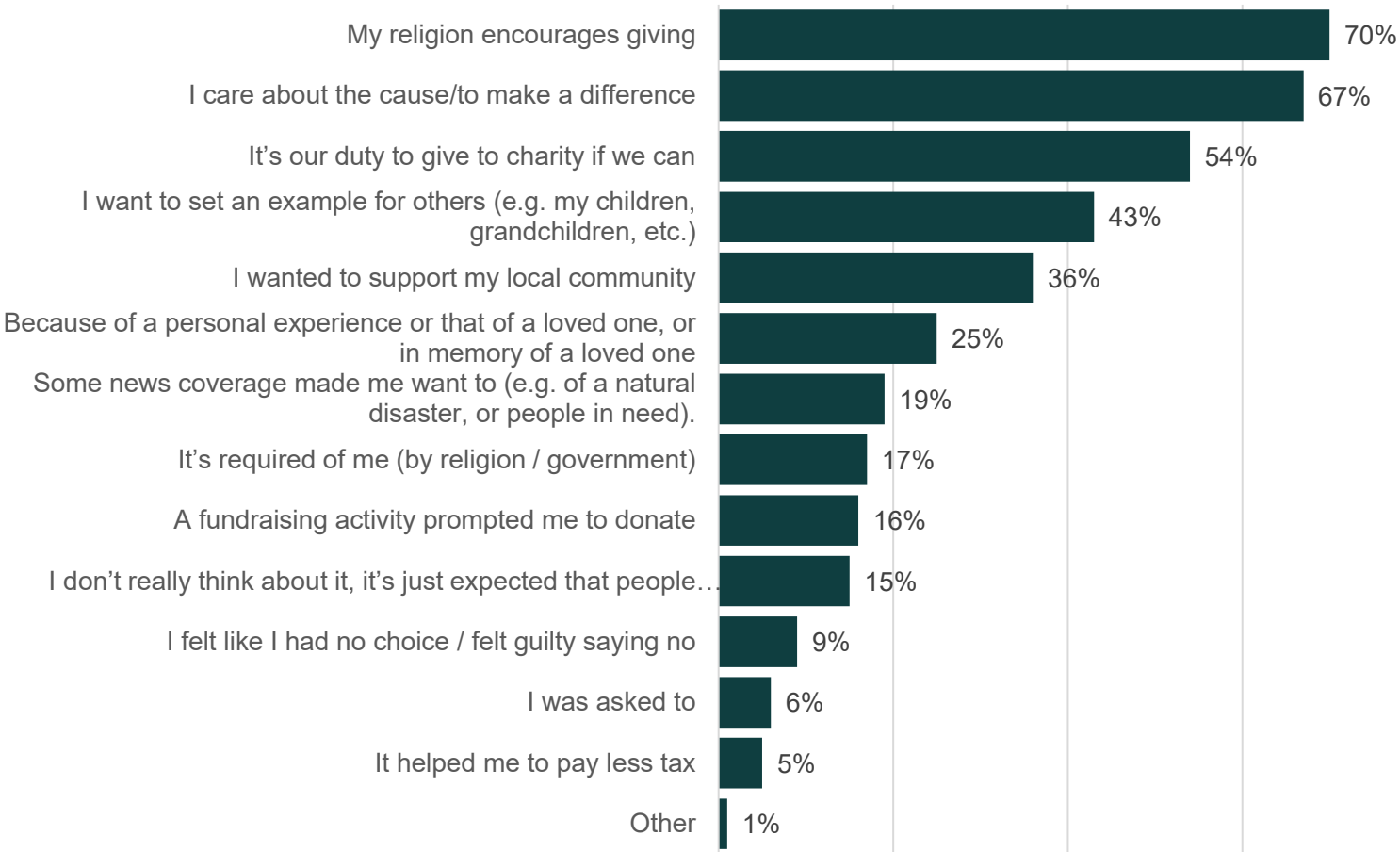
Faith and duty drive giving.

Religion was the leading reason for giving followed by donors caring about a cause and / or wanting to make a difference.

More than half (54%) said giving to charity was a duty and a good proportion (43%) said they wanted to set an example for others.

Interestingly, just 17% of those who gave money said it was “required” of them by religion or government, which suggests that religious motivation is ingrained in how people give, rather than a separate factor.

Which of the following, if any, are reasons that you gave away money in 2024?
(People who had given money, n = 396).



Global top 3

1. I care about the cause/to make a difference (65%)
2. It's our duty to give to charity if we can (31%)
3. My religion encourages it (29%)

Continental top 3

1. I care about the cause/to make a difference (62%)
2. It's our duty to give if we can (39%)
3. My religion encourages giving (37%)

Reasons for not giving money.

Lack of means a barrier to giving.

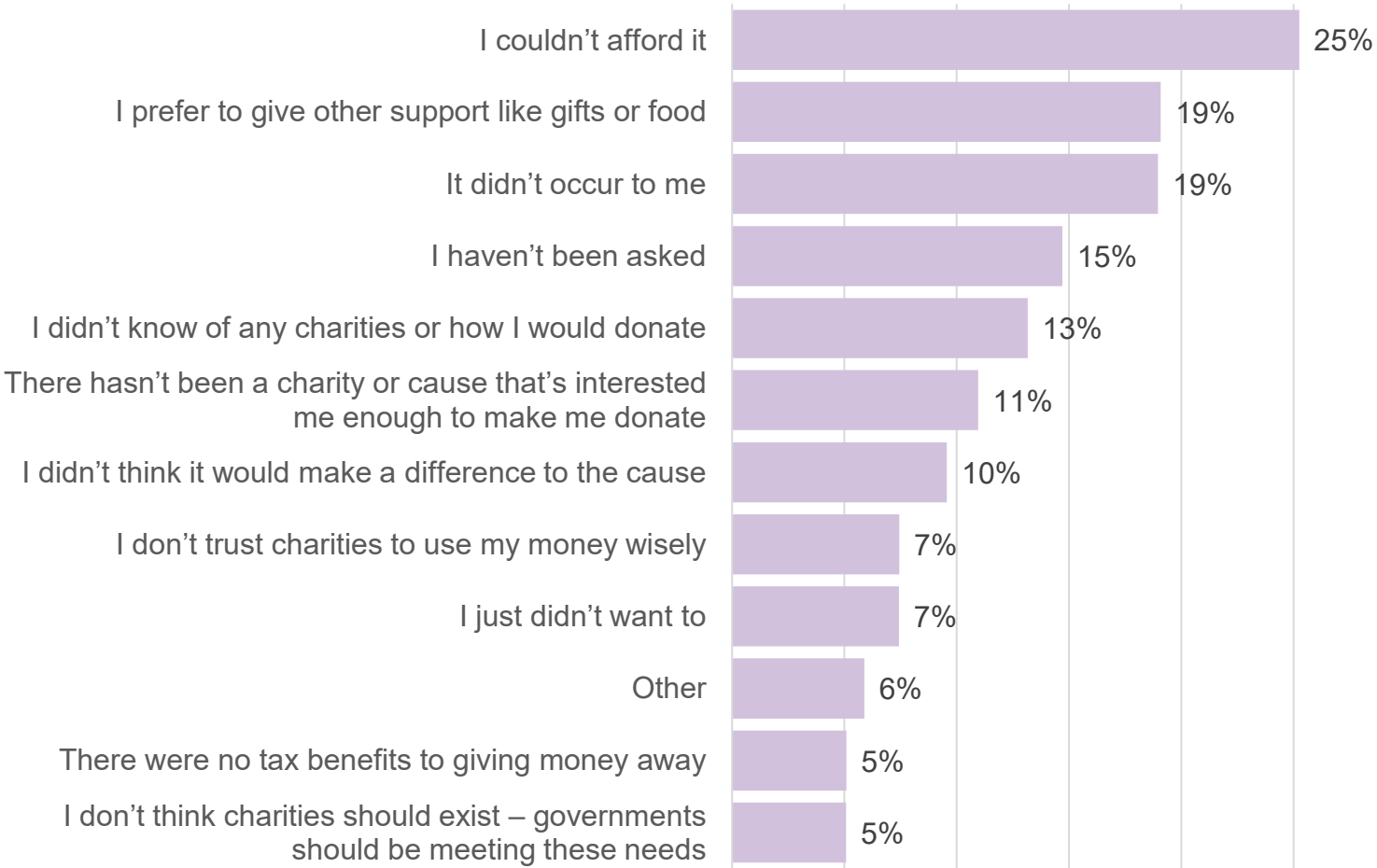
One in four (25%) interviewees who did not donate cited not being able to afford it and one in five (19%) said they preferred to give in-kind support like gifts or food.

These top reasons track with global and regional trends but while elsewhere a lack of trust was a major turnoff, in Saudi Arabia, one in five donors (19%) said it hadn't occurred to them to give.

Trust — or lack of — was only cited as a reason by 7% of respondents who didn't give.

The barriers presented by those interviewed in Saudi Arabia are mostly practical, rather than ideological, and NGOs may wish to do more to engage with donors and offer clearer paths for giving.

What would you say are the main reasons that you did not give money away in 2024? (People who had not given money, n = 104).



Global top 3

1. I couldn't afford it (40%)
2. I prefer to give other support like gifts or food (20%)
3. I don't trust charities to use my money wisely (14%)

Continental top 3

1. I couldn't afford it (35%)
2. I prefer to give other support like gifts or food (20%)
3. I don't trust charities to use my money wisely (14%)

What would increase donations?

Trust and transparency.

Nearly half (47%) of people interviewed in Saudi Arabia said having more of their own money would make them more likely to increase donations and volunteering.

But beyond greater means, knowing how donations are being used was important to people in Saudi Arabia, as was knowing more about how the charity sector is regulated.

Saudi non-profits may attract more donations if they are more forthcoming about the work they do and how the impact they are having.

The top three reasons that would make the respondent likely to give more money, goods or time to charities in 2025. (All, $n = 500$)

47%

Having more money myself

42%

Knowing more about the results and impact that a charity has

40%

Knowing more about how my money would be spent
and
Knowing the charity sector is well regulated

The causes people support through donating.

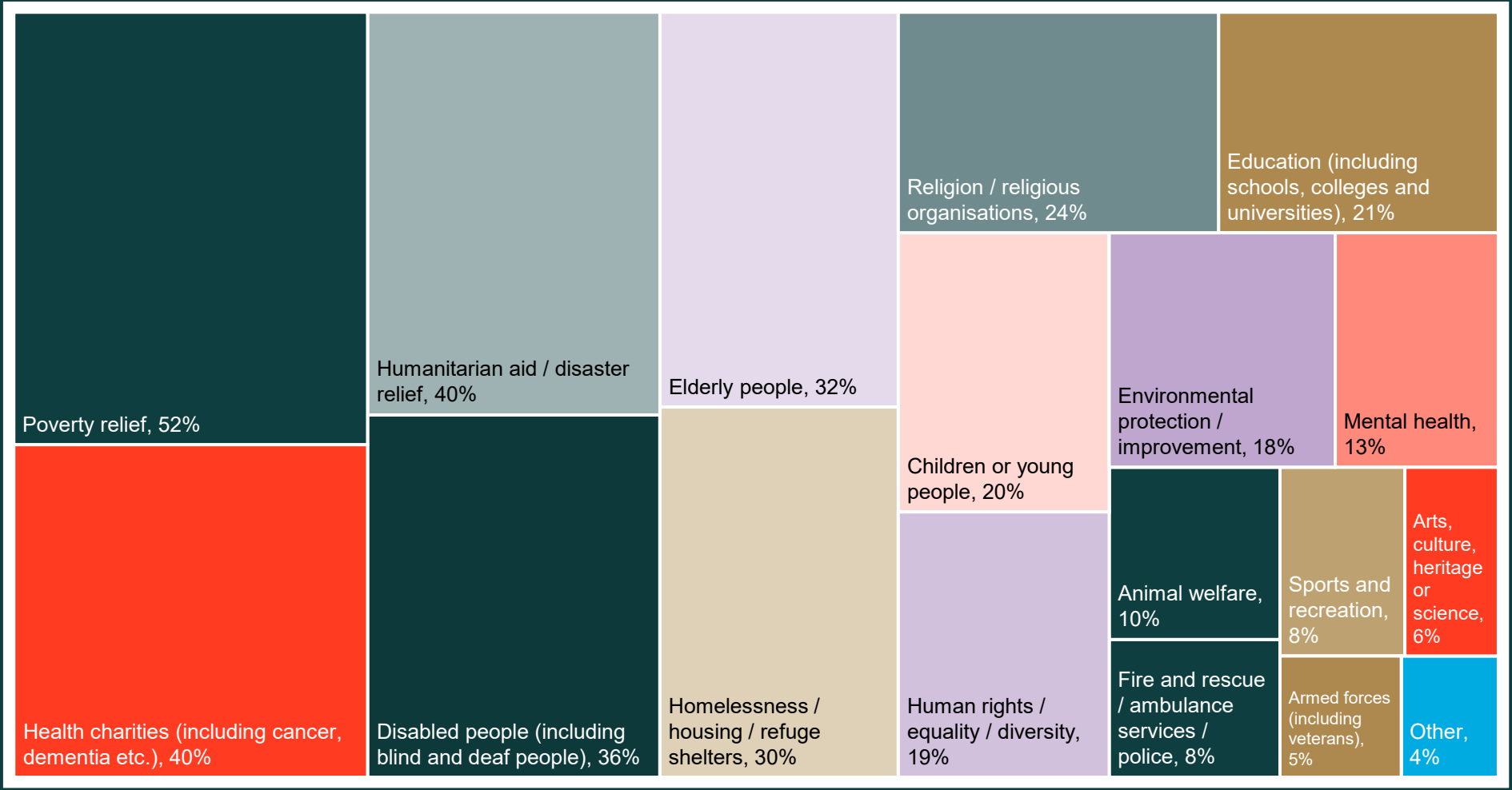
Beyond boundaries.

Poverty relief, health, and disaster response were the leading causes supported by Saudi donors.

Of the 40% of people in the sample who donated to aid / disaster relief, 53% of them helped a cause in Saudi Arabia, while 90% donated to an overseas cause (some did both).

The high volume of donations going overseas from Saudi Arabia highlights the Kingdom’s global awareness and its residents’ international ties, especially to neighbouring and conflict-affected regions.

Which cause(s) did you give money to in 2024? (People who had given money, n = 396)



Frequency of volunteering, per person.

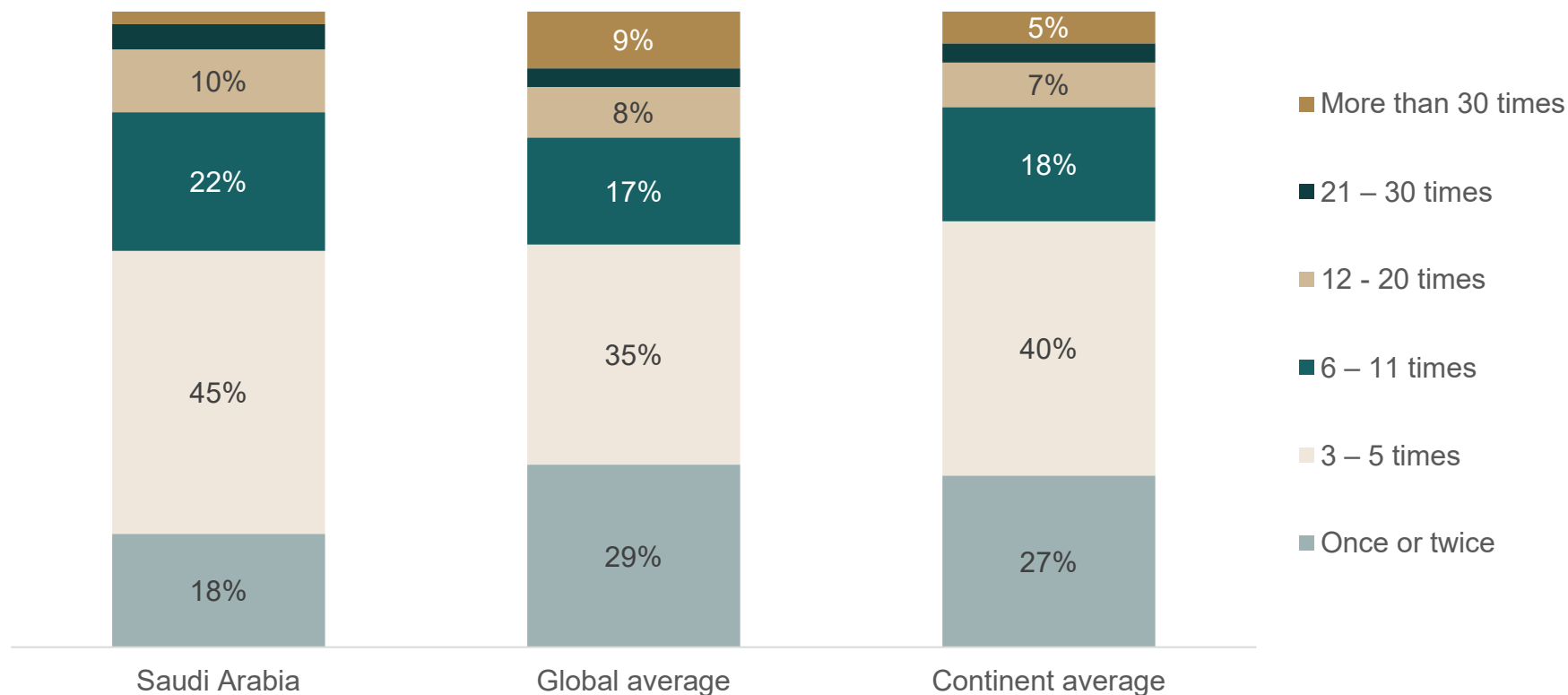
A committed few.

Only 26% of respondents said they volunteered during 2024, and of those, close to half (45%) did so 3-5 times, and just over one fifth (22%) 6-11 times.

This suggests that while the overall number of volunteers is low, those who do participate tend to be committed and recurring contributors.

It reflects a core group of engaged people, which could be a strong foundation for broader volunteer mobilisation, especially if awareness, accessibility, and incentives are improved.

How often did you do unpaid, voluntary work in 2024 that benefitted people other than your family or friends? *(Those who volunteered, n = 130)*



Average time spent volunteering, per person.

Above the regional average.

People in Saudi Arabia spent more time volunteering than their regional counterparts, giving up an average of eight and a half hours.

Given the small pool of actual volunteers, this time commitment is impressive and shows a strong responsibility to a cause or campaign.

Saudi nonprofits may wish to explore ways to create more volunteering opportunities to tap into this rich stream of human resource.

8 hours **30** minutes

On average, people in Saudi Arabia spent this time volunteering in 2024

(All, n = 500) [nb – this is overall, so includes all those who did nothing within the average]

9 hours

Global average

7 hours **30** minutes

Continent average

The causes people supported through volunteering.

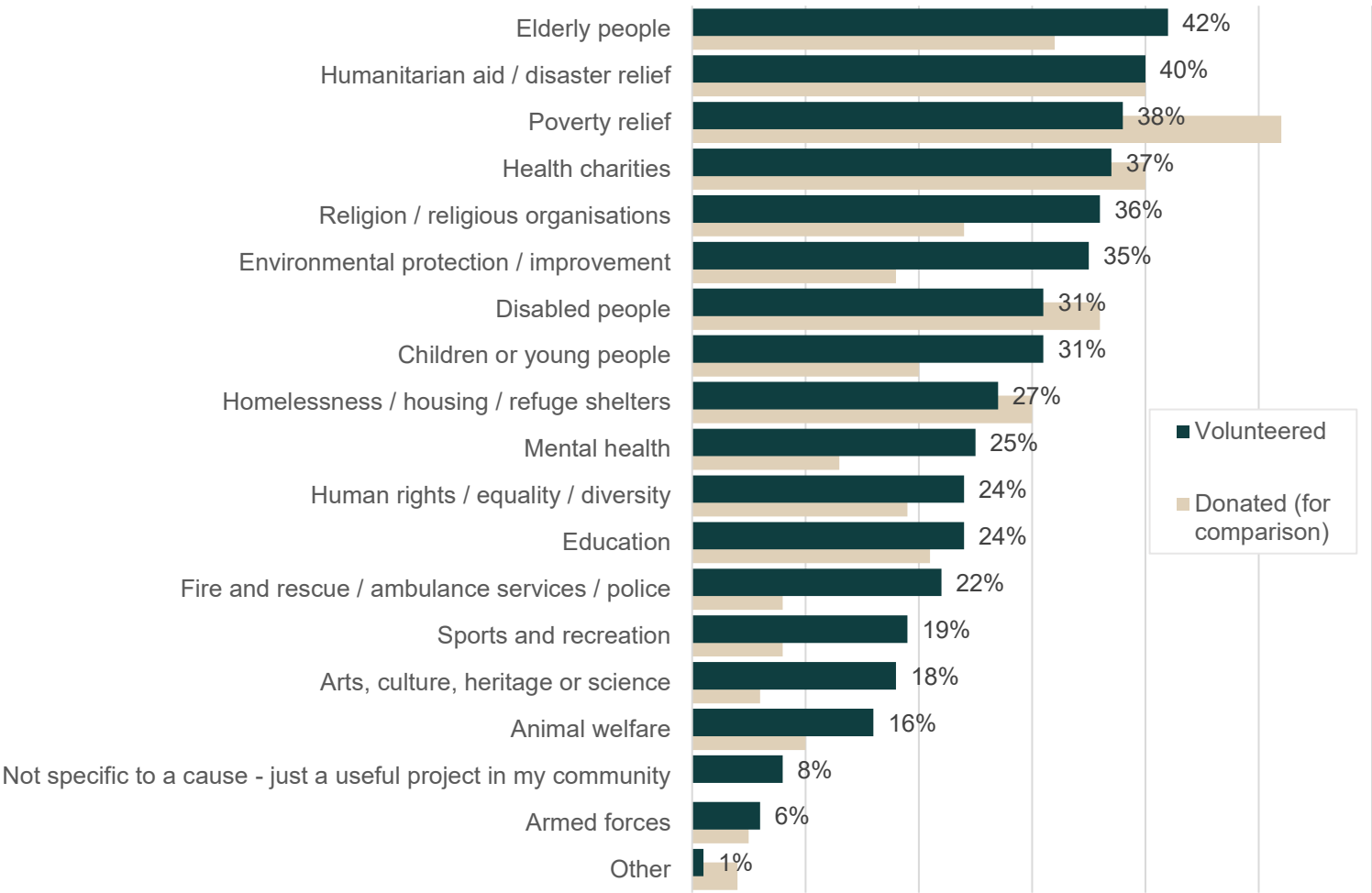
Community action.

Working with elderly people was the most common cause for volunteers in Saudi Arabia in 2024, according to our data.

This was followed by humanitarian aid / disaster relief (40%), poverty relief (38%), and health charities (37%).

This loosely tracks with how donations are allocated (except for the elderly category) and suggests a potential opportunity for non-profits to encourage more volunteering from their donors, and likewise, more donations from their volunteers.

Which cause(s) did you do unpaid voluntary work for in 2024? (People who had volunteered, n = 130)



How helpful people are to others.

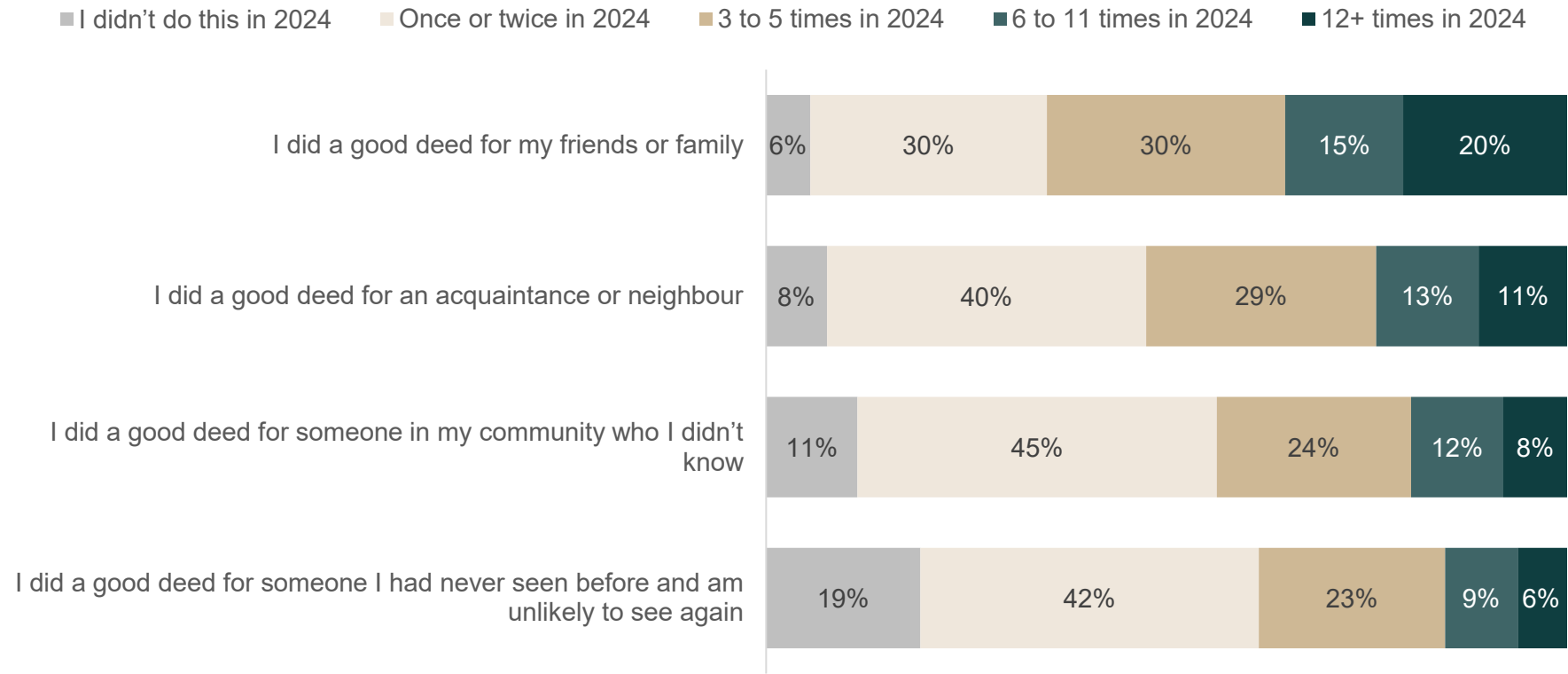
Kindness of strangers.

Beyond formal giving, kindness thrives in the fabric of Saudi Arabia.

Whether it's helping a neighbour, assisting a stranger, or pitching in during emergencies, nearly everyone surveyed in the Kingdom reported having done at least one good deed in 2024.

One fifth (20%) said they did good deeds 12+ times a year when it came to friends and family.

Beyond easy acts of kindness or simple good manners that do not require much effort, for example, holding open a door or picking up a dropped item, did you do a good deed in 2024?
(All, n = 500)





04 PERCEPTIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY

How much the public trusts charities.

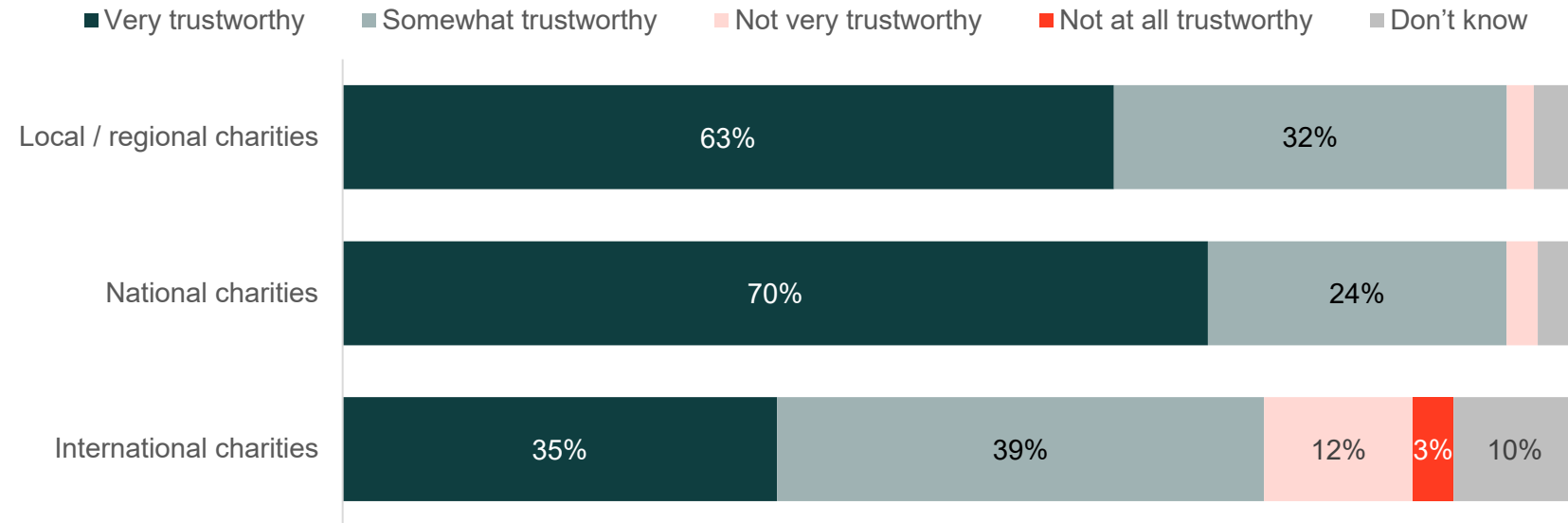
Local v global.

Two thirds (63%) of respondents in Saudi Arabia say local and regional charities are very trustworthy, and 70% say this of national charities.

Yet, when it comes to international NGOs (iNGOs), just one third of interviewees feels they are very trustworthy and 12% regard them to be “not very trustworthy” and 3% “extremely untrustworthy.”

This less than favourable view of iNGOs may stem from the fact they are not permitted to operate in Saudi Arabia and few Saudis will have had interactions with them directly.

How trustworthy do you tend to find each of these types of charities? (All, n = 500)



Overall, the public in Saudi Arabia gave a score of 11.6 out of 15 for how much they trust charities. This compares to a continental average of 9.65 and a global average of 9.22.

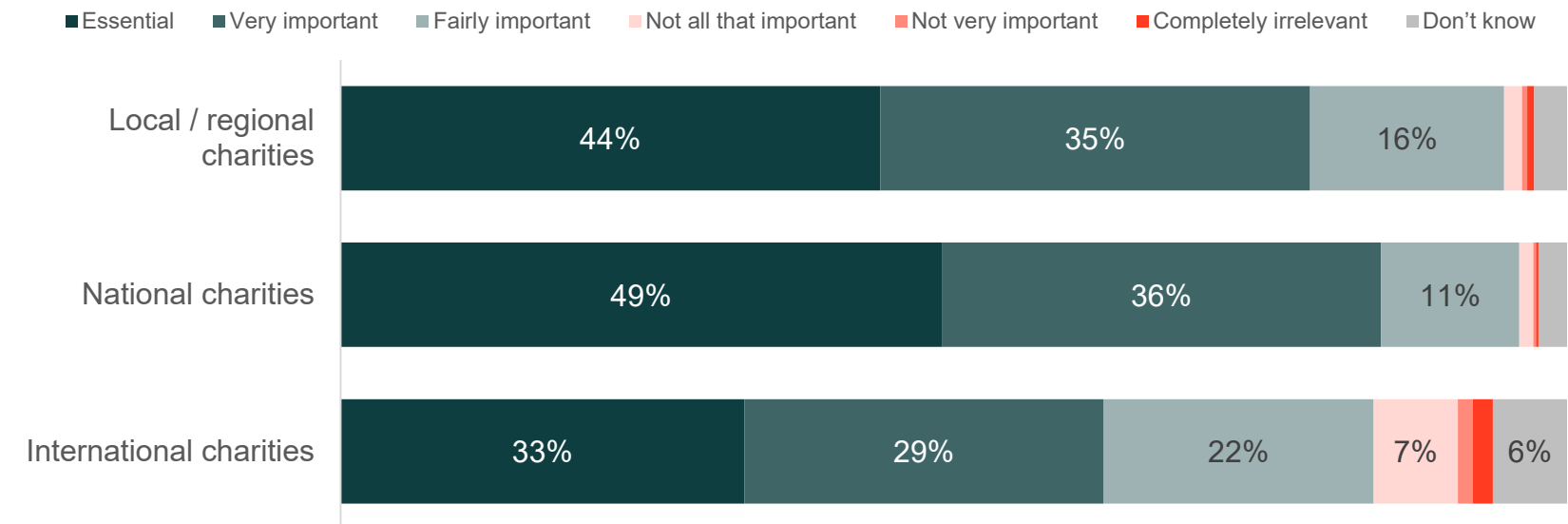
The perceived importance of charities to society.

The power of charity.

Charities hold a respected role in Saudi society. With a score above both regional and global averages, people in the Kingdom view non-profit organisations as essential to solving real problems.

More weight is given to local and national charities, over international organisations with around 10% of respondents regarding them either “not important” or “completely irrelevant”.

How important, in general, do you believe these different types of charities are to your country's society? (All, n = 500)



Overall, the public in Saudi Arabia gave a score of 12.2 out of 15 for how much they value charities. This compares to a continental average of 11.04 and a global average of 10.98.

How people discover charities.

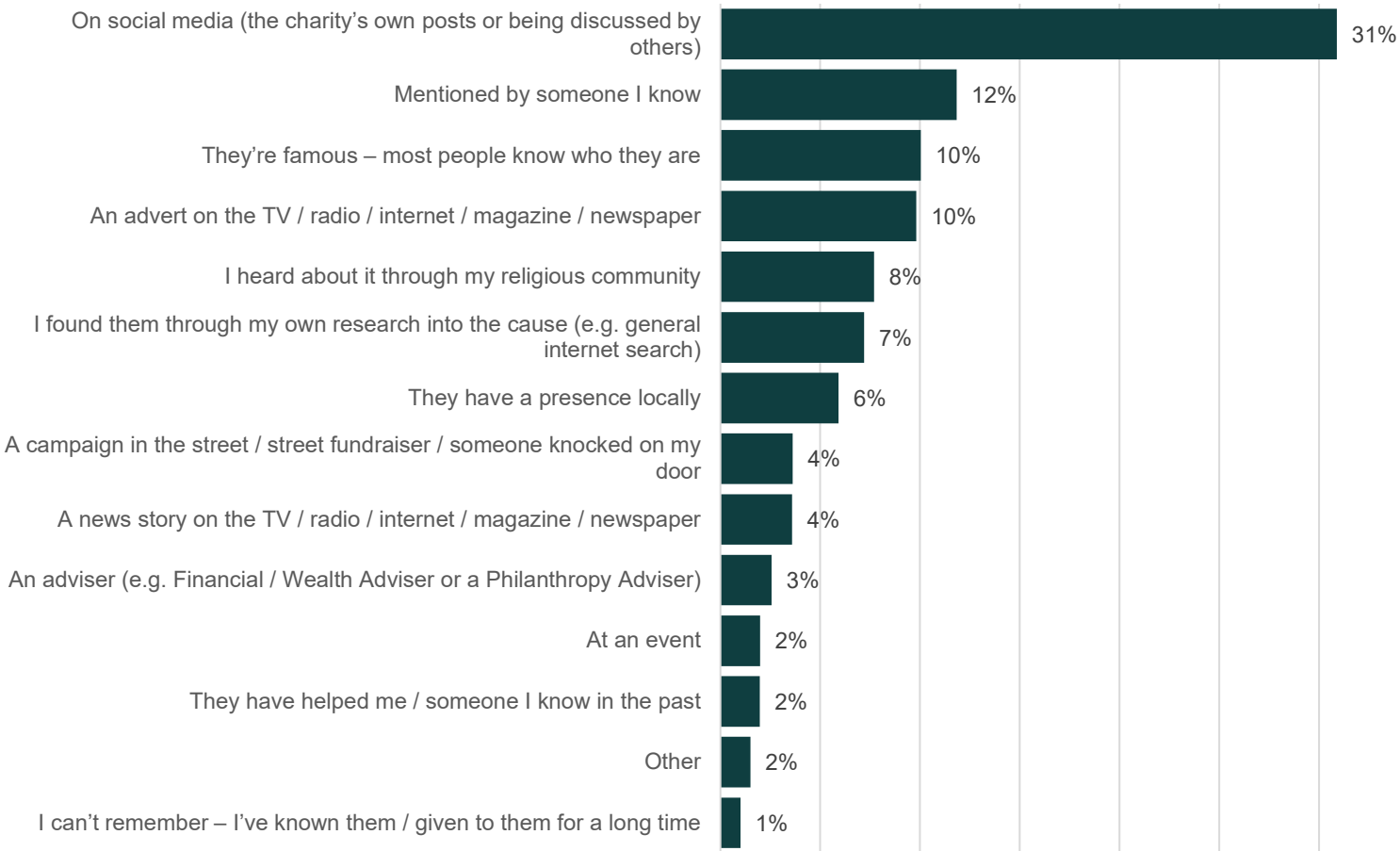
The power of social media.

When it comes to discovering charities, Saudi Arabia is digital-first, with close to one third (31%) of respondents — more than double the global average - saying they first learned about a charity via social media.

However, word of mouth and local visibility also play an important role, showing that even in a connected world, community trust still matters.

News articles and street campaigns had little impact, as did private advisers.

For the last charity that you gave money to, how did you first find out about them?
(People who had given money to charities, n = 285)



Global top 3

1. On social media (14%)
2. They have a presence locally (11%)
3. They were mentioned by someone I know (10%)

Continental top 3

1. On social media (18%)
2. They have a presence locally (12%)
3. Mentioned by someone I know (11%)

Overall influence of government on charities.

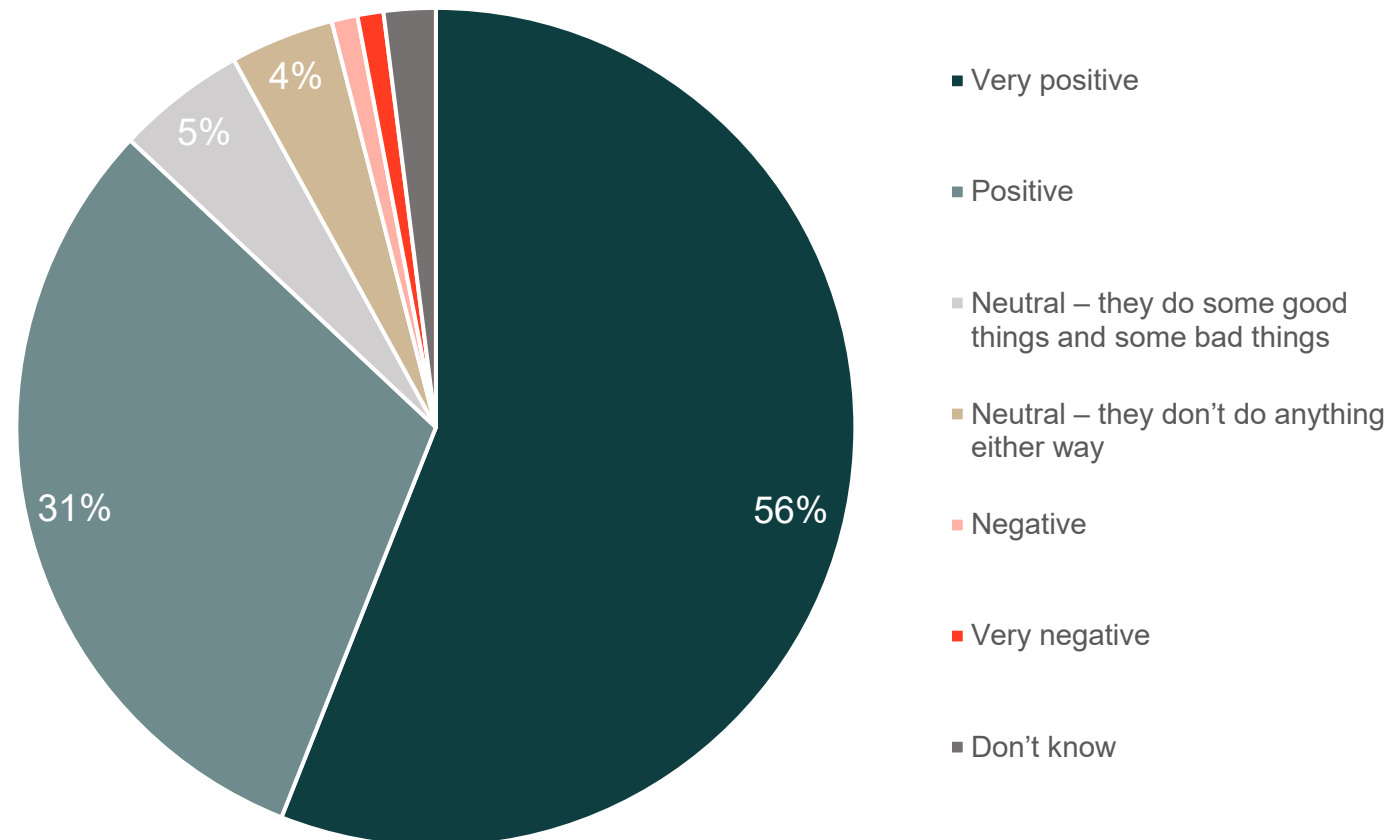
A positive influence.

Nearly nine out of 10 (87%) respondents in Saudi Arabia thought the Government was a very positive or positive influence on the charity sector.

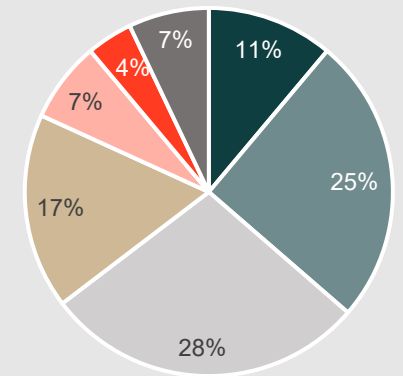
This far exceeds the regional average of 50% and the global benchmark of 36%.

A key factor in this will be the National Center for the Development of the Non-Profit Sector (NCNP), a government-led entity created in 2019 to support charities and help Saudi Arabia achieve a target of non-profits contributing 5% of national GDP by 2030.

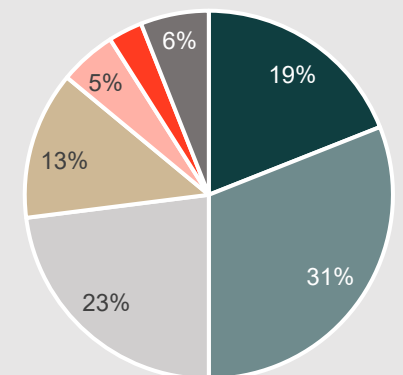
Overall, do you think the Government is a positive or negative influence on the charity sector? (All, n = 500)



Global average



Continent average



Specific opinions on the role of government.

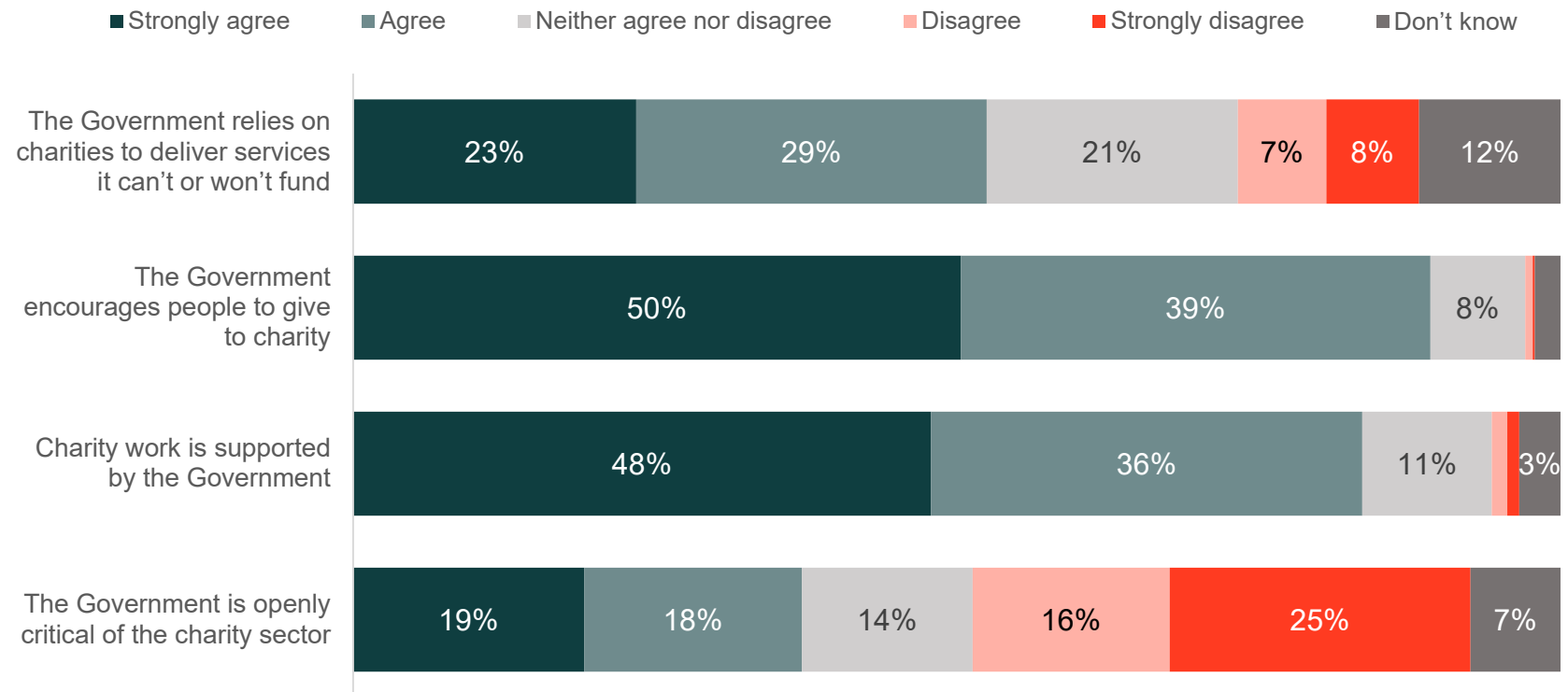
Encouraging and supportive.

People in Saudi Arabia spoke positively about the Government's influence on the charity sector.

More than two thirds (84%) agree or strongly agree that the Government encourages people to give and and equal among believed the government supports charity work.

Organisations like the The National Center for Non-Profit Sector play a key role supporting the Kingdom's non-profit ecosystem and it's clear they are having a positive. impact based on this feedback.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Government's involvement in the charity sector? (All, n = 500)



THANK YOU

www.worldgivingreport.org

Charities Aid Foundation registered charity number 268369

