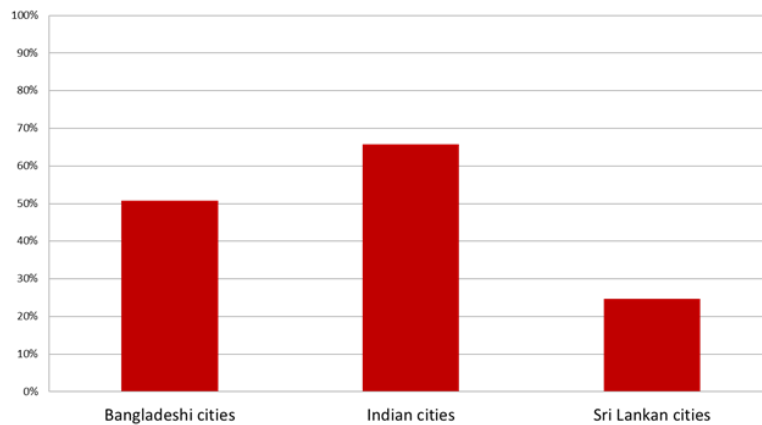


**ADDRESSING CONSUMER COMPLAINTS**

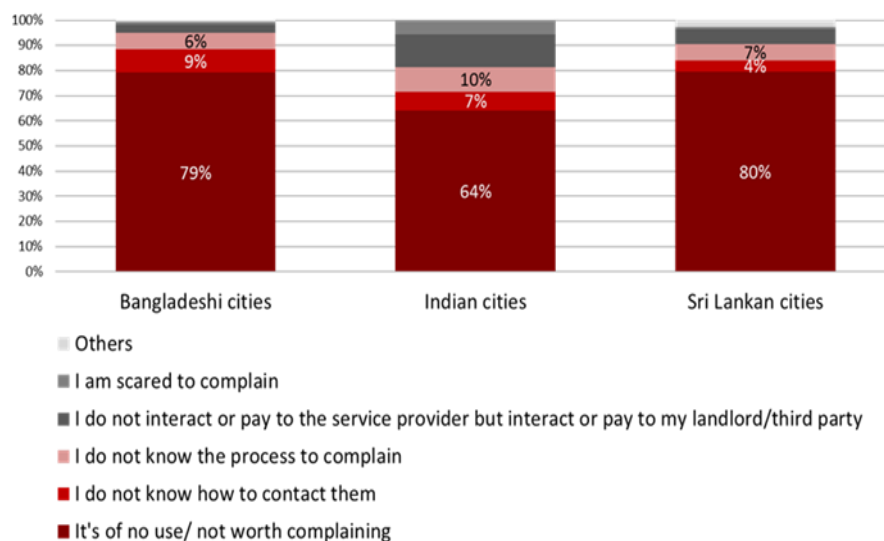
A survey of urban low income micro-entrepreneurs in selected Bangladeshi, Indian and Sri Lankan cities showed that 25% of micro entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka who used electricity for their business, were dissatisfied with the action taken by the electricity service provider in response to their complaints<sup>1</sup> (Figure 1). This compared favorably with Indian cities where 66% of micro entrepreneurs were dissatisfied with the action taken by the service provider.

However 80% of Sri Lankan micro-entrepreneurs stated that they refrained from complaining since they felt there was no use (Figure 2). For example even though 84% of Sri Lankan micro-entrepreneurs who used electricity for their business reported that blackouts were a problem, only 29% complained to the provider (Figure3). Even those who tried to complain, especially about unplanned power outages, were often unable to contact the service provider by telephone. A further 11% also stated that they either did not know how to contact the provider or were unaware of the process to complain. Less than one fifth of micro entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka received a reference ID for their complaints.

**Figure 1: Dissatisfaction with action taken by the provider (as a % of micro-entrepreneurs who use electricity for business)**



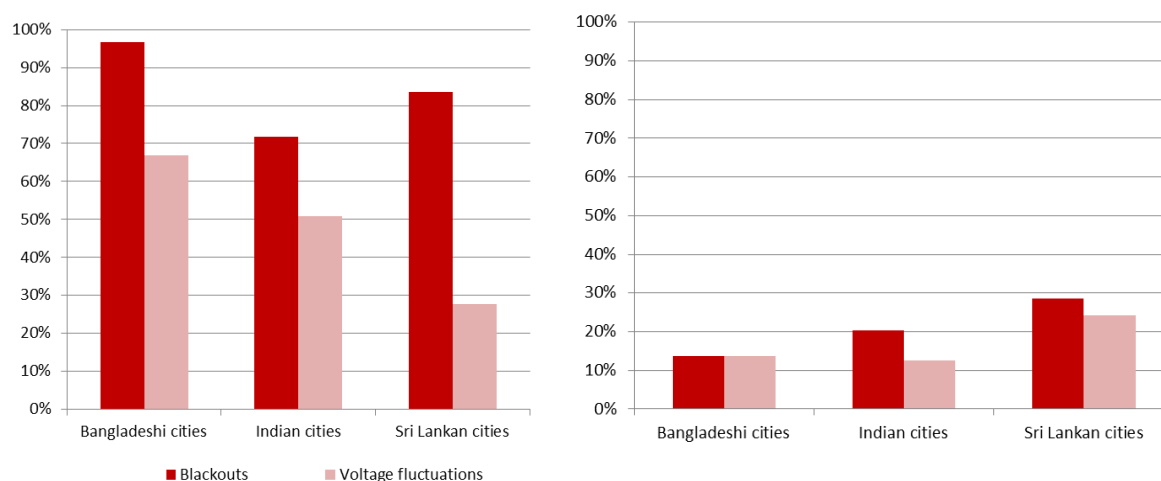
**Figure 2: Many micro-entrepreneurs see no use in complaining (as a % of micro-entrepreneurs who use electricity for business)**



<sup>1</sup> <http://lirneasia.net/projects/2012-2014-research-program/improving-service-delivery-for-e-inclusion/>

**Figure 3:**

**Most common problems faced by micro-entrepreneurs      Percentage who complained to provider**



## IMPROVING PROCESS FOR DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

Communicating is a two way process. The consumer should be able to talk to the provider to make a complaint and the provider needs to let the consumer know about issues such as planned power outages. Complaints can also be a source of useful information for the provider- for example it can help the provider become aware of problems such as unplanned power outages.

### **Issues faced by consumer:**

- Inability to contact the distribution company to make complaints
- Difficulty in obtaining information about a complaint when needed
- Lack of knowledge on how to complain

### **Solutions: Maintenance of a dedicated call center with staff trained to manage customers effectively**

- Eliminate discretion and record all consumer calls made to the call center and issue a reference number for each complaint.
- Record every single call so that the supervisors can keep track of interactions
- Send an SMS asking for consumer for feedback on how satisfied they were with the way a query was resolved. The consumer can reply via SMS.
- Analyze the call center data together with system generated data for more in depth understanding of issues such as breakdowns and voltage fluctuations.

For further information please see <http://lirneasia.net/projects/2012-2014-research-program/improving-service-delivery-for-e-inclusion/>