



# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative



INNOVATION LAB FOR  
FOOD SECURITY POLICY RESEARCH,  
CAPACITY, AND INFLUENCE (PRCI)

## PRCI-Africa Technical Training Program: Accomplishments, Impacts, & Next Steps

*Veronique Theriault, Nicole Mason-Wardell, and Yeyoung Lee*

Presented at

PARTNERING TO STRENGTHEN CAPACITY FOR APPLIED POLICY  
RESEARCH WITH IMPACT: ACCOMPLISHMENTS UNDER PRCI, LESSONS,  
AND NEXT STEPS

Washington, DC (Ronald Reagan Building)

*March 6-8, 2024*



RIS  
Research and Information System  
for Developing Countries  
ระบบสารสนเทศเพื่อการพัฒนาประเทศ

# Accomplishments

	<b>Y1</b>	<b>Y2</b>	<b>Y3</b>	<b>Y4</b>	<b>Y5</b>
<b>Trainings</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Trainees</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>146</b>
<b>Core Center co-/lead trainers</b>			<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>

- **43 trainings**
- **1,504 participants**
- **14 Core Center co-/lead trainers**

# Accomplishments (cont'd)

- [43 training modules](#) - all publicly available
- 14,210 total page views (as of 2/28/24)

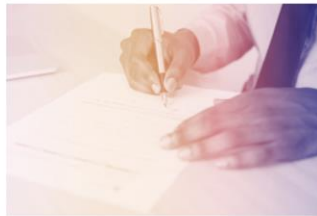
## PRCI-Africa Training Modules



[Module 01: Integrating Gender in Policy Research and Outreach](#)



[Module 02: Stata Basics - Working with Complex Survey Data and Descriptive Statistics](#)



[Module 03: Informed Consent and Human Research Subject Protection](#)



[Module 04: Research Transparency](#)



[Module 05: Avoiding Unintentional Plagiarism](#)



[Module 06: Ordinary Least Squares](#)



# Assessment methods

## Participants' survey

- 34 respondents (18 men, 16 women) out of 50 Core Center invitees
- Jan. 13 - Feb. 9, 2024

## Discussions w/ leaders from each Core Center

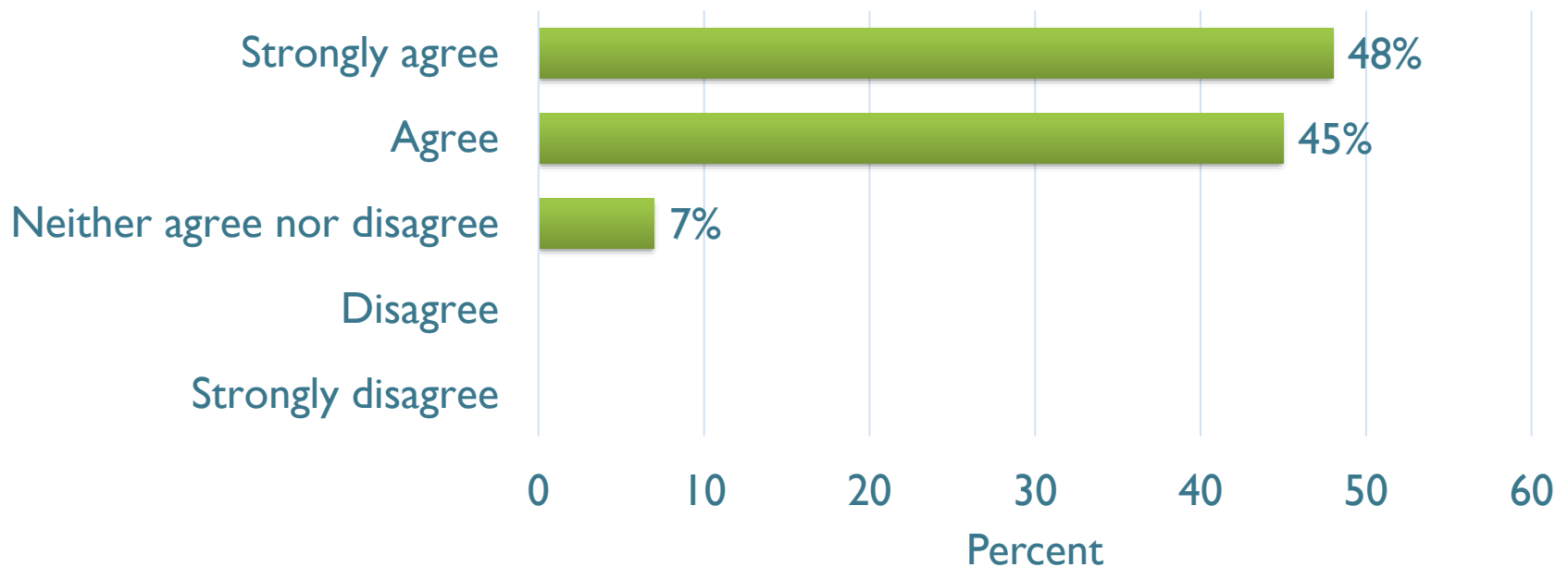
- 13 leaders (6 men, 7 women)
- Jan. 29 - Feb. 5, 2024

**Impacts cannot be solely attributed to the technical training activities**

# Main takeaway #1

Leaders' opinions: Each Center's **policy research capacity has improved** through training, especially with the co-trainers approach

Participants' responses to: “My organization is more effective at **conducting rigorous policy research** now than it was prior to PRCI.”

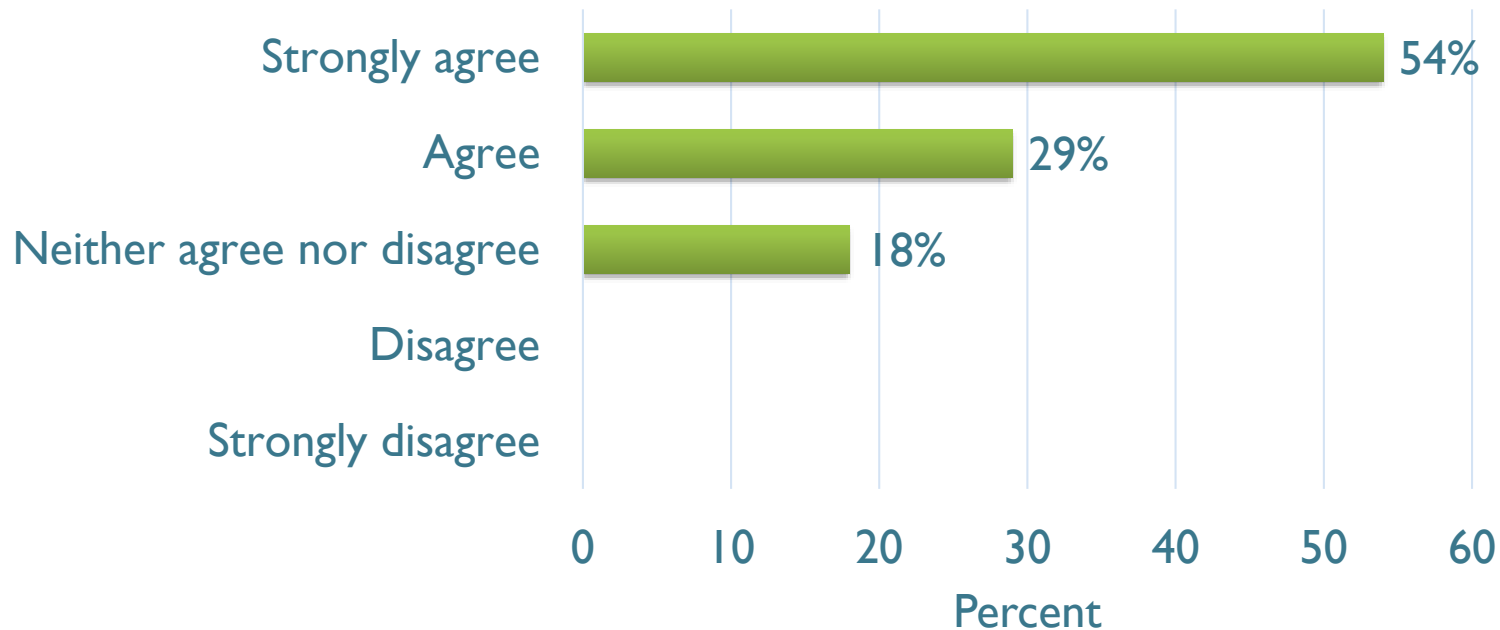


Note: N = 29

# Main takeaway #2

Leaders' opinions: Each Centers' capacity to conduct **effective policy outreach has improved** through training

Participants' responses to: “My organization is more effective at **influencing policy** now than it was prior to PRCI.”

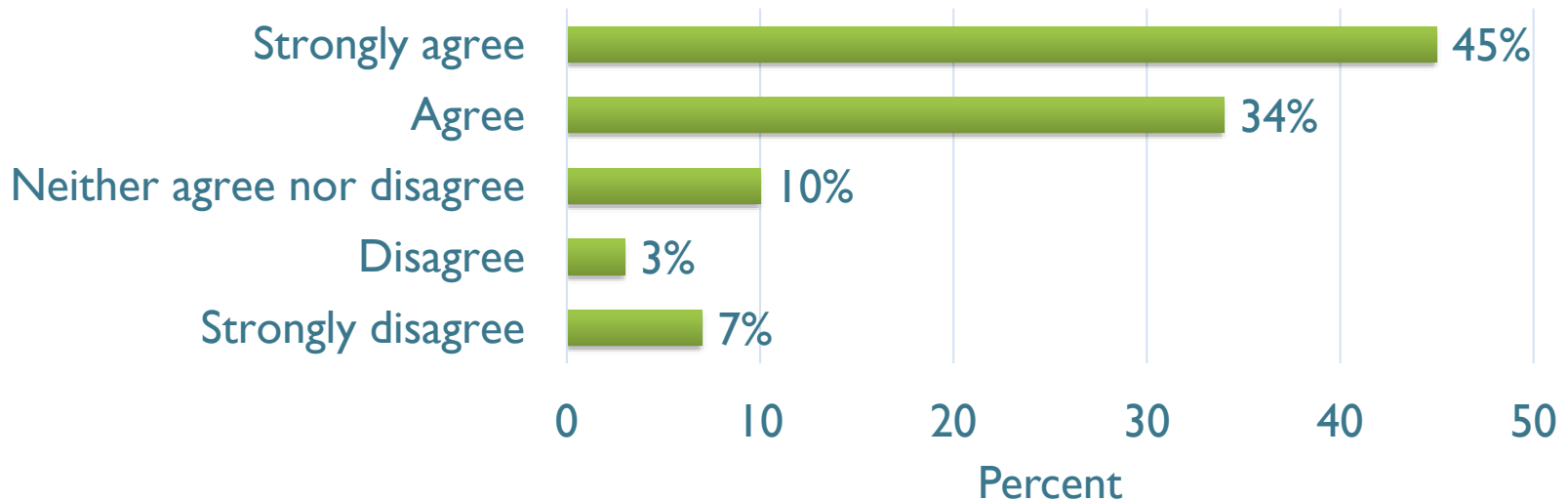


Note: N = 28

# Main takeaway #3

Leaders' opinions: Each Centers' capacity to **train and mentor junior researchers has improved** through training

Participants' responses to: "My organization is **better equipped to train and mentor junior researchers** now than it was prior to PRCI."

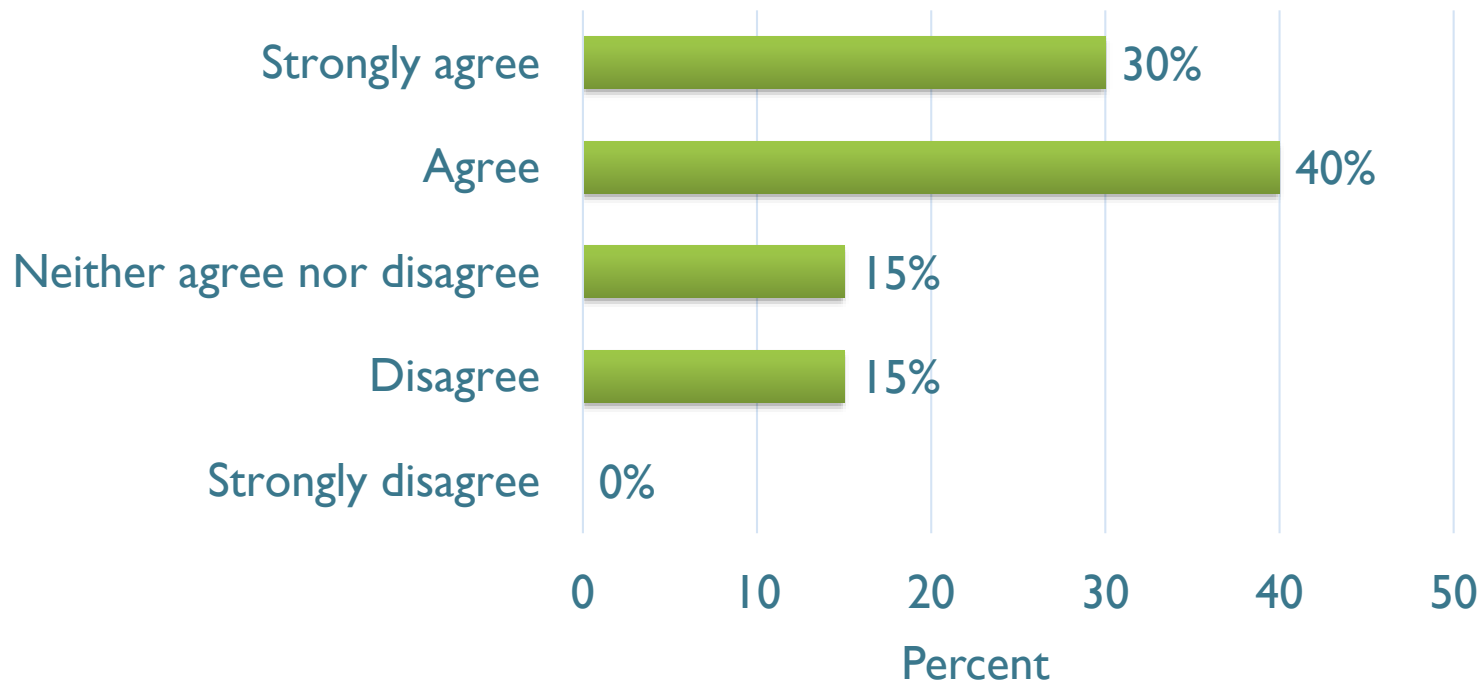


Note: N = 29

# Example

## Integrating gender

Participants' responses to: “I am more confident **integrating gender** in my research and policy outreach now than I was prior to PRCI.”



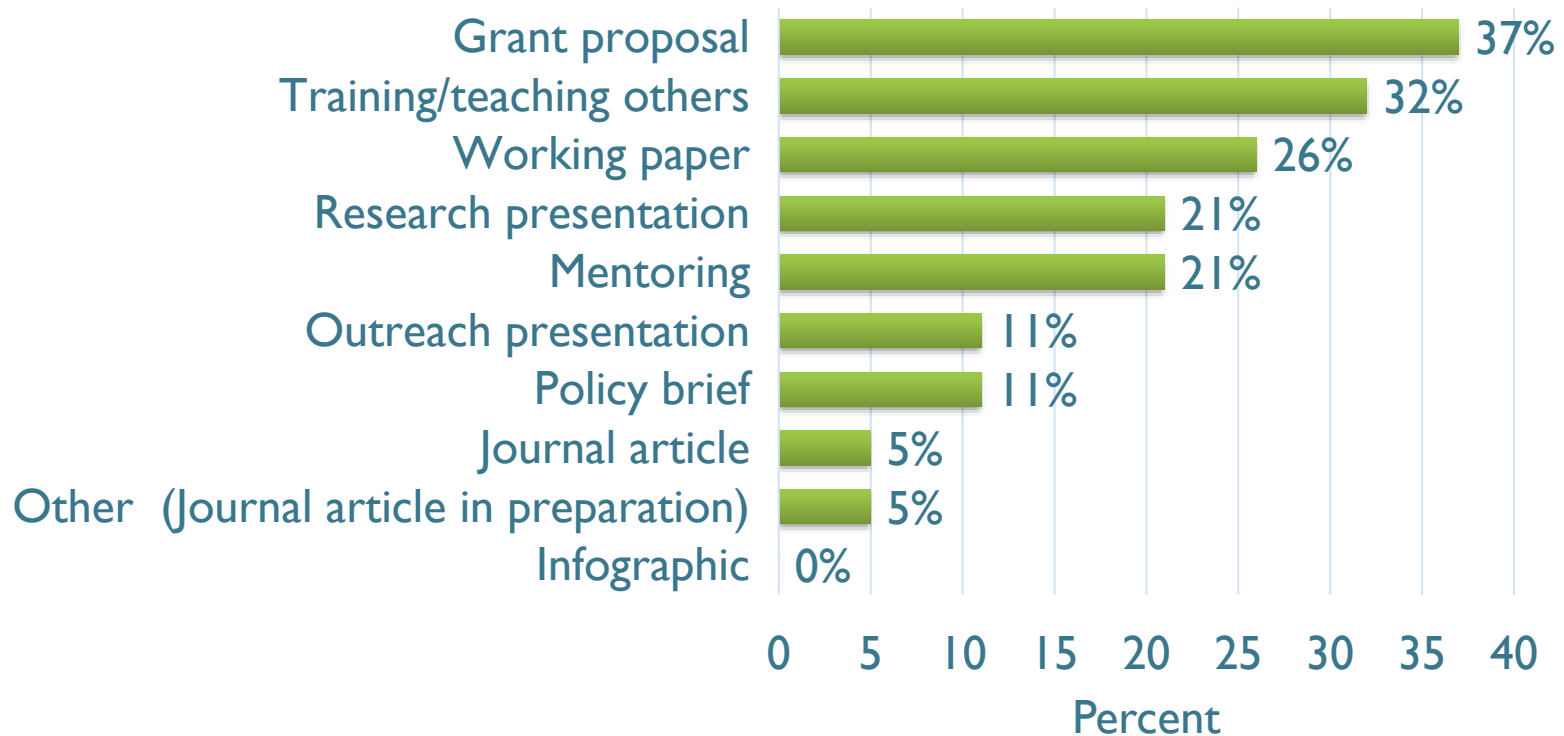
Note: N = 20



# Example

## Use of gender training knowledge/skills

Participants' responses to: “Have you used knowledge or skills from the gender-related training(s) in any of the following?”



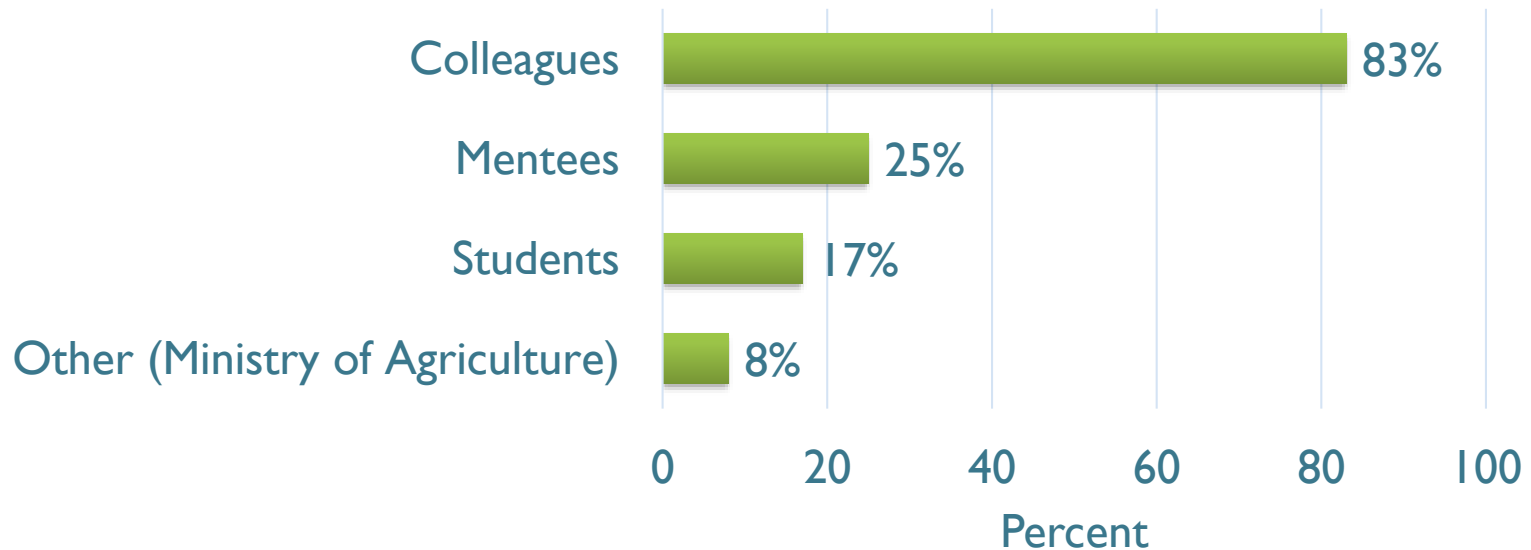
Note: N = 19

# Example

## Sharing of gender training materials

- Of the 20 respondents attending one or more gender trainings, 60% (12) shared some gender training materials with others

Participants' responses to: "With whom did you share the materials?"



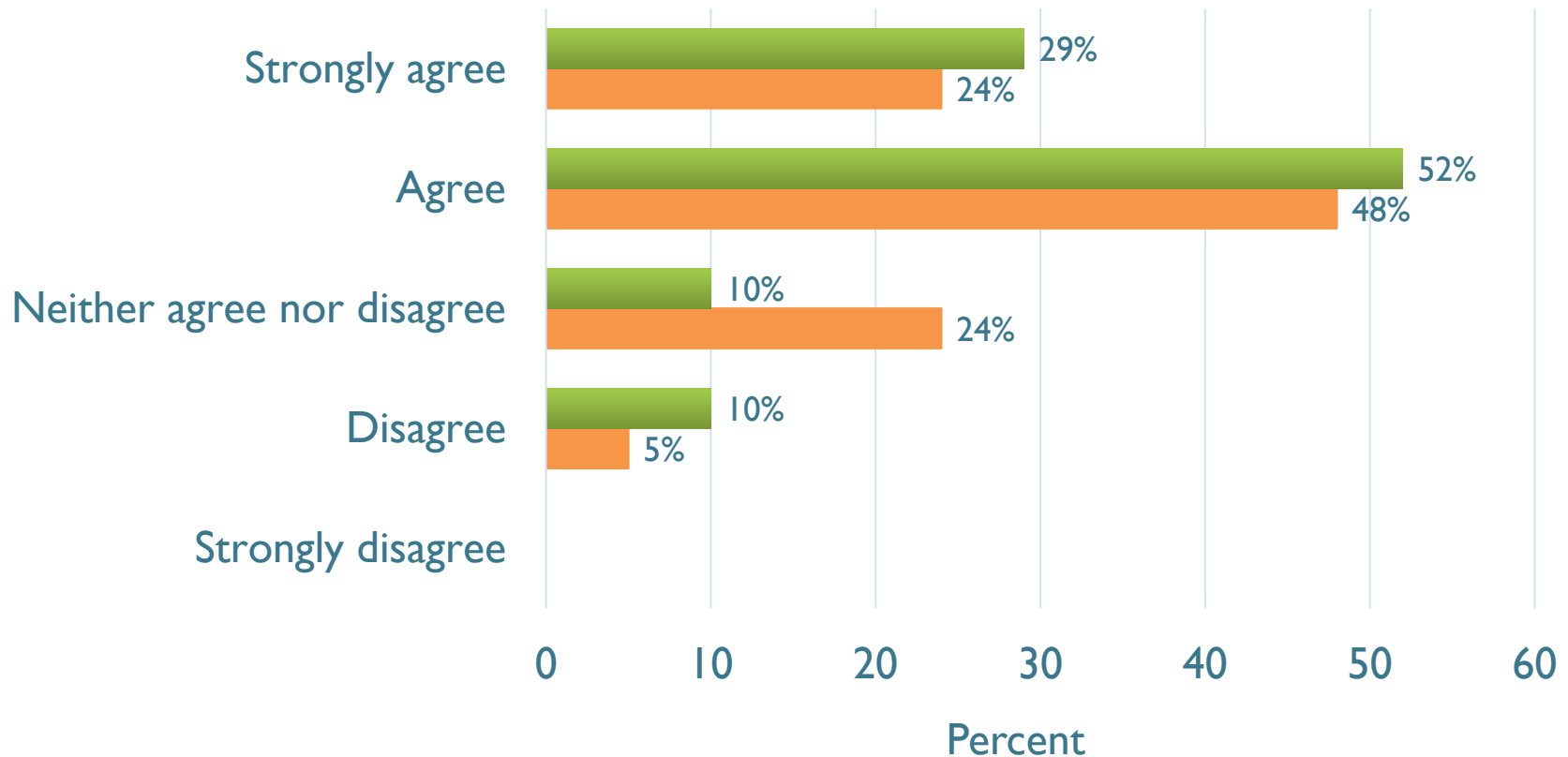
Note: N = 12

# Example

## Policy dialogue & communications (R2P)

Participants' responses to: "I am more confident **influencing policy dialogue** [designing effective policy communication outputs] now than I was prior to PRCI."

■ Influencing policy dialogue ■ Designing effective policy communication outputs

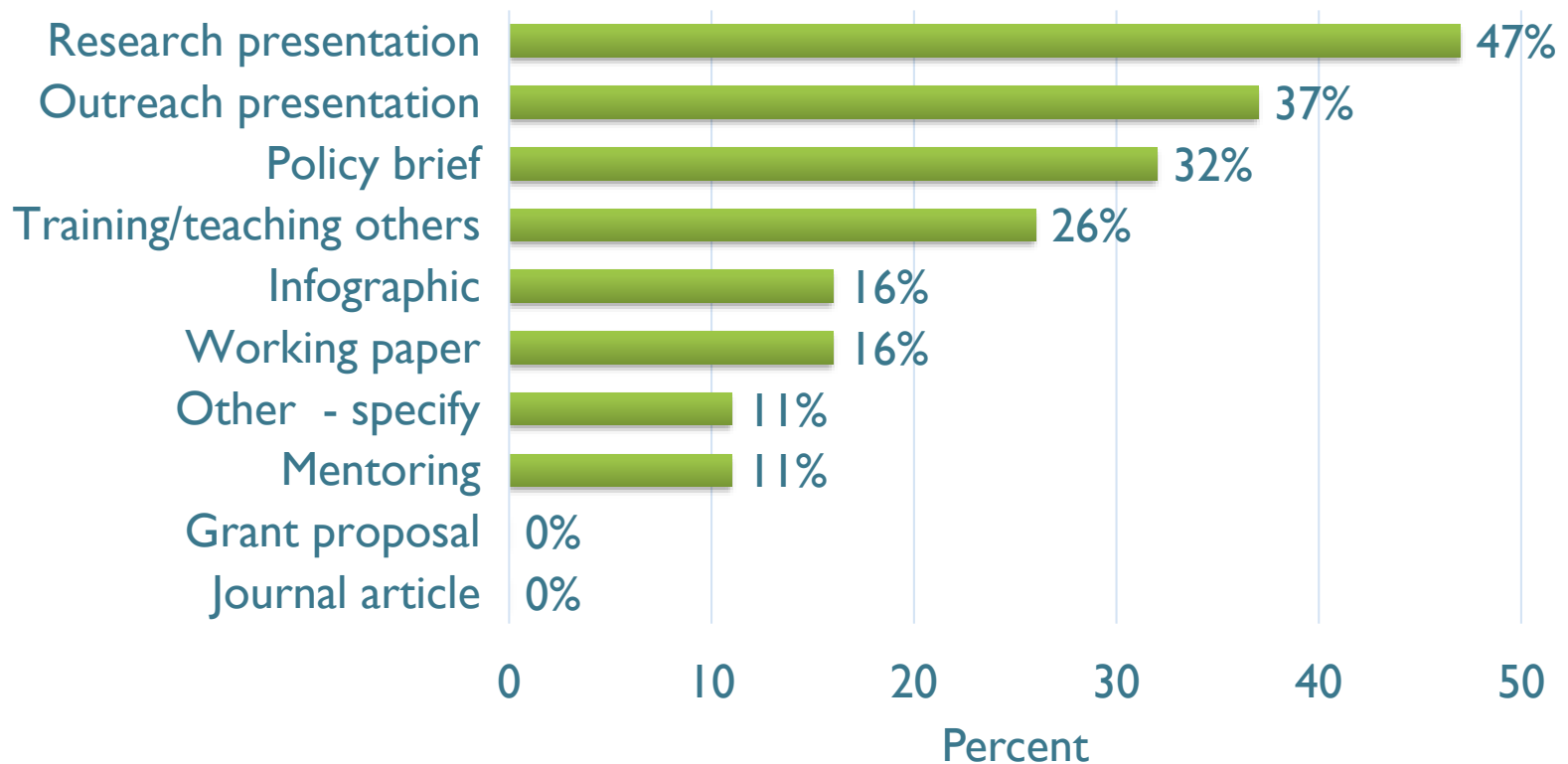


Note: N = 21

# Example

## Use of R2P training knowledge/skills

Participants' responses to: "Have you used knowledge or skills from the R2P-related training(s) in any of the following?"



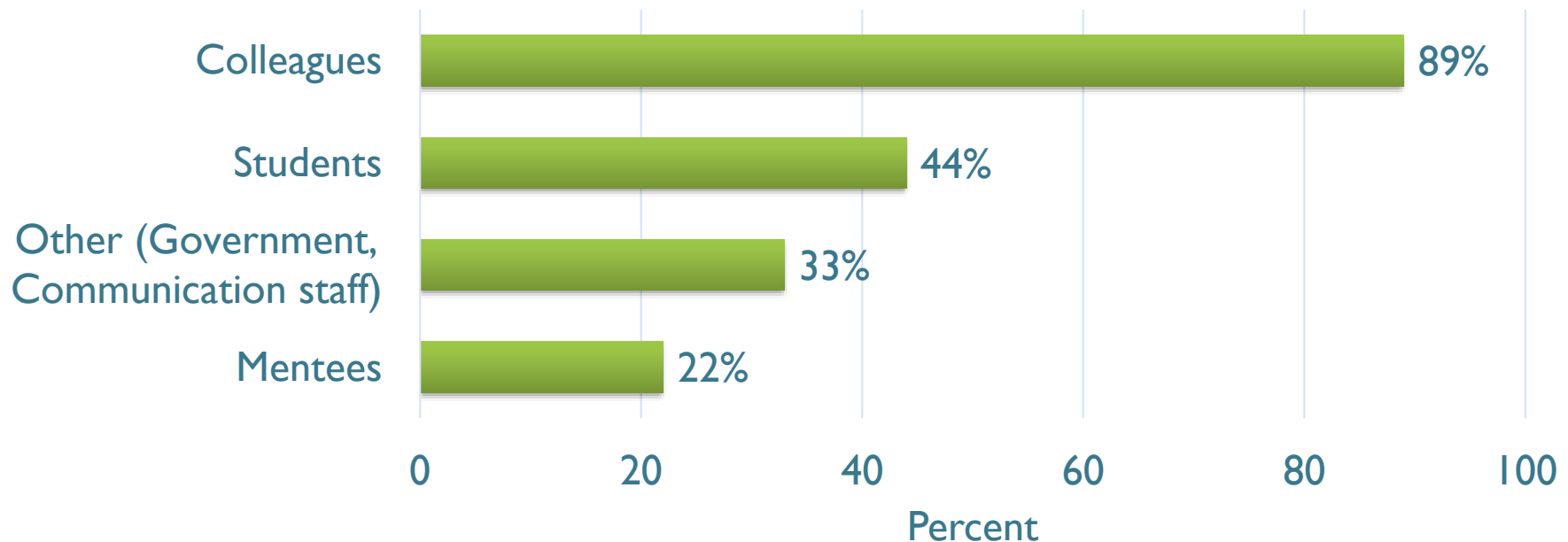
Note: N = 19

# Example

## Sharing of R2P training materials

- Of the 23 respondents attending one or more R2P trainings, 43% (10) shared some R2P training materials with others

Participants' responses to: "With whom did you share the materials?"



Note: N=9 (plus one non-response)

# Other key takeaways

(per Core Center leaders)

- Co-trainers approach created opportunities for the Centers to better appreciate their colleagues' expertise
- The technical trainings:
  - Increased some Core Center team members' confidence
  - Inspired PiLAF's Stata training
  - Opened up new opportunities  
(e.g., speaking invitation, networking)
- The econometrics and Stata training materials were useful for onboarding new researchers

# Other key takeaways

(per survey respondents)

- A large majority of respondents that attended relevant trainings ( $\geq 75\%$ ) indicated that their skills in the following areas had improved relative to before PRCI:
  - Writing
  - Navigating the peer review process
  - Research transparency and reproducibility
  - Avoiding unintentional plagiarism

# Next Steps:

## Changes to consider going forward

- Better synchronize trainings with trainees' work schedules
- Create space for training participants to use skills/tools in their applied research/outreach.
  - (e.g., Dedicated work session with technical support to start infographic or QGIS map)
- Longer training sessions
- A series of trainings (from basics to advanced)
- More in-person trainings
- Incentives (i.e., certificates)
- Address poor internet connectivity experienced by some Centers
- Continue to involve Core Center co- or lead trainers



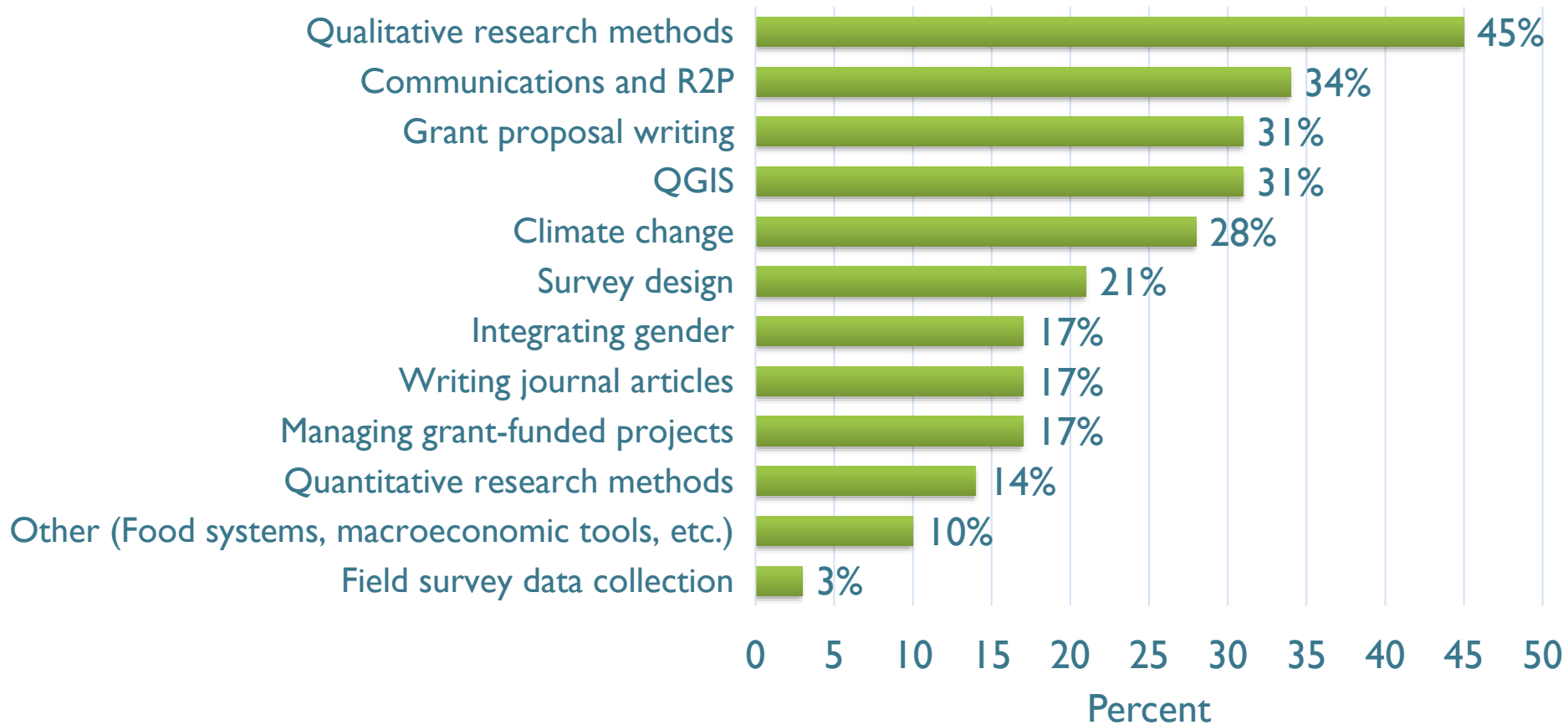
# Next Steps:

## Topics suggested by Center leaders

- A series of trainings on integrating gender
- How to use the latest technologies in research (e.g., Chat GPT, machine learning)
- More trainings on QGIS and spatial analysis
- Micro-simulation and scenario building analysis (e.g., CGE models)

# Next Steps: Topics suggested by training participants

Responses to: “Which topic(s) would you like to see more training offered? (Select up to 3)”



Note: N = 29

# Thank you!

## Questions?

We are deeply grateful to Saweda Liverpool-Tasie, Hanna Carlson, Paul Samboko, Ryan Highfill, Ruth Meizen-Dick, Elizabeth Bryan, Kristin Davis, Dave Tschirley, the STAAARS+ team, and all trainers and training participants for their contributions to the PRCI-Africa technical training program.



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<https://www.canr.msu.edu/prci>



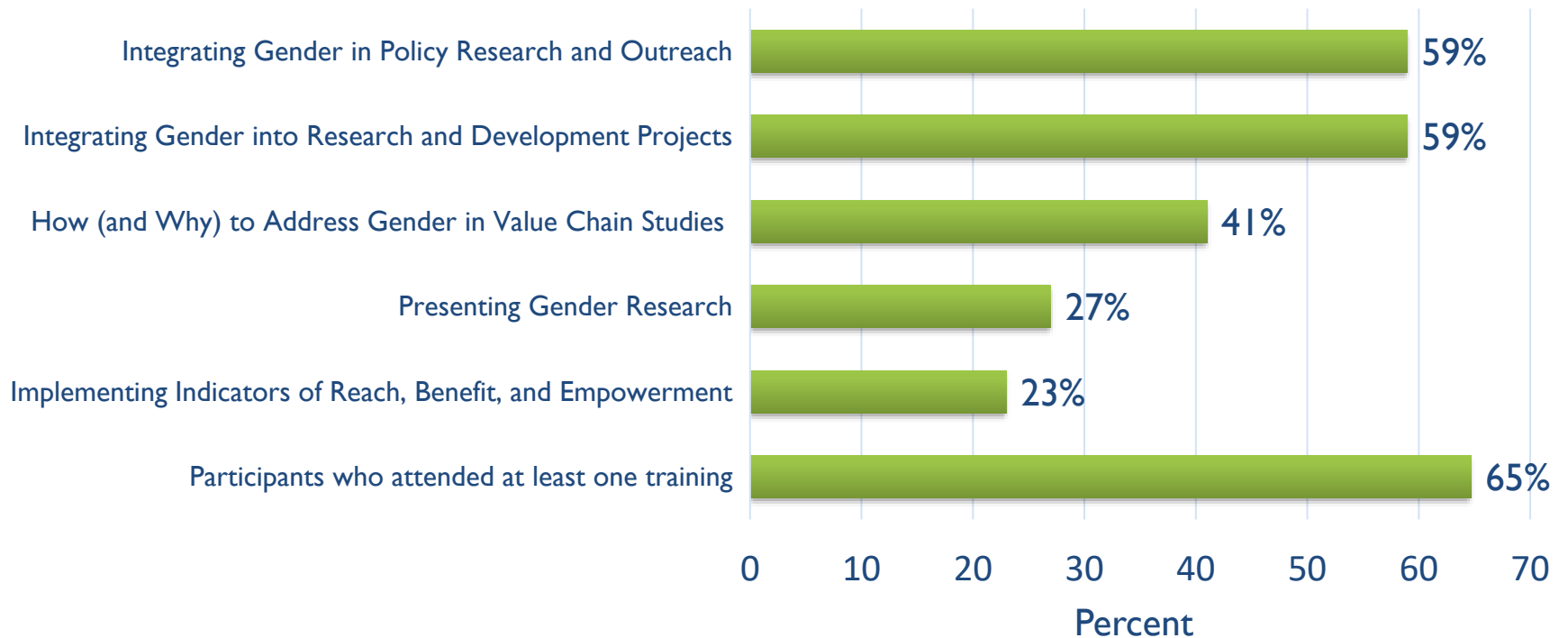
# **EXTRA SLIDES**

# Broad training areas

1. Gender
2. Communications and Research-to-Policy (R2P)
3. Research methods
4. QGIS
5. Writing journal articles
6. Research ethics and transparency
7. Grant proposal writing

# I. Gender-related trainings

- **Topics that respondents participated in (or watched the recording of):**

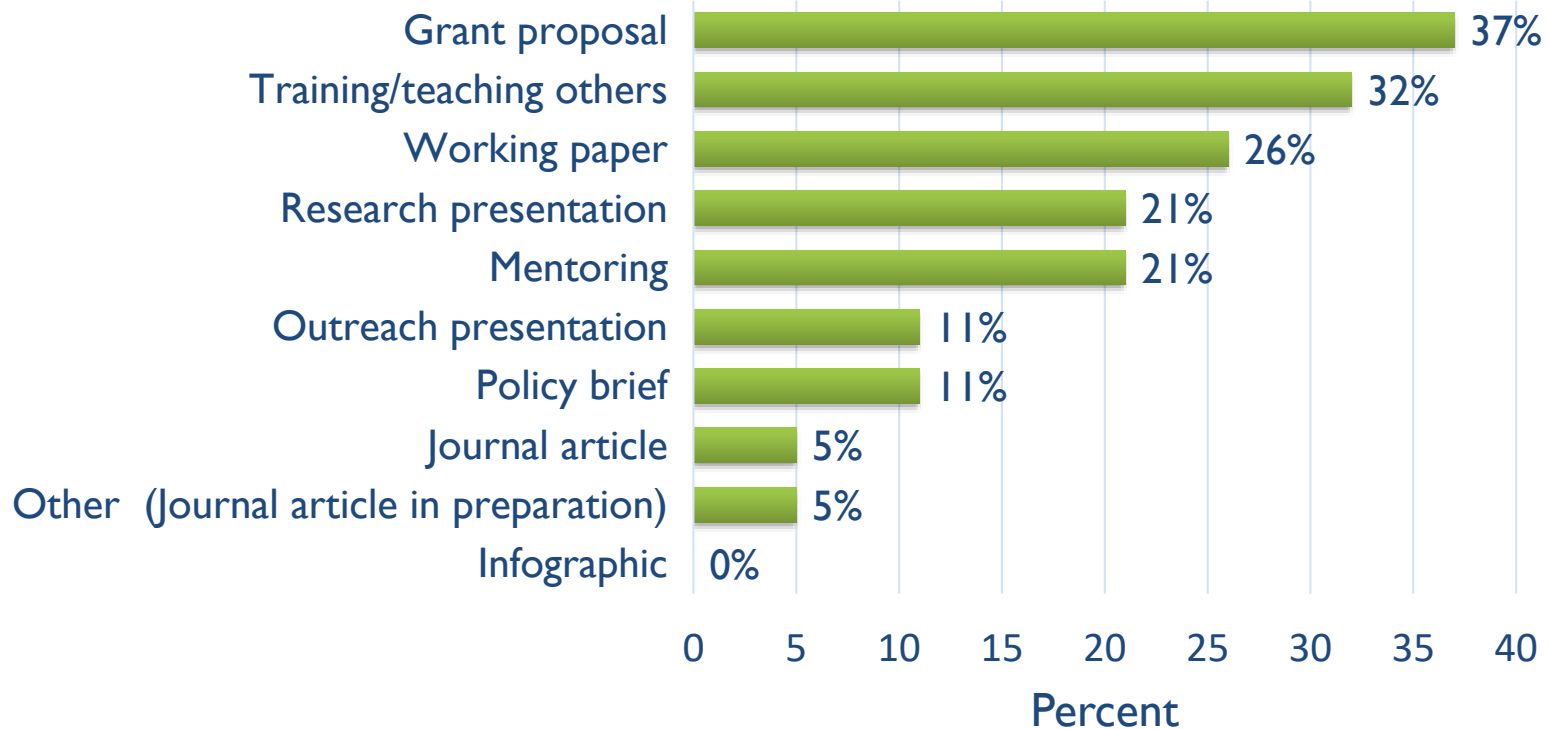


Notes: N = 22



# I. Gender-related trainings

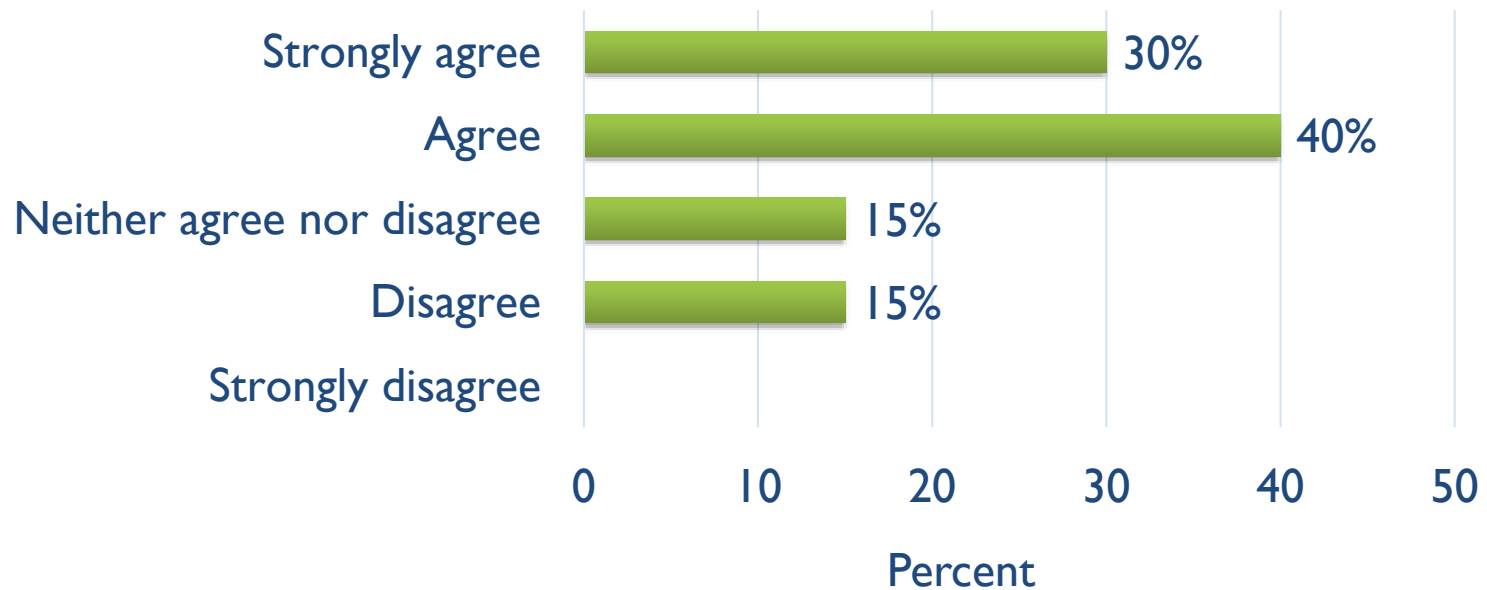
- **Have you used knowledge or skills from the gender-related training(s) in any of the followings? (Select all that apply)**



Note: N = 19

# I. Gender-related trainings

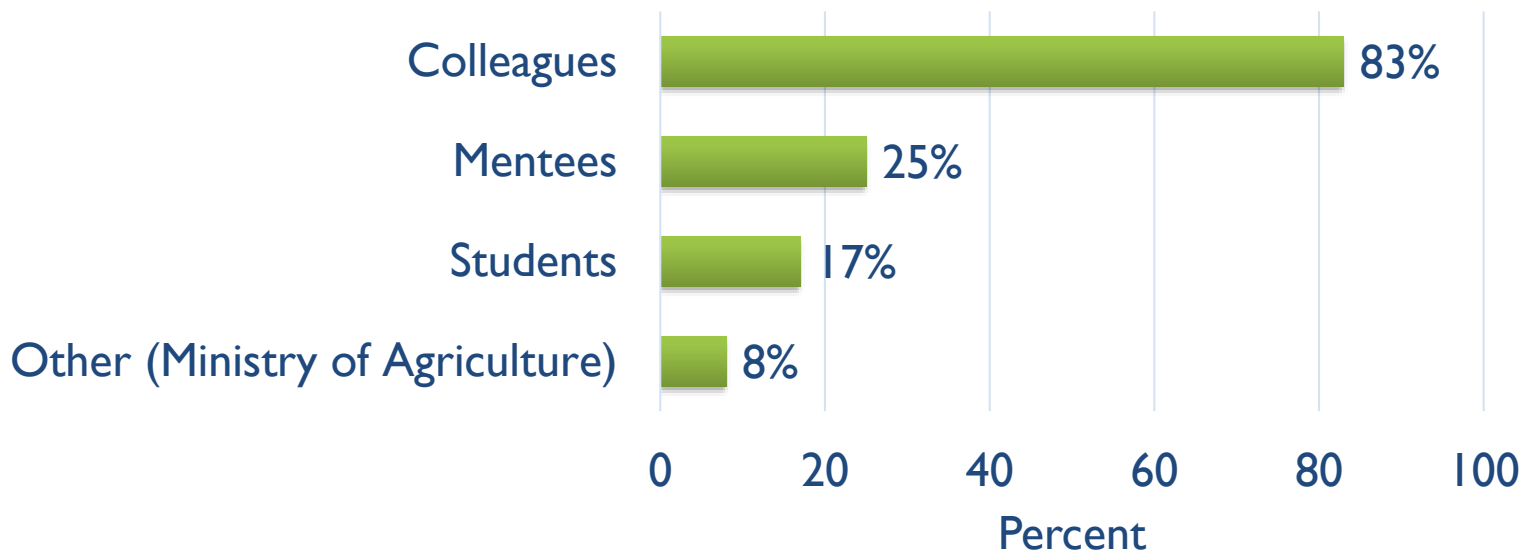
- I am more confident **INTEGRATING GENDER IN MY RESEARCH** and **POLICY OUTREACH** now than I was prior to PRCI (%):



Note: N = 19

# I. Gender-related trainings

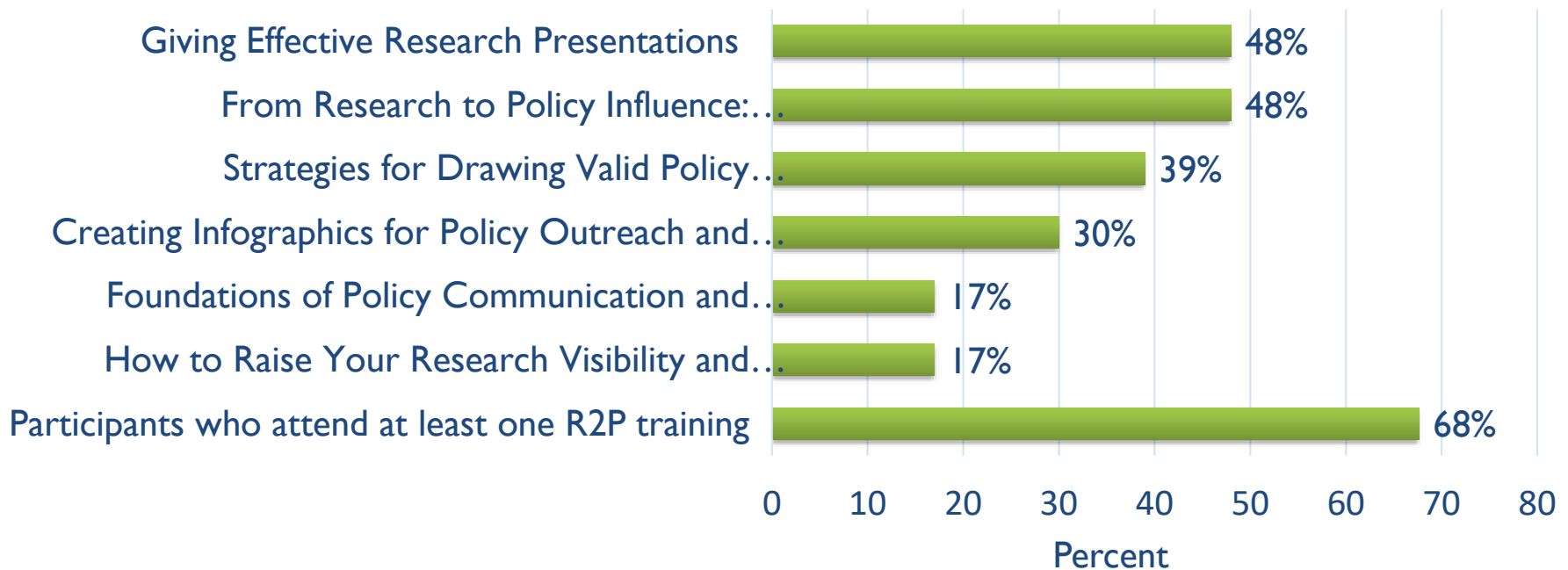
- **20 of 34 respondents** attended one or more gender trainings
- Of those 20, **60% (12) shared** some gender-related training materials with others
- **With whom did you share the materials? (Select all that apply)**



Note: N = 12

## 2. Research-to-Policy (R2P)

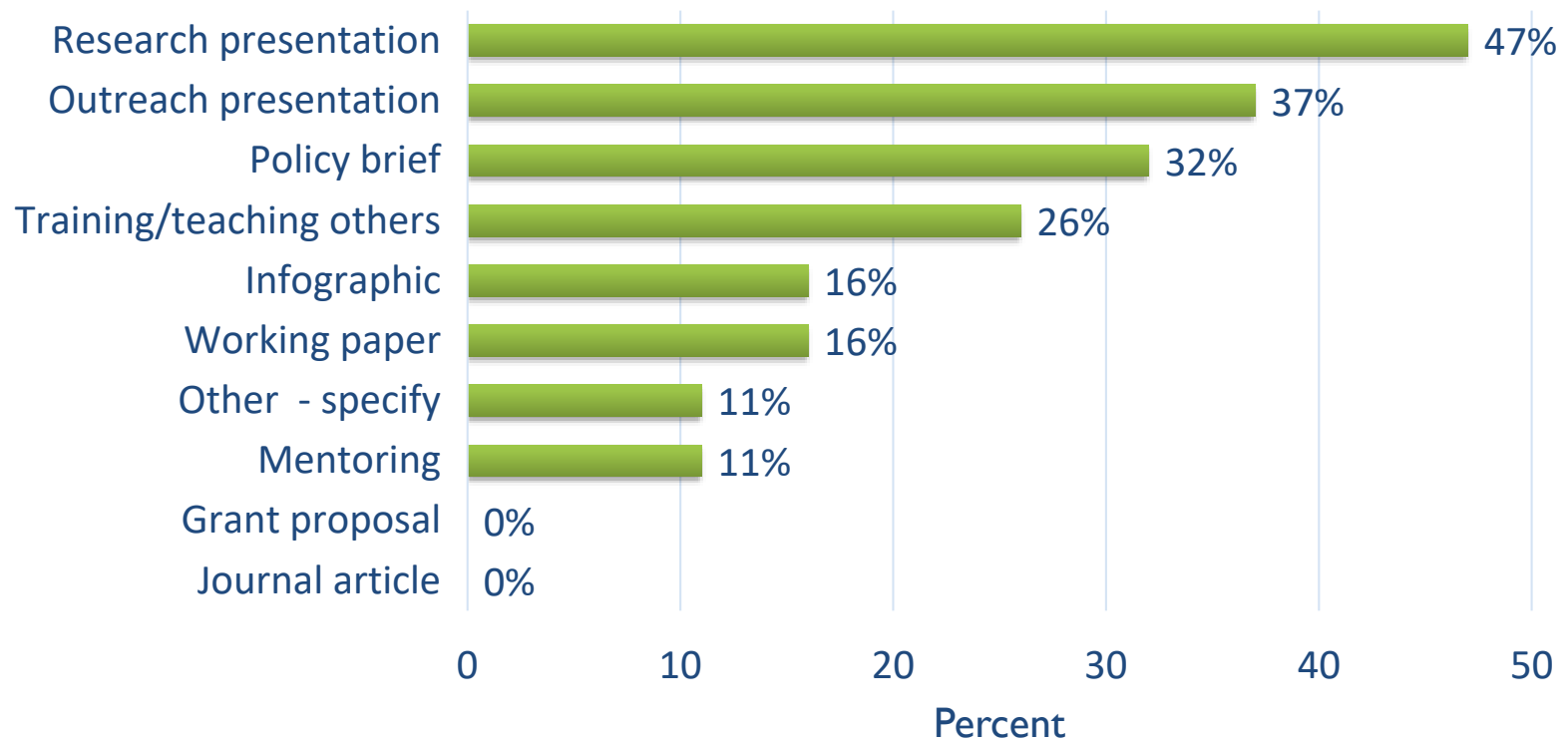
- **Topics that respondents participated in (or watched the recording of):**



Note: N = 23

## 2. Research-to-Policy (R2P)

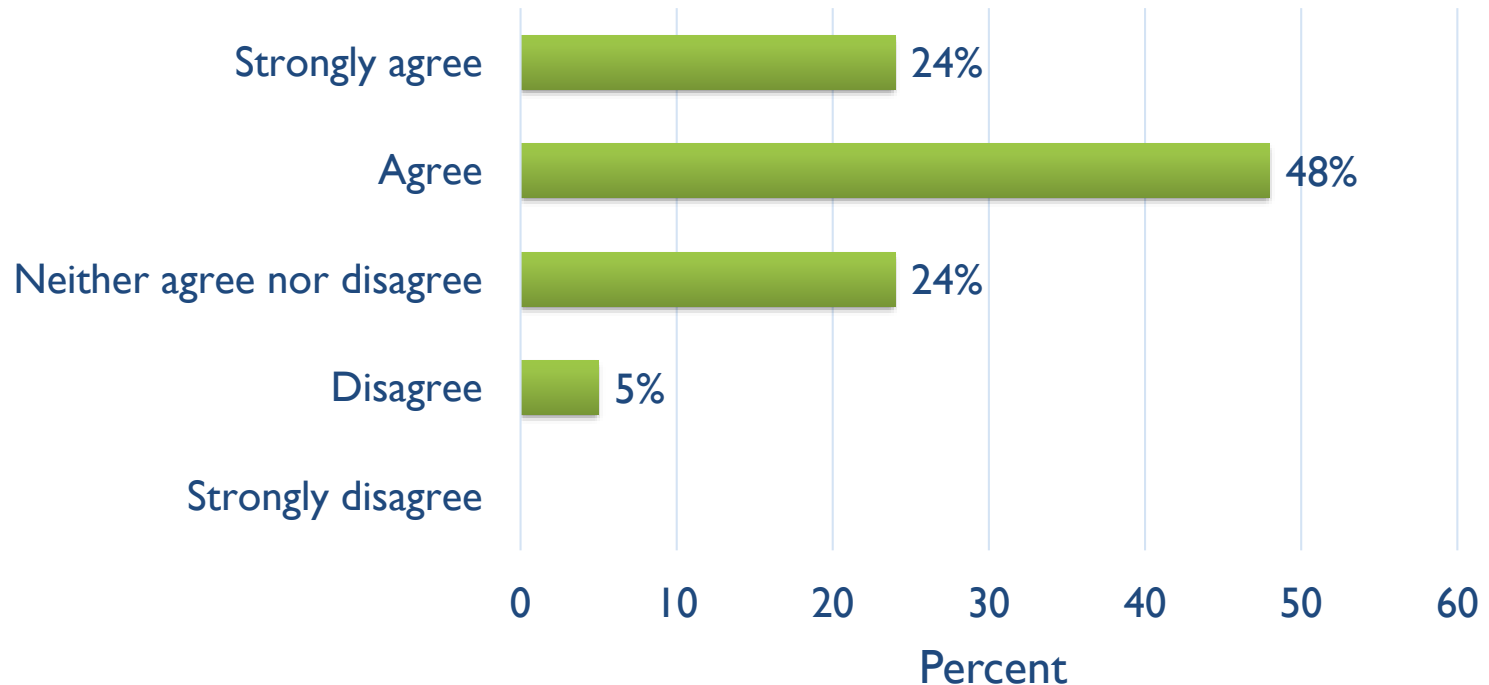
- **Have you used knowledge or skills from the R2P-related training(s) in any of the followings? (Select all that apply)**



Note: N = 19

## 2. Research-to-Policy (R2P)

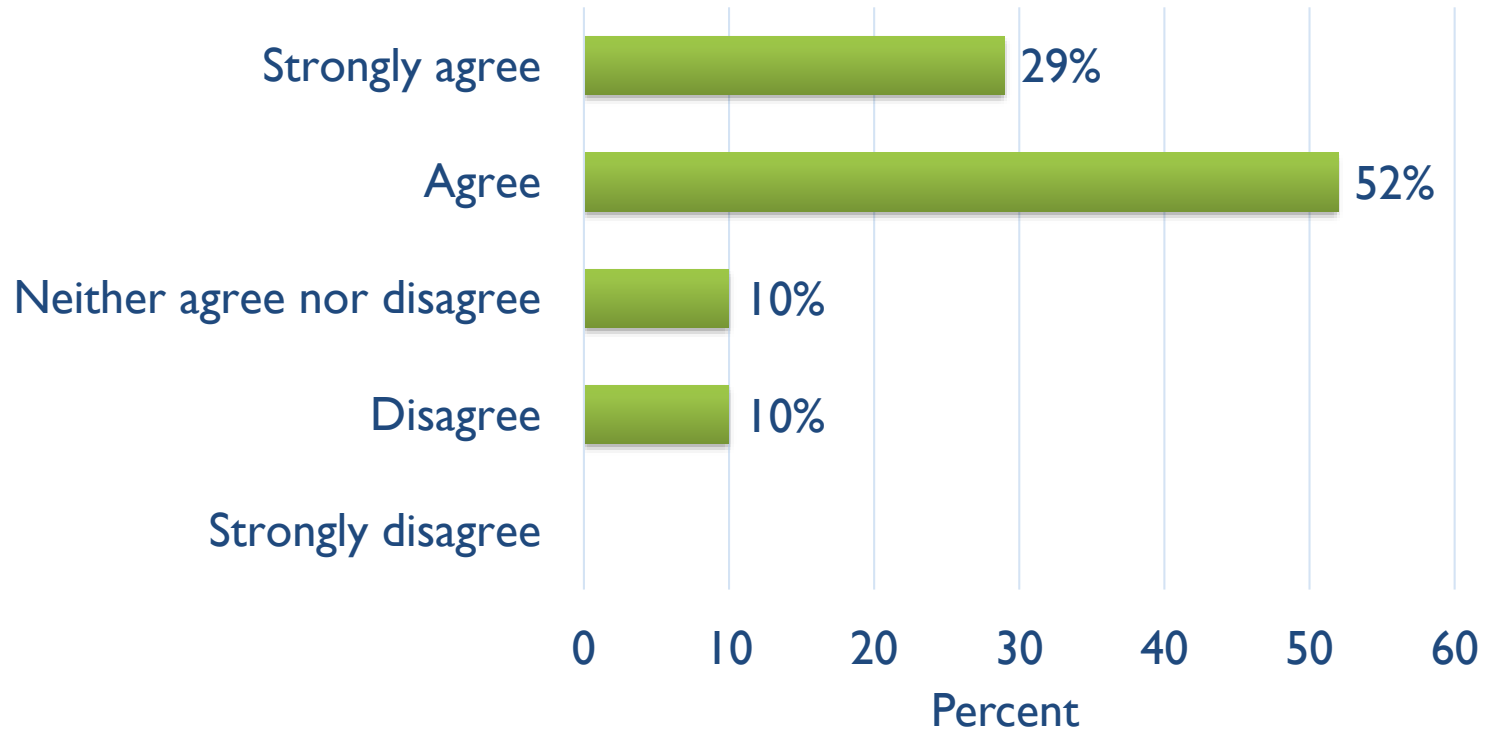
- I am more confident **DESIGNING EFFECTIVE POLICY COMMUNICATION OUTPUTS** now than I was prior to **PRCI**:



Note: N = 21

## 2. Research-to-Policy (R2P)

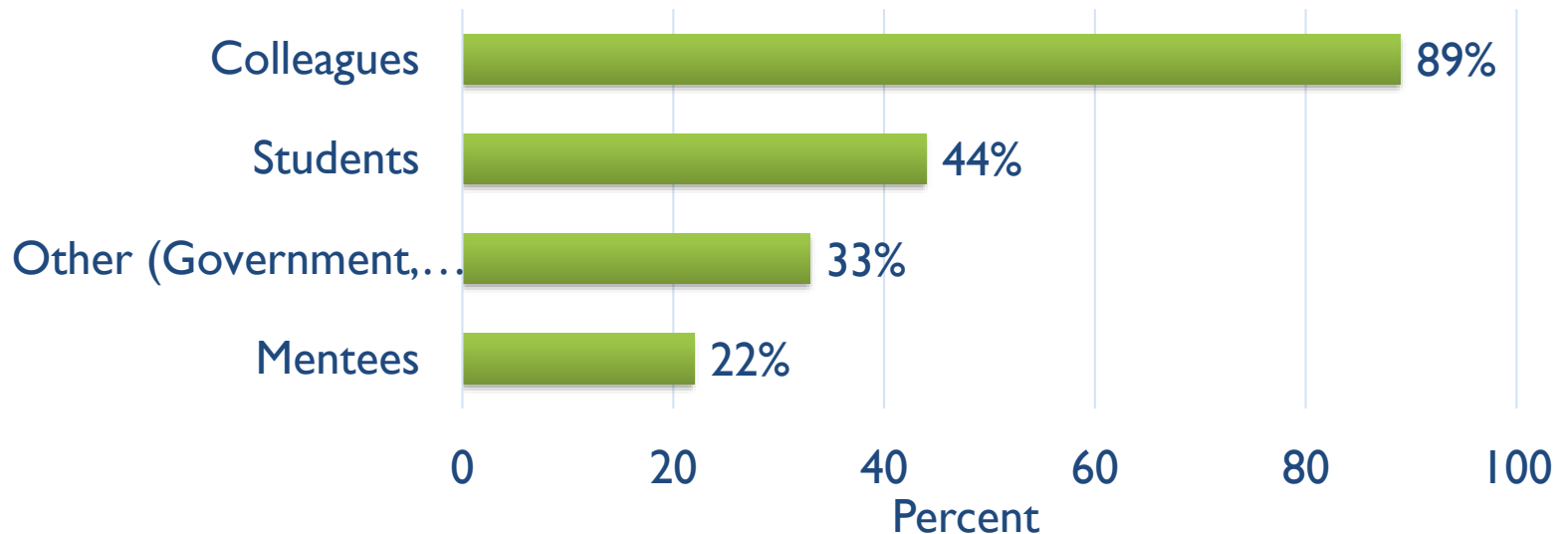
- I am more confident **INFLUENCING POLICY DIALOGUE** now than I was prior to PRCI:



Note: N = 21

## 2. Research-to-Policy (R2P)

- **23 of 34 respondents** attended one or more R2P trainings
- Of those 23, **43% (10) shared** some R2P-related training materials with others
- **With whom did you share the materials? (Select all that apply)**



Note: N = 9

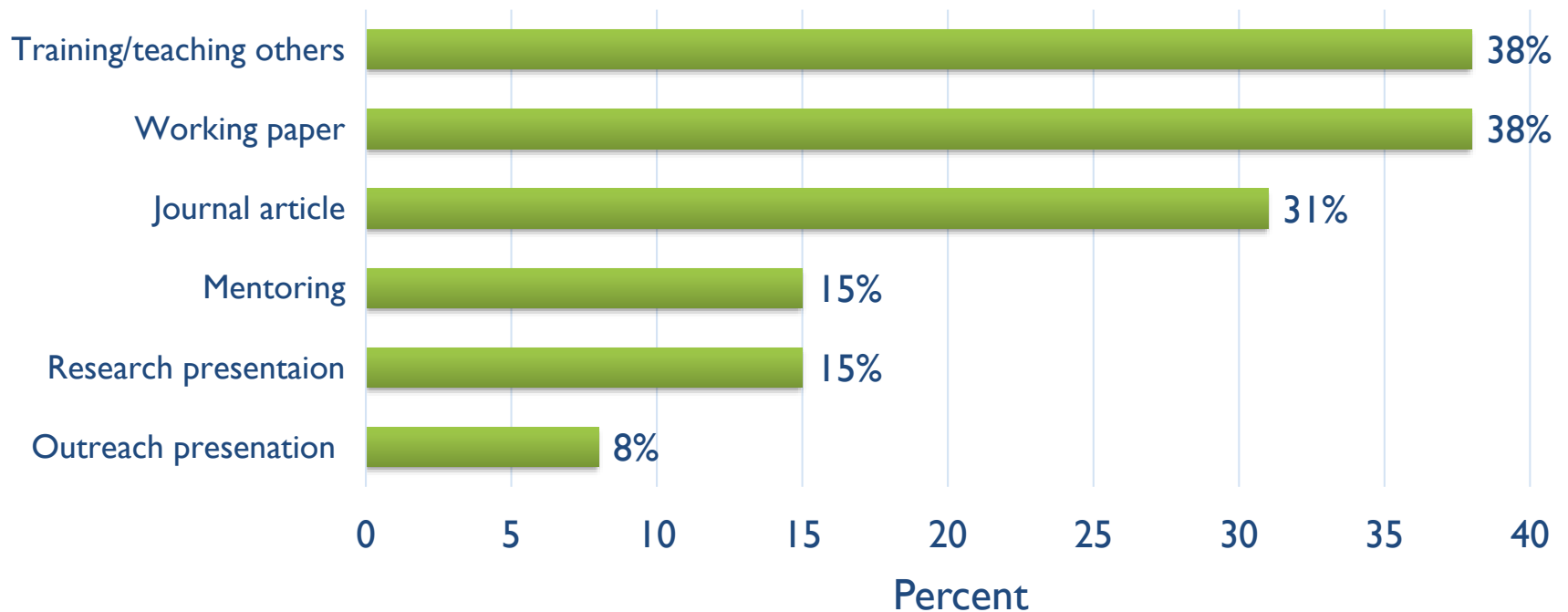


# 3. Research Methods

- **Topics that respondents participated in (or watched the recording of):**
  - **Stata basics: Working with Complex Survey Data (74%)**
  - **Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) Regression (53%)**
  - **Impact Evaluation: Introduction and Methods Overview (53%)**
  - Binary Response Models (Linear Probability, Probit, and Logit Models) (47%)
  - All you Need to Know to Get Started with Stata Part I (37%)
  - Double Hurdle Models (32%)
  - Testing and Correcting for Endogeneity in Linear Models (26%)
  - Linear Panel Data Models (26%)
  - Integrating Mixed Methods in Research (26%)
  - Tobit Models (21%)
  - Designing and Implementing Agri-Food Value Chain Surveys (16%)
- **At least 56% of respondents attended at least one session**

# 3. Research Methods

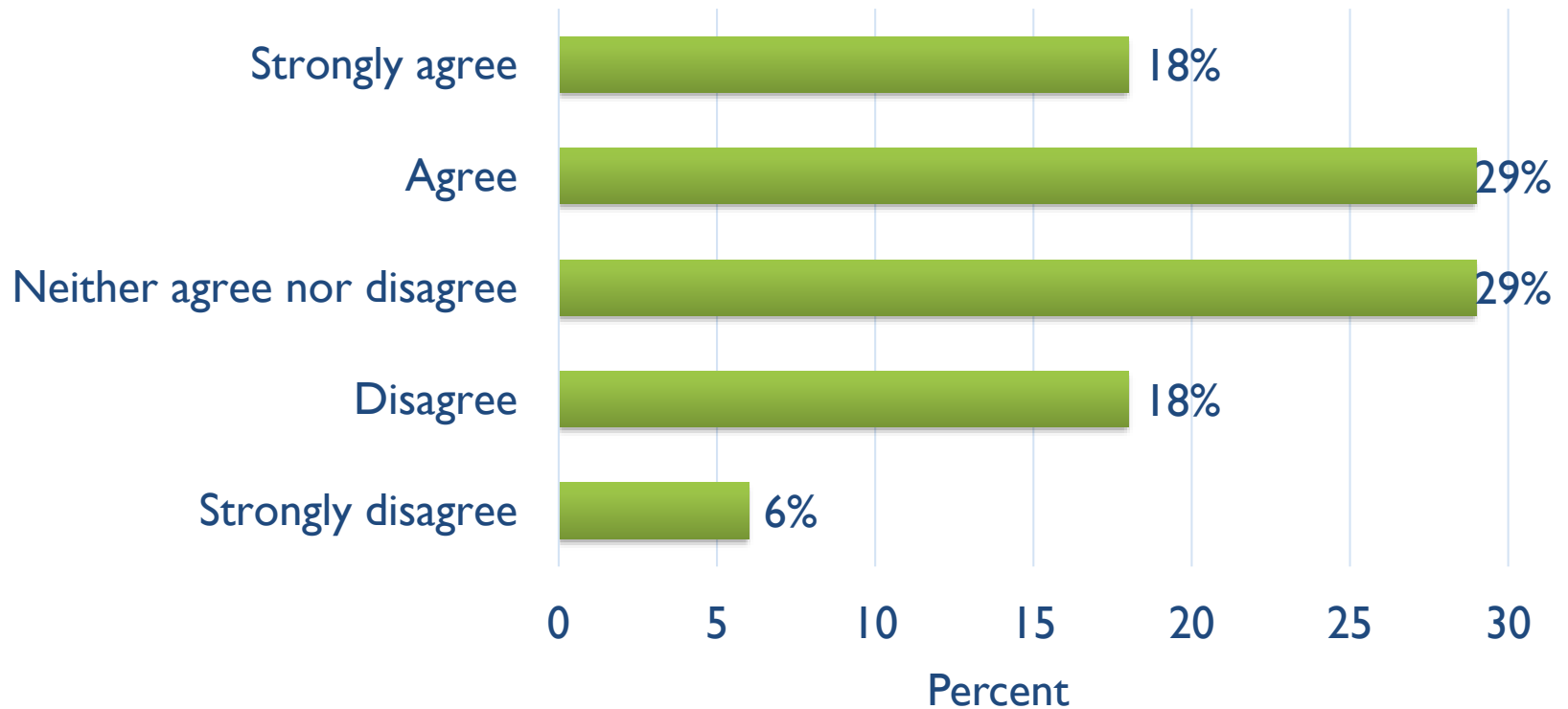
- **Have you used knowledge or skills from the research method training(s) in any of the followings? (Select all that apply)**



Note: N = 13

### 3. Research Methods

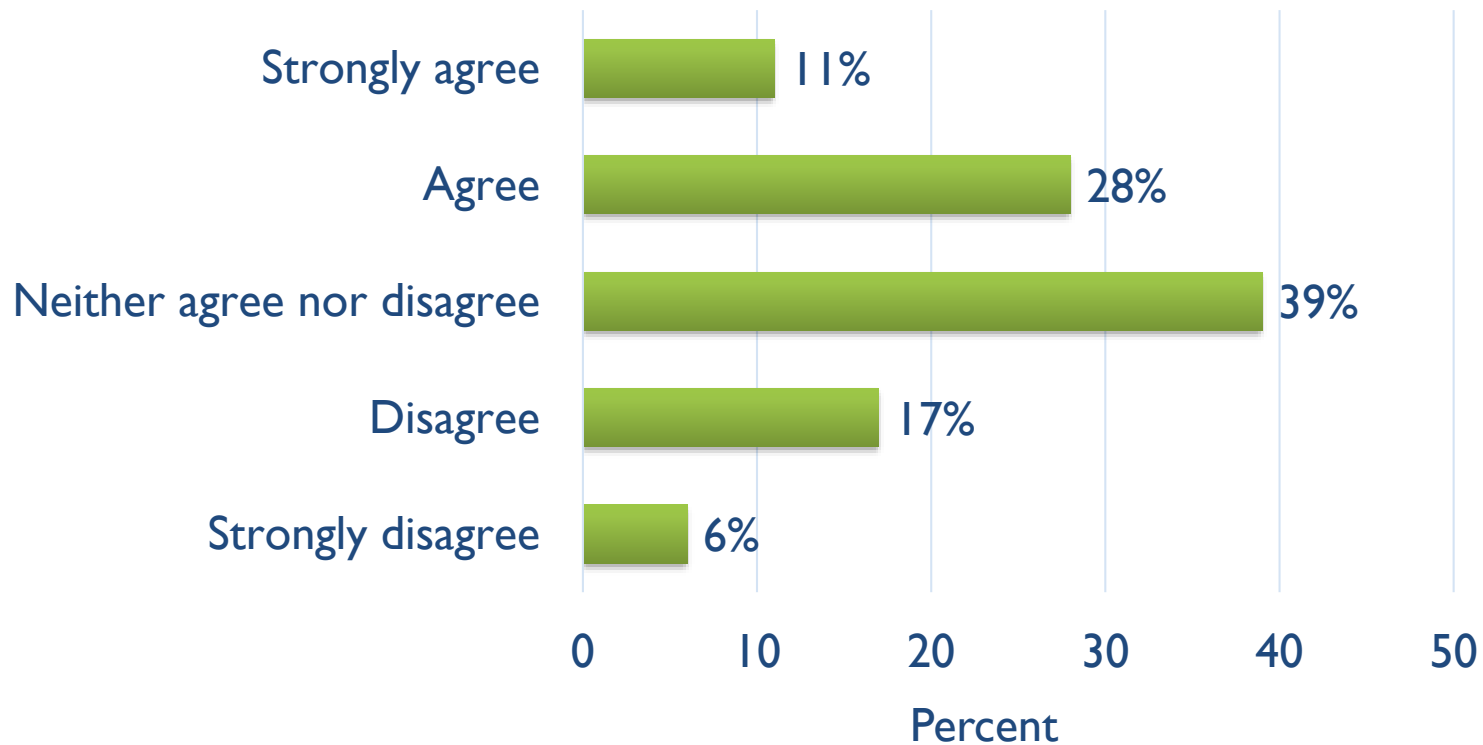
- I am more confident **WORKING WITH DATA IN STATA** now than I was prior to **PRCI**:



Note: N = 17

### 3. Research Methods

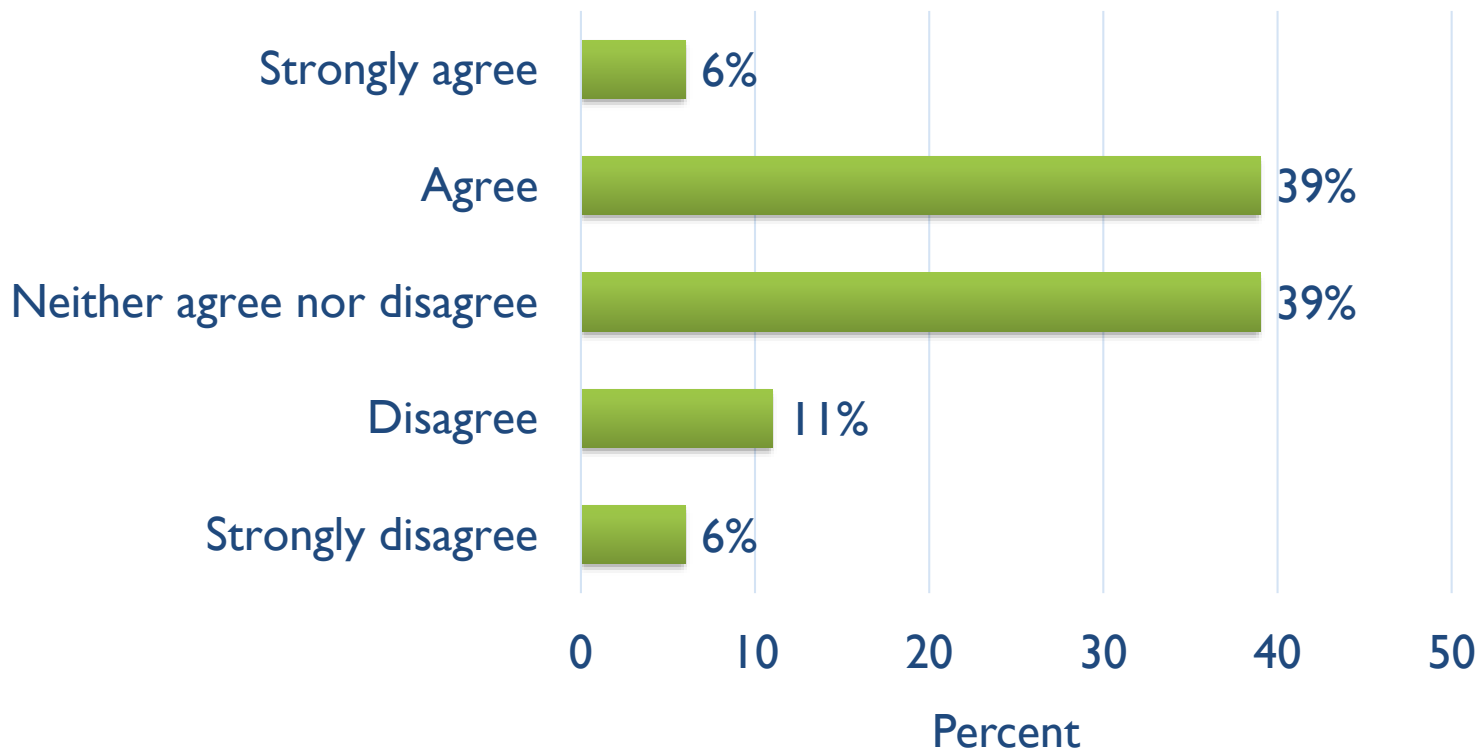
- I am more confident understanding or using **ECONOMETRIC METHODS** now than I was prior to **PRCI**:



Note: N = 18

### 3. Research Methods

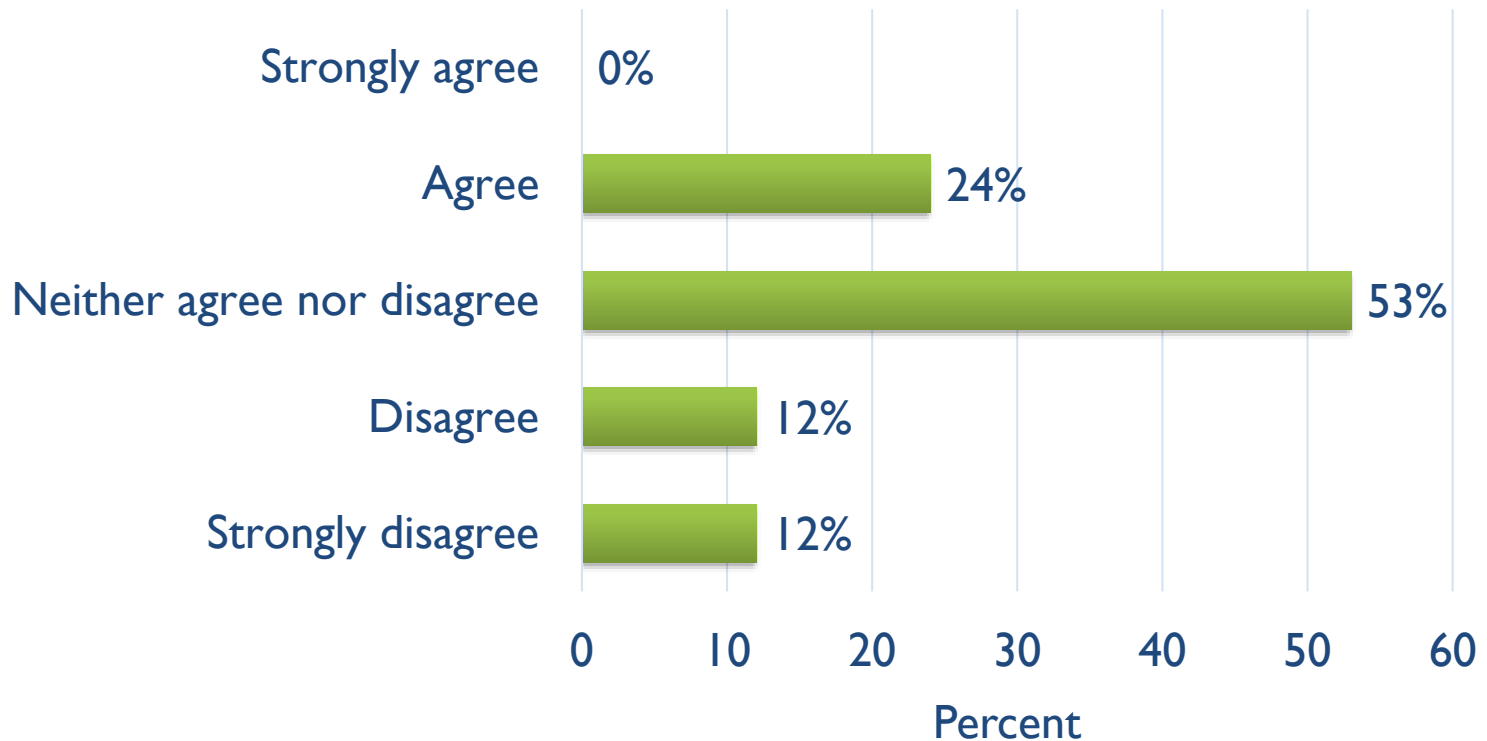
- I am more confident understanding or using **IMPACT EVALUATION METHODS** now than I was prior to **PRCI**:



Note: N = 18

### 3. Research Methods

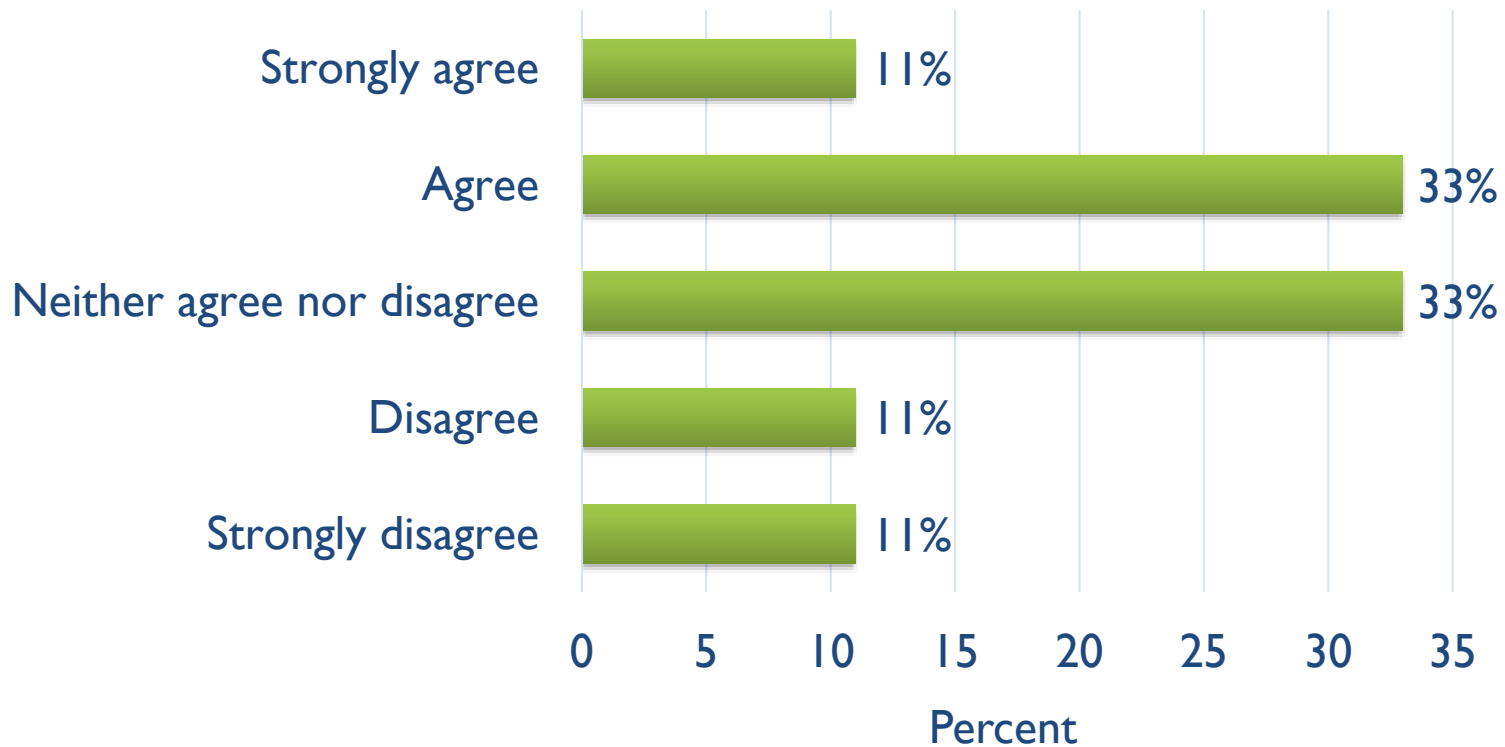
- I am more confident understanding or using **LINEAR PANEL DATA MODELS** now than I was prior to **PRCI**:



Note: N = 17

### 3. Research Methods

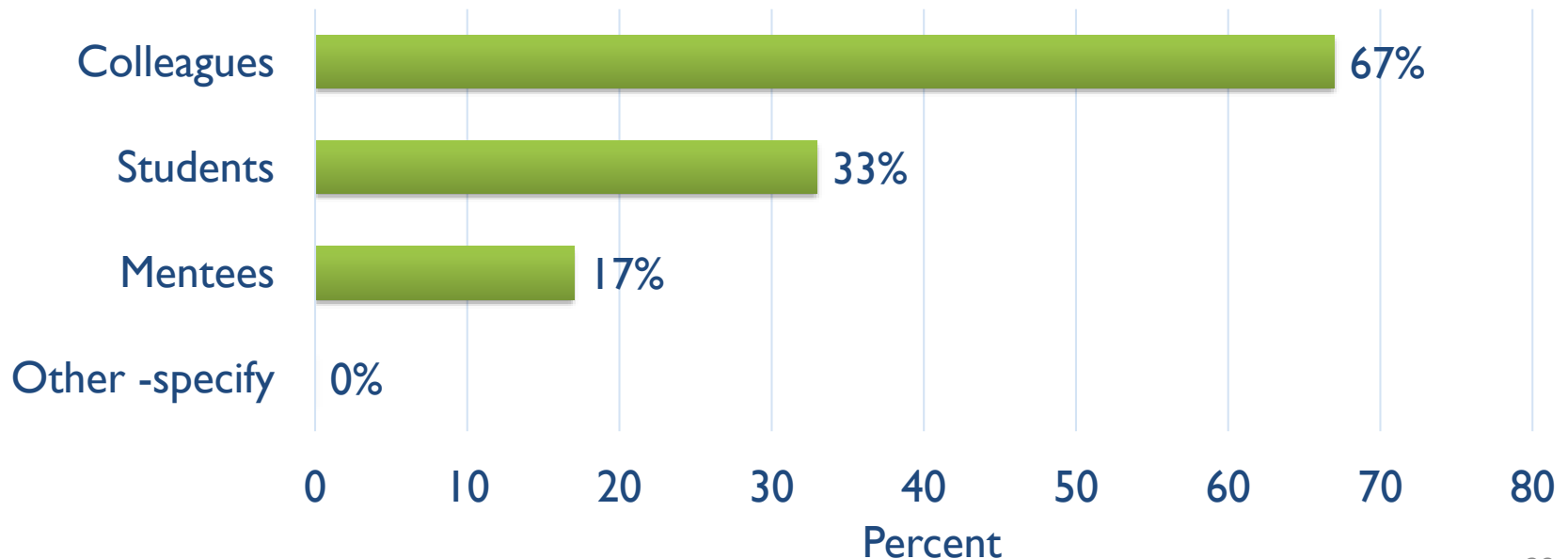
- I am more confident understanding or using **QUALITATIVE METHODS** and/or **MIXED METHODS** now than I was prior to **PRCI**:



Note: N = 18

### 3. Research Methods

- **19 of 34 respondents** attended one or more research method trainings
- Of those 19, **32% (6)** shared some research method training materials with others
- **With whom did you share the materials? (Select all that apply)**

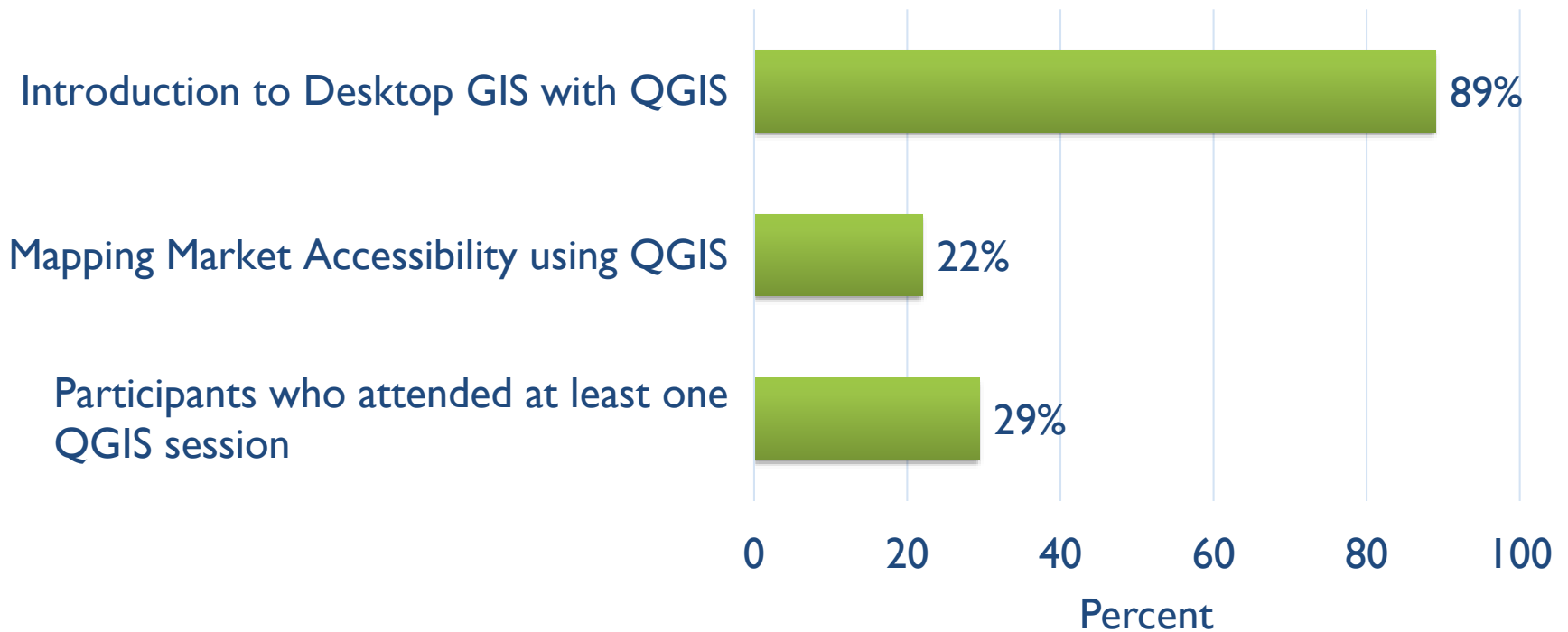


Note: N = 18



# 4. QGIS

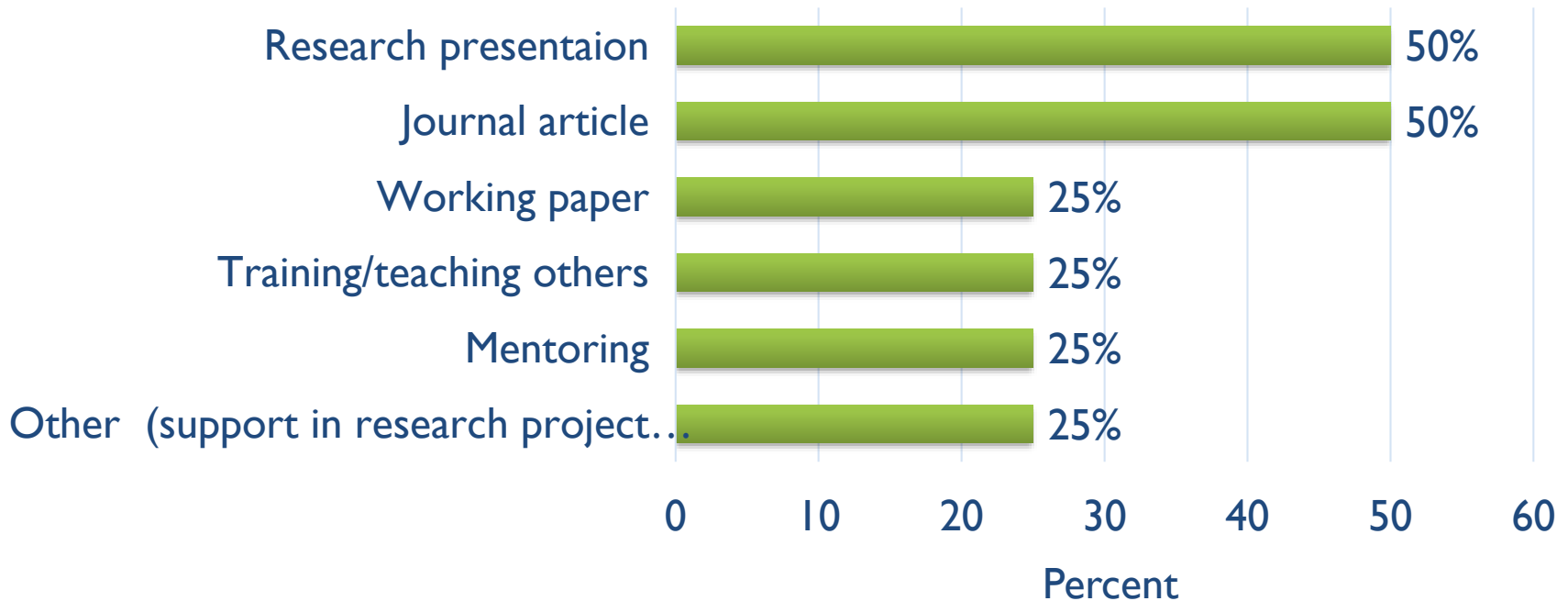
- **Topics that respondents participated in (or watched the recording of):**



Note: N = 10

# 4. QGIS

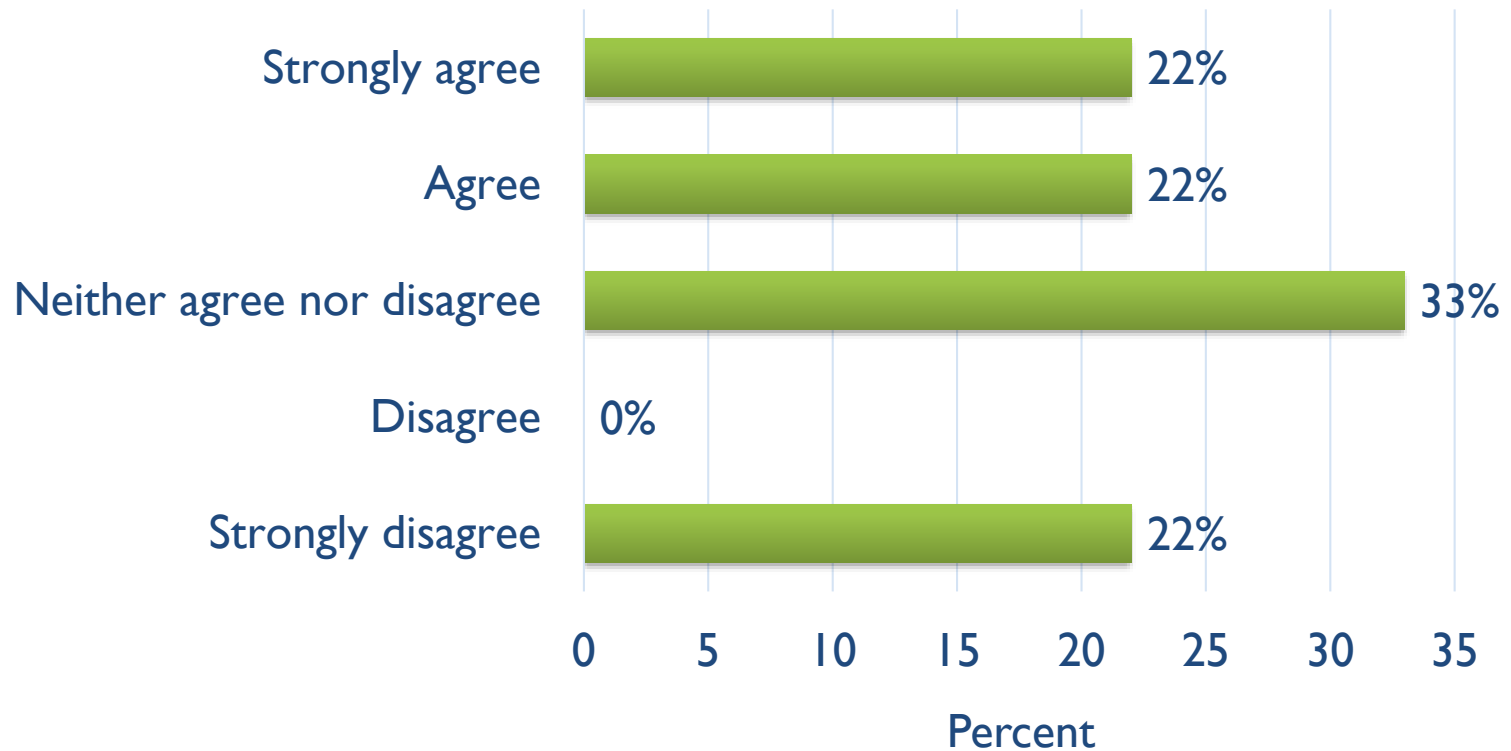
- **Have you used knowledge or skills from the QGIS training(s) in any of the followings? (Select all that apply)**



Note: N = 4

# 4. QGIS

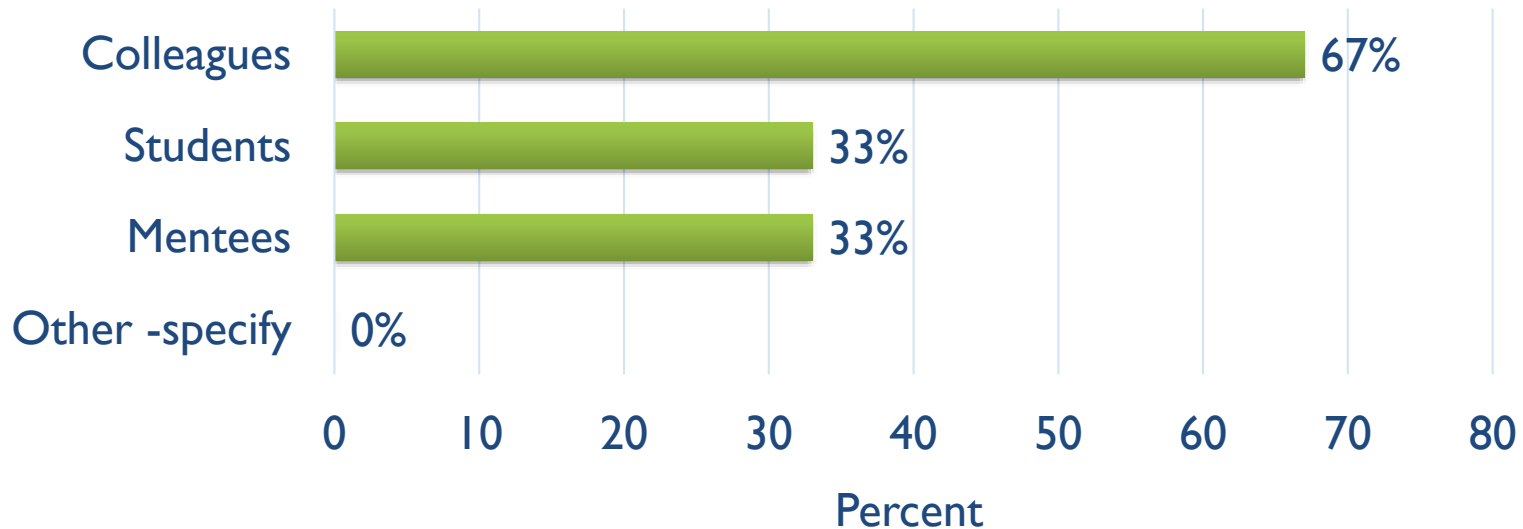
- **I am more confident understanding or using QGIS now than I was prior to PRCI:**



Note: N = 9

## 4. QGIS

- **10 of 34 respondents** attended one or more QGIS trainings
- Of those 10, **90% (9)** shared some QGIS training materials with others
- **With whom did you share the materials? (Select all that apply)**



Note: N = 9

# 5. Writing journal articles

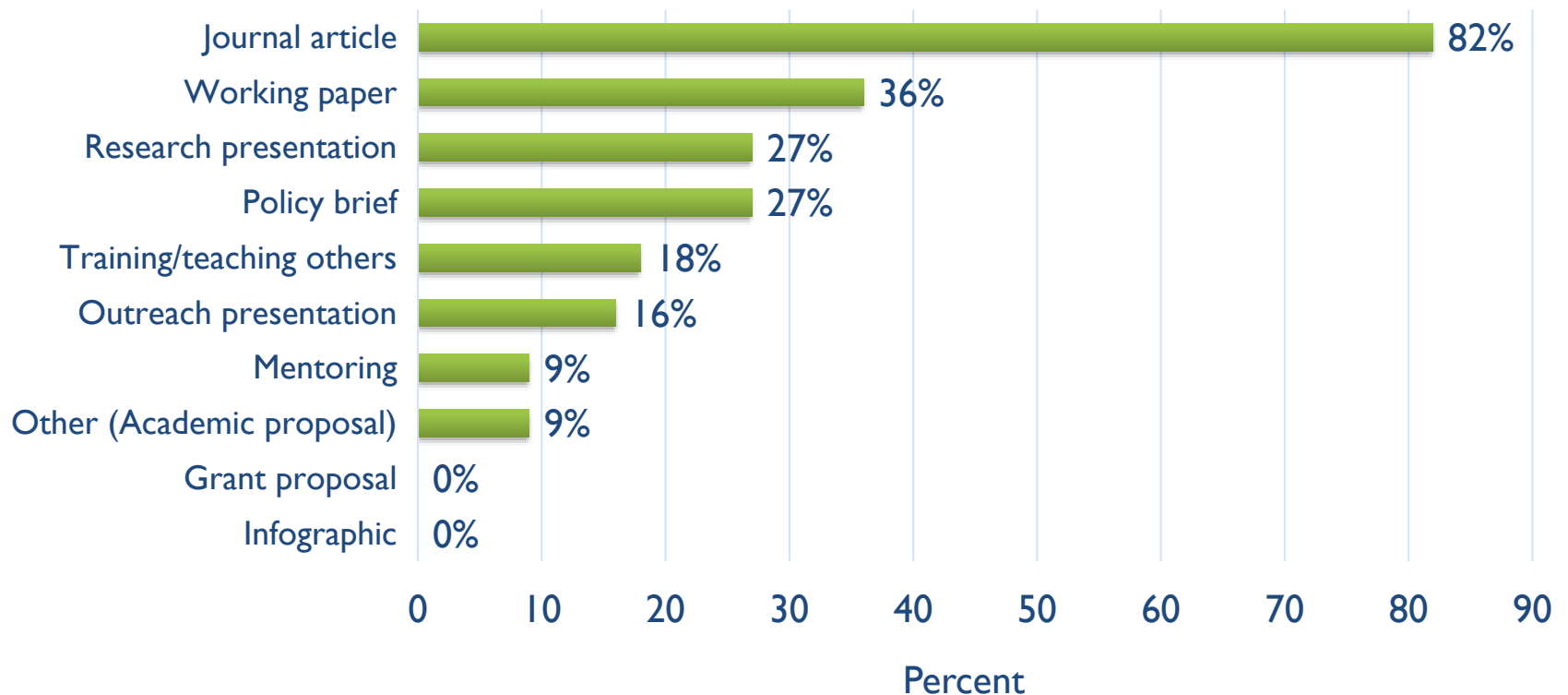
- **Topics that respondents participated in (or watched the recording of):**



Note: N = 16

# 5. Writing journal articles

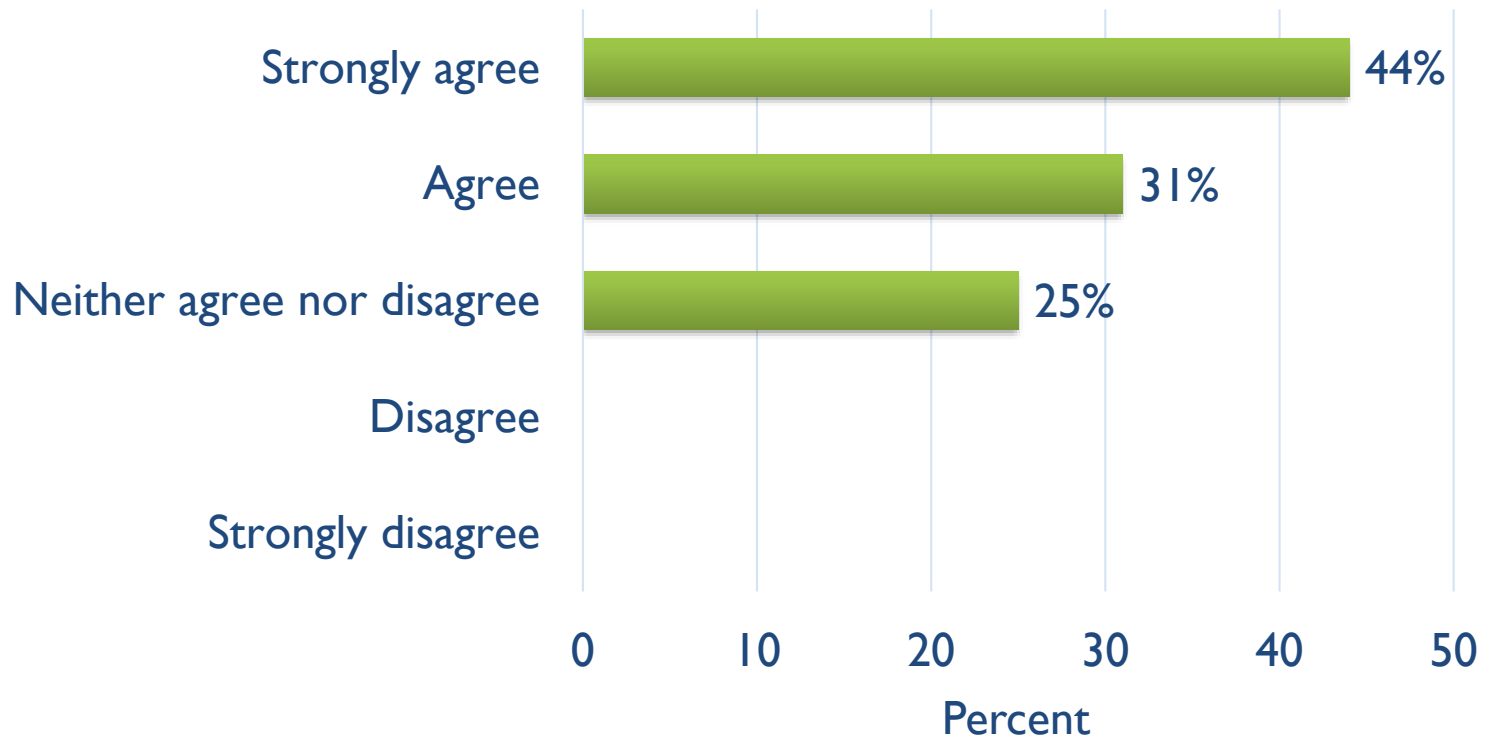
- **Have you used knowledge or skills from the journal article writing-related training(s) in any of the followings? (Select all that apply)**



Note: N = 11

# 5. Writing journal articles

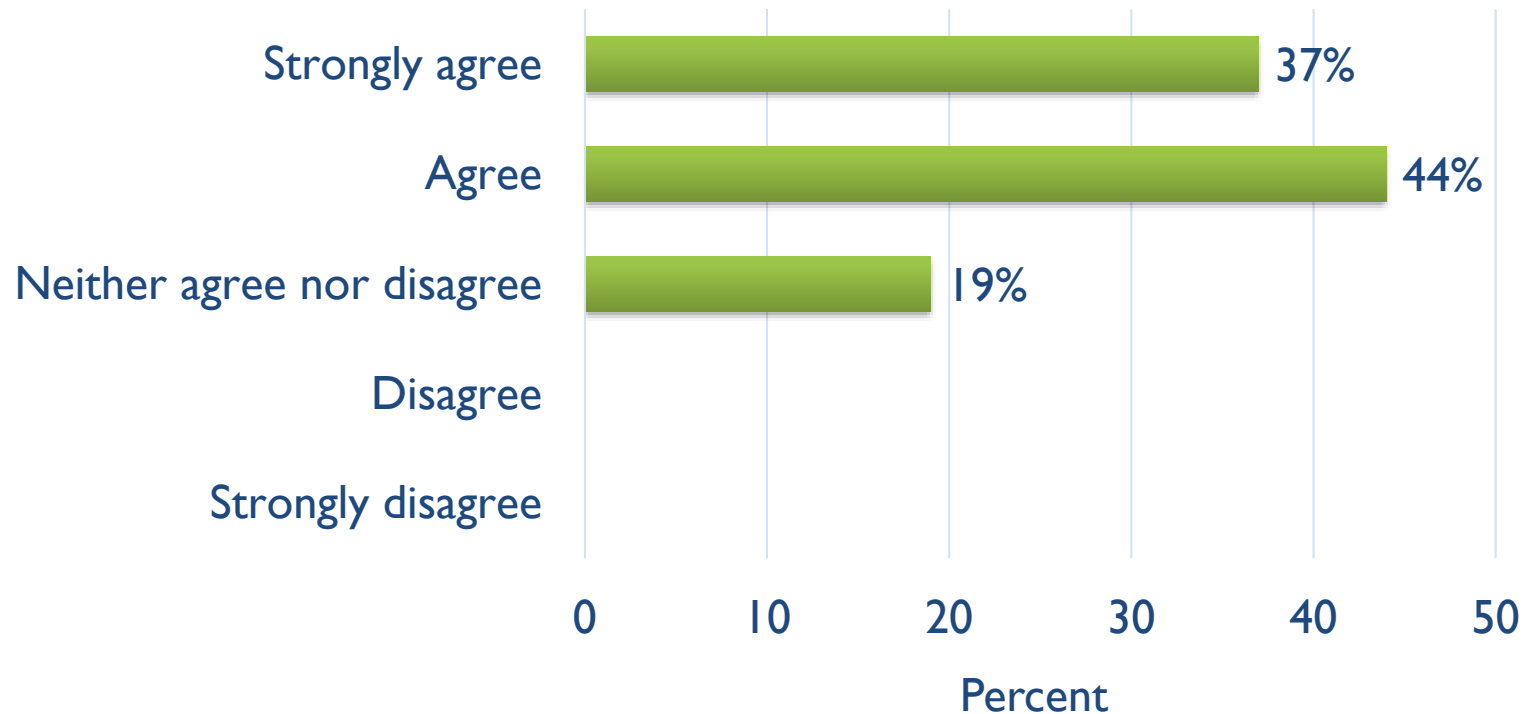
- **MY WRITING SKILLS ARE BETTER** now than I was prior to PRCI:



Note: N = 16

## 5. Writing journal articles

- I am more confident **NAVIGATING THE PEER REVIEW PROCESS** now than I was prior to PRCI:

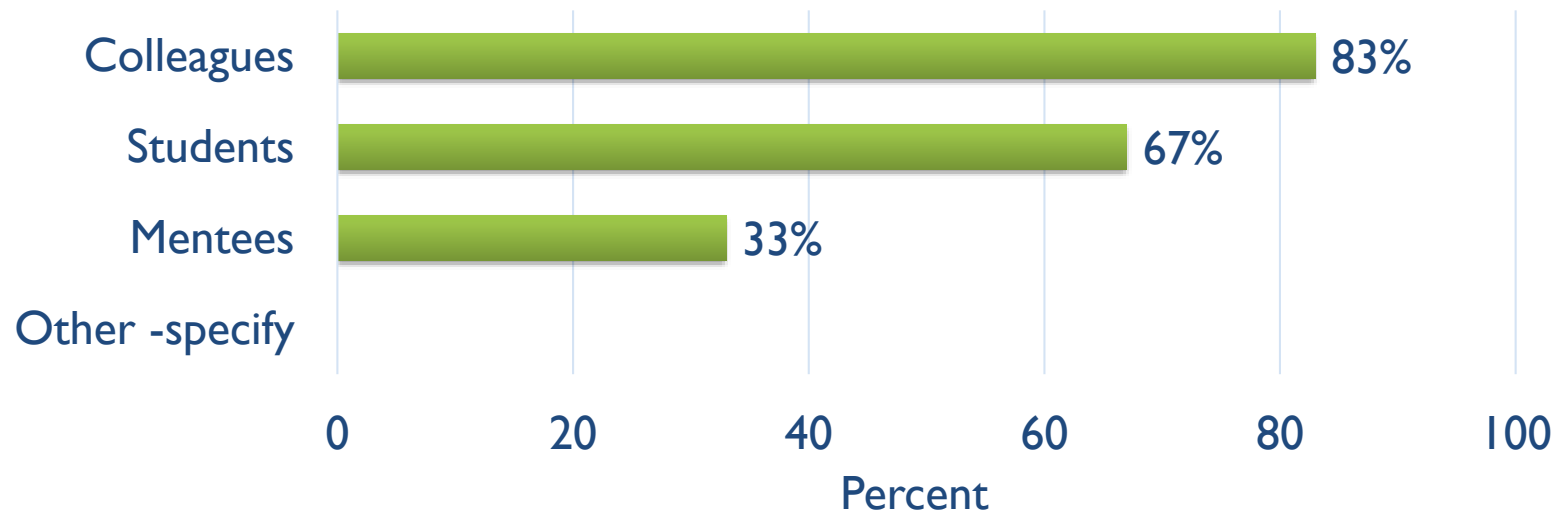


Note: N = 16



## 5. Writing journal articles

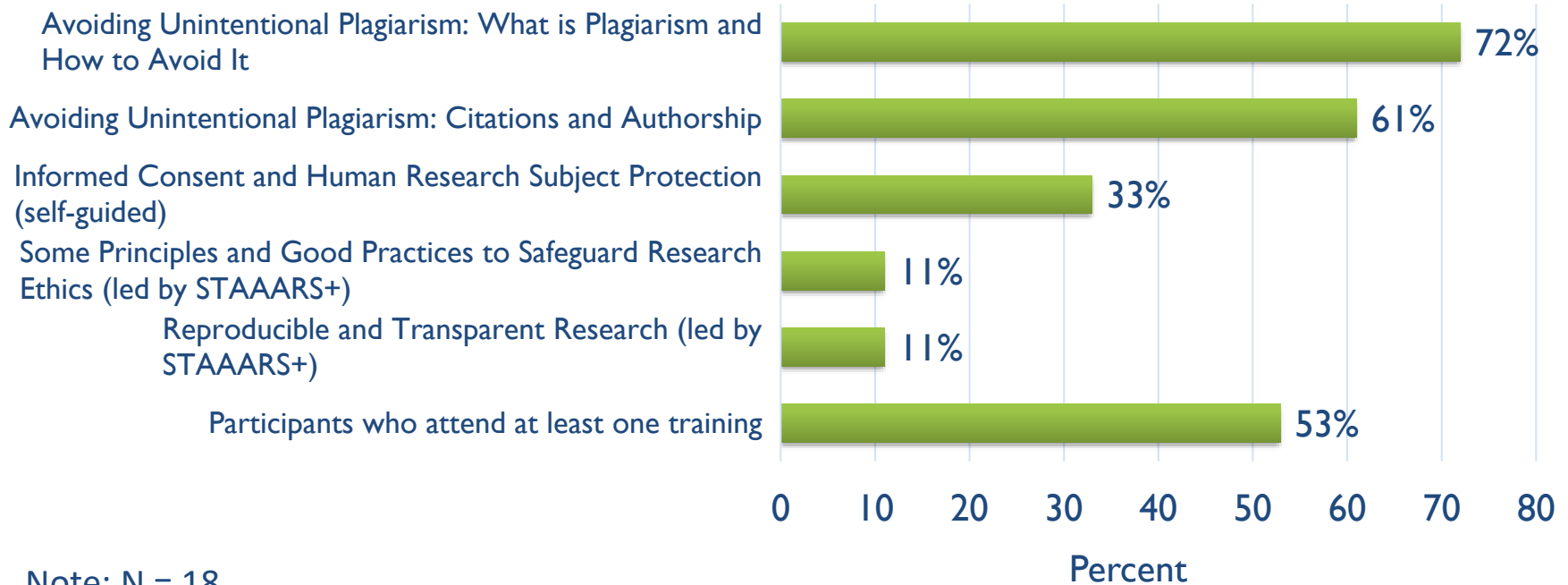
- **16 of 34 respondents** attended one or more journal article writing-related trainings
- Of those 16, **38% (6)** shared some journal article writing training materials with others
- **With whom did you share the materials? (Select all that apply)**



Note: N = 16

# 6. Research ethics & transparency

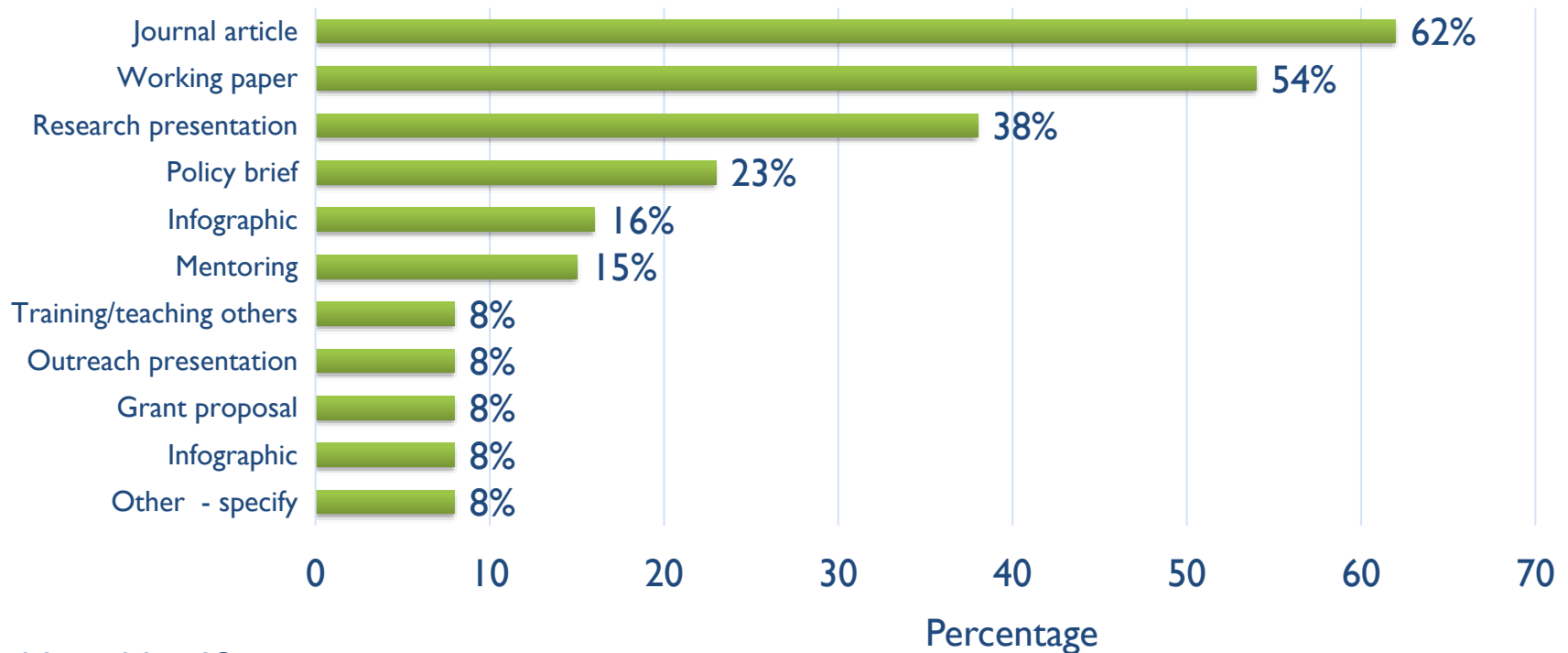
- **Topics that respondents participated in (or watched the recording of):**



Note: N = 18

## 6. Research ethics & transparency

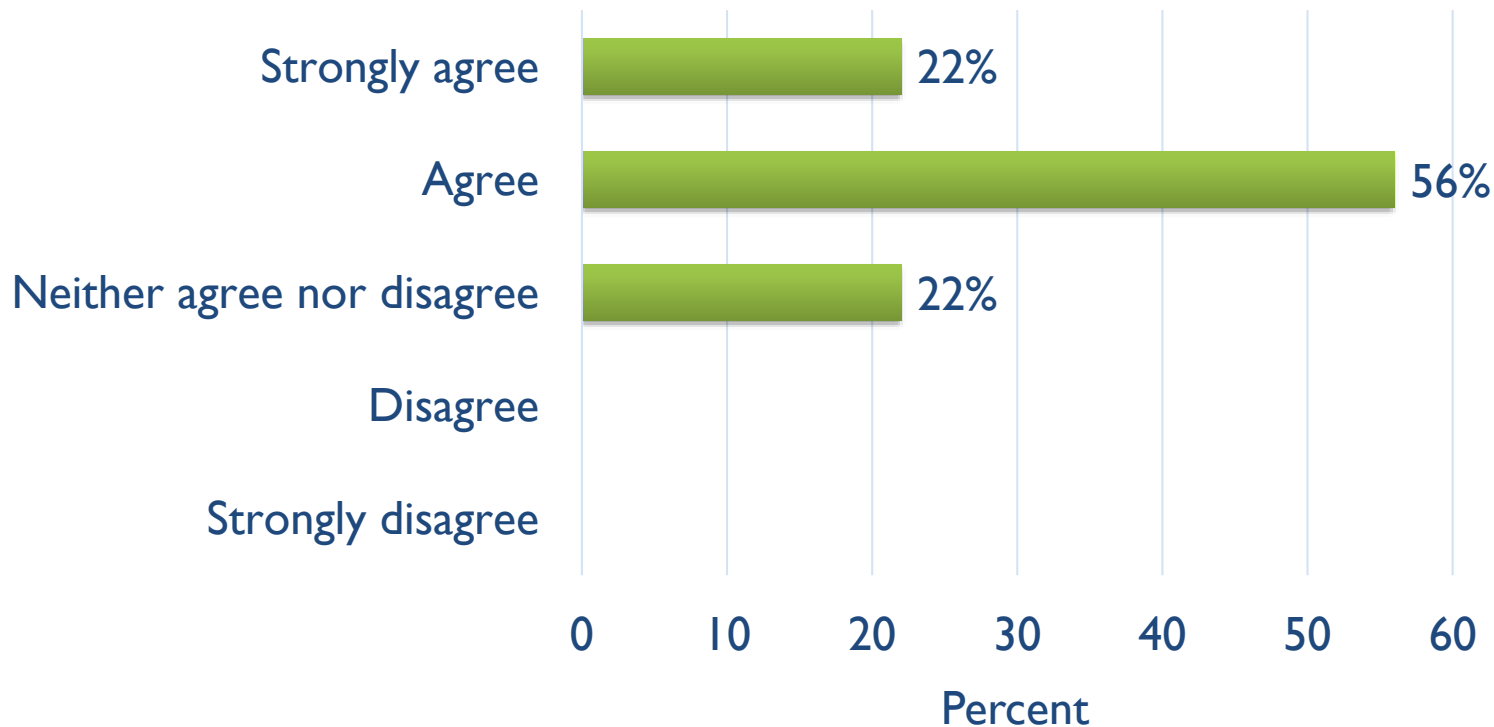
- **Have you used knowledge or skills from the research ethics and transparency training(s) in any of the followings? (Select all that apply)**



Note: N = 13

## 6. Research ethics & transparency

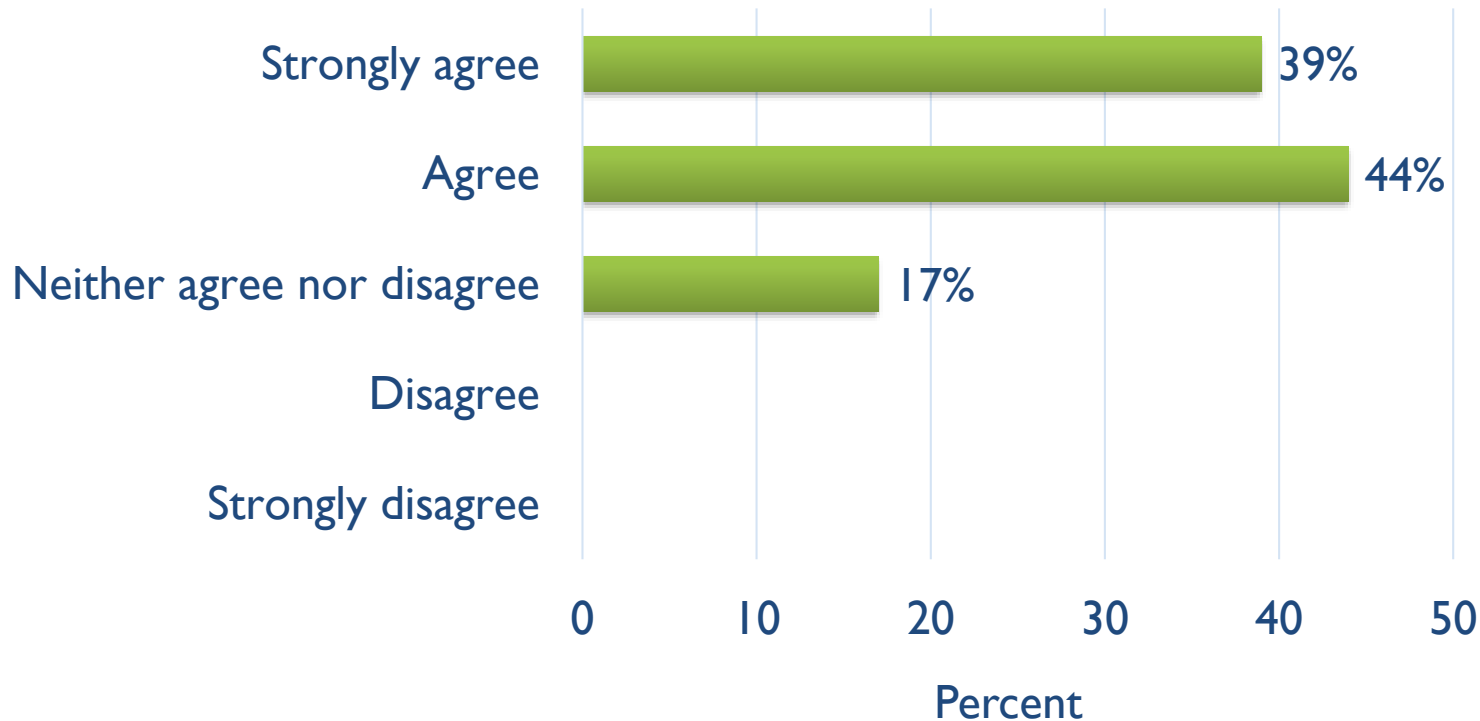
- **MY RESEARCH IS MORE TRANSPARENT AND REPRODUCIBLE now than I was prior to PRCI:**



Note: N = 18

## 6. Research ethics & transparency

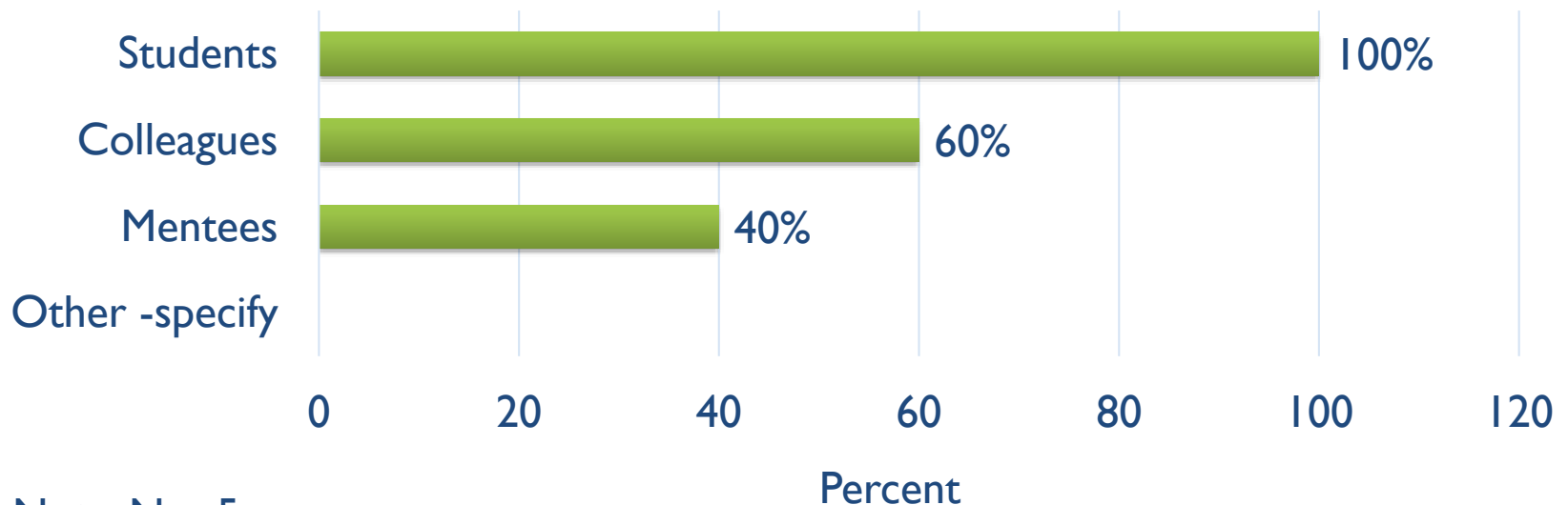
- I am more confident **AVOIDING UNINTENTIONAL PLAGIARISM** now than I was prior to PRCI:



Note: N = 18

## 6. Research ethics & transparency

- **18 of 34 respondents** attended one or more research ethics and transparency-related trainings
- Of those 18, **28% (5)** shared some research ethics and transparency training materials with others
- **With whom did you share the materials? (Select all that apply)**



Note: N = 5

# 7. Grant proposal writing

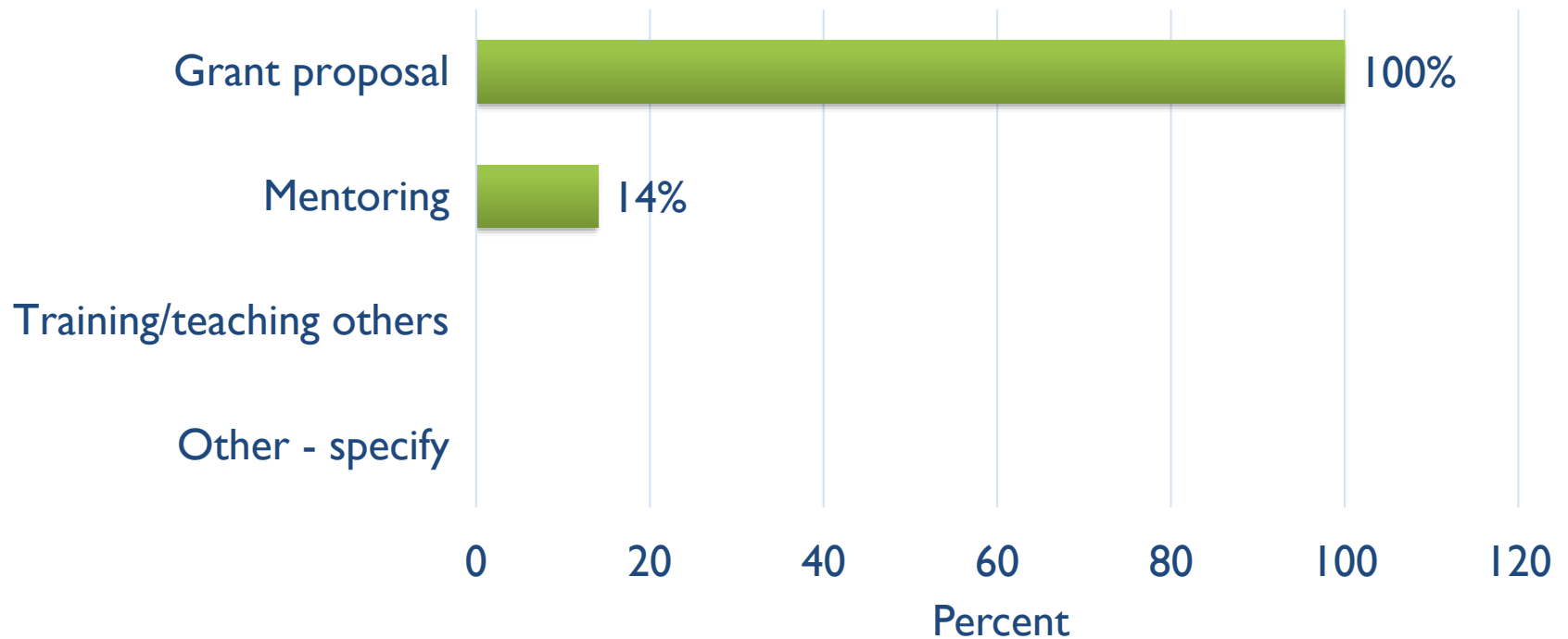
- **Topics that respondents participated in (or watched the recording of):**



Note: N = 12

# 7. Grant proposal writing

- **Have you used knowledge or skills from the grant proposal writing training(s) in any of the followings? (Select all that apply)**

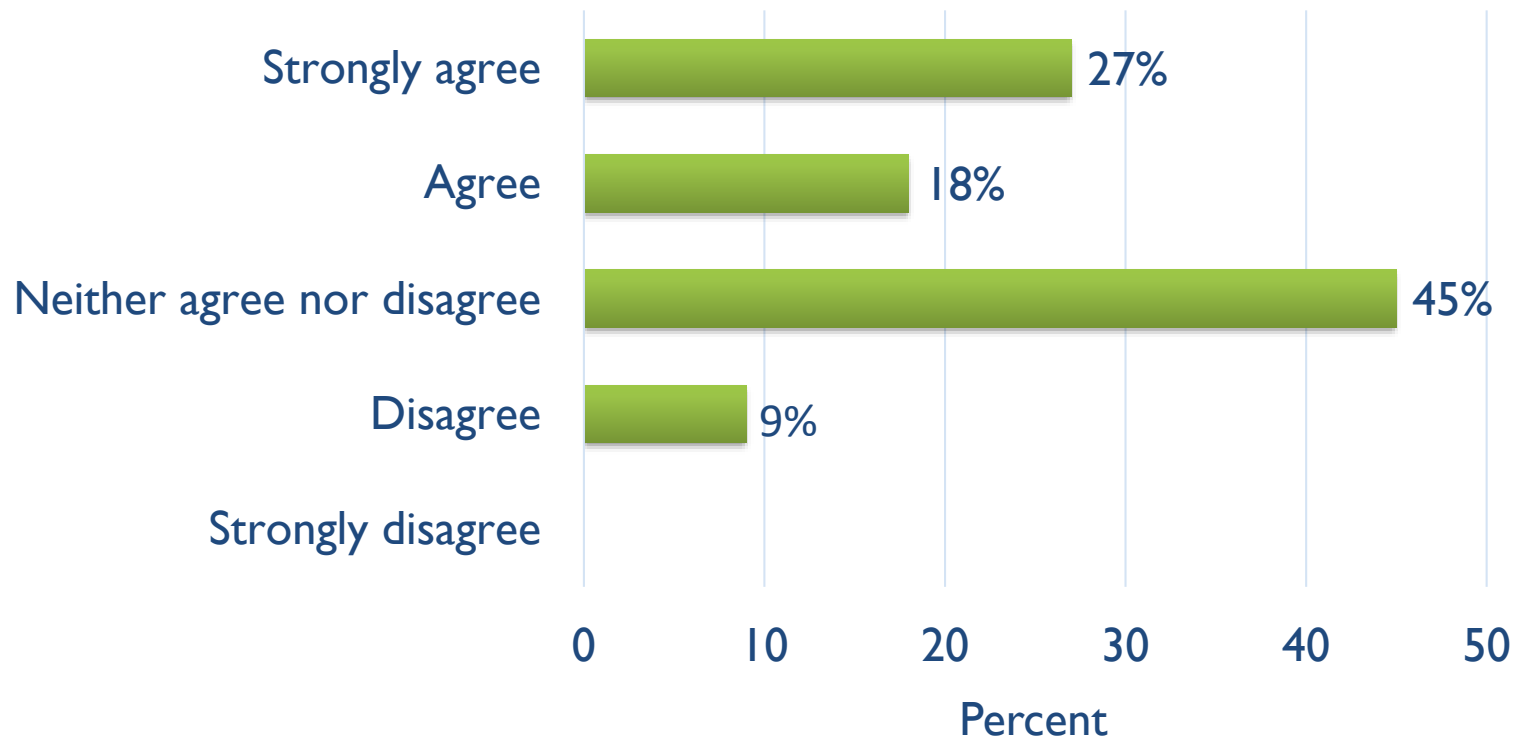


Note: N = 7



# 7. Grant proposal writing

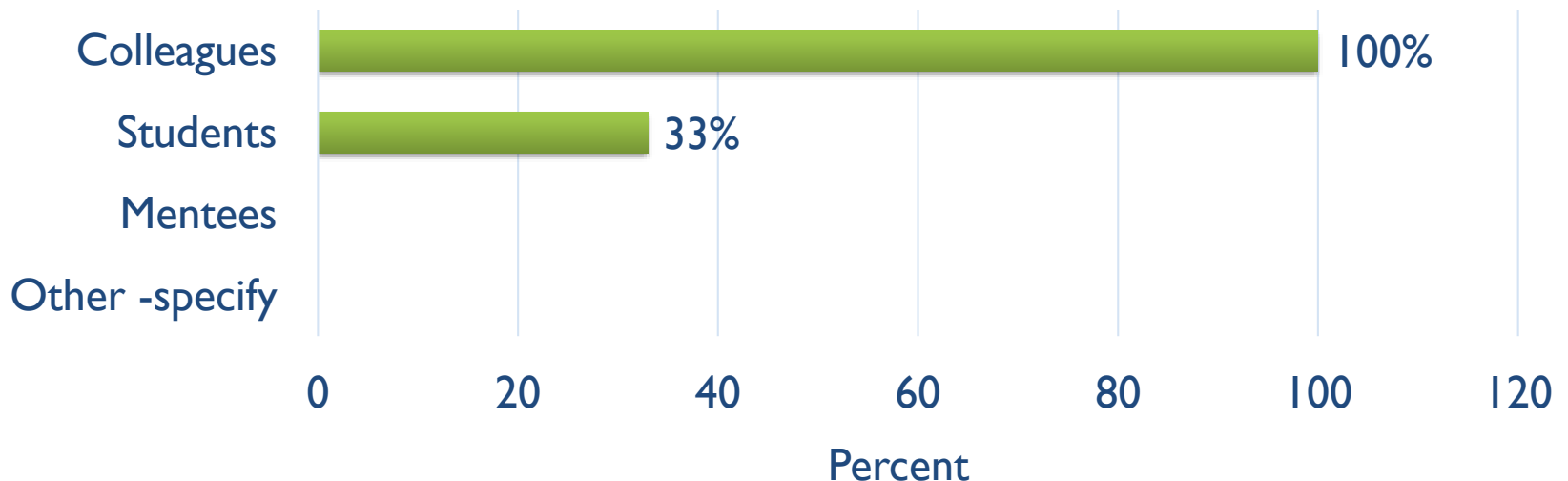
- I am more confident **WRITING GRANT PROPOSAL** now than I was prior to **PRCI**:



Note: N = 11

# 7. Grant proposal writing

- **12 of 34 respondents** attended one or more grant proposal writing-related trainings
- Of those 12, **25% (3)** shared some grant proposal writing training materials with others
- **With whom did you share the materials? (Select all that apply)**



Note: N = 11