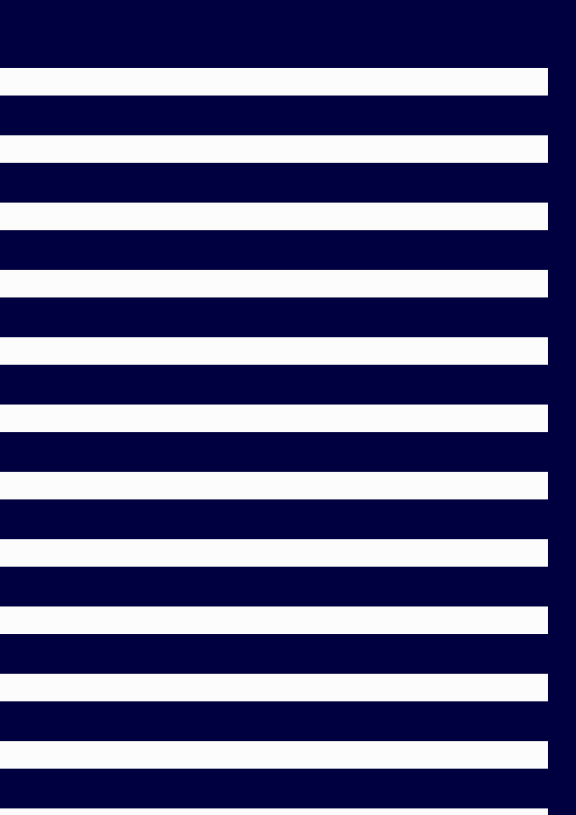


**FRAMINGS AND DISCOURSES
ON MOBILITY AND CRISIS:
BLESSING OR CURSE?**

SHORT COURSE ON MIGRATION

04 NOVEMBER - 03 DECEMBER 2020

**OUTCOME
REPORT**



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
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Embassy of Switzerland to Sri Lanka and the Maldives

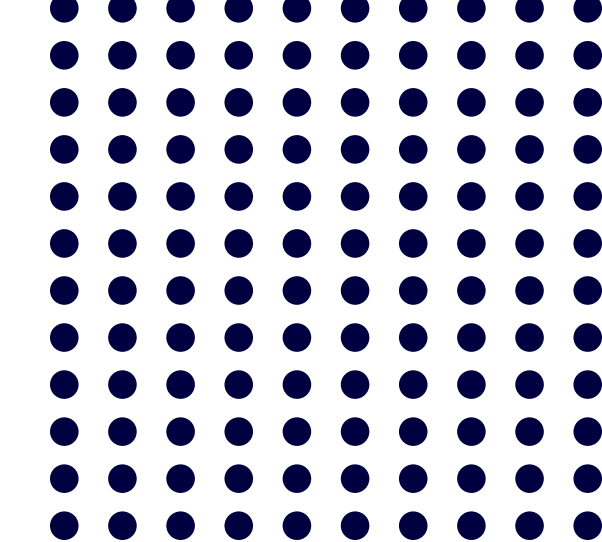


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Short Course on Migration, ‘Framings and Discourses on Mobility and Crisis: Blessing or Curse?’, was conducted by the Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA) in collaboration with the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), Utrecht University and Radboud University, and financially supported by the Embassy of Switzerland to Sri Lanka and Maldives. It was designed to create an interactive learning space for those interested in understanding the intricacies of migration, including how different types of migration is interconnected with conflict, natural disasters and (under)development.

This year, due to the prevailing pandemic situation, CEPA conducted the course online. It gave participants and resource persons the opportunity to join remotely, opening to a wider audience and newer resource people from across the globe. Moreover, taking on board participant feedback from last year, the curriculum was further enhanced to bring in regional discourses pertaining to migration. Whilst capturing the concept of migration and how it is interconnected with conflict and (under)development, this year the curriculum included the concept of climate change and how it is affecting livelihoods and the decision to migrate. The course also expanded on the aspects of labour migration and gave it a prominent place in the agenda.

Prominence was also given to how the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced the migration regime, mobility, regulation, and the discourse. Almost every lecture explored internal and external mobility dynamics introduced and exacerbated by COVID-19 and brought in examples from a range of national, regional, and global experiences.

The course was conducted over 5 weeks (The course schedule and structure can be viewed at www.cepa.lk/shortcourse2020) and adopted interesting learning methods to keep students engaged even in a virtual learning environment. Lectures were held on Wednesdays and Thursdays for a duration of two hours. Reading material and preparation tasks were shared with participants one week prior to the relevant lecture, giving them ample time to prepare for the lectures, ensuring active participation. CEPA made sure that each lecture had an interactive element built in, such as quizzes and polls using *Mentimeter*, virtual input from all participants, breakout groups and presentations.

Feedback from last year suggested the addition of a field visit so that participants can gain exposure to the realities of the field. Therefore, a virtual fieldwork element was introduced focusing on the topic of Trafficking in Persons (TIP). The report will discuss this element in more detail. Moreover, as a method of validating knowledge, the final session was a flip classroom session where participants were able to present their learnings on various topics. This too will be detailed in the report.

Notwithstanding challenges of conducting a course online amidst a pandemic, overall, the course was implemented successfully. Feedback from participants validated that the main aim of this course – to bring together a multi-disciplinary faculty, who was able to bring to the fore the current discourses/issues around migration, and effectively communicate it to participants who were interested and engaged in this field – was successfully achieved. Through various interactions, formal evaluation and feedback sessions with the course participants, CEPA learnt that the course was useful for them to gain a deeper understanding on migration related issues specific to each individual’s working area, and created new networking opportunities with peers as well as resource persons. The following report will breakdown how exactly this was achieved from concept stage to implementation. It will also highlight the challenges, areas of improvement, and the overall impact of the course.



PROCESS OF PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Curriculum Planning and Development

The planning of the course began in July 2020. There was already a foundation set by the course that took place in 2019, therefore the curriculum was loosely based on that. However, over the four-month period up until the commencing the course, the curriculum underwent several edits in order to incorporate current discourses surrounding migration, to flow well and logically, and also to adapt it to an online method of delivery. Similarly, the aim was to include sessions that focused more on the South Asian perspective (as opposed to a predominantly local perspective) and contrast it with and problematise the discourses stemming from the Global North.

Input From Resource Persons

The concept note and expectations of the lectures in terms of structure was shared with faculty. They then provided a background note on their lecture, a minimum of two recommended readings, and preparation tasks that were required from participants. These were all collated and shared with participants a week prior to each session.

Promotion of Course

The course was widely publicized on social media, CEPA's website, and through email campaigns sent to contact networks. 18% of participants learnt about the course through the CEPA website, 27% learnt about the course through social media, 27% learnt about the course through the email campaign and 27% learnt about the course through word of mouth (these figures are based on the evaluation form which was filled by 22 participants).

Headhunting Faculty

While last year the curriculum was set in advance, and faculty members were approached based on their expertise in the topics that were decided, this year a different approach was taken. The curriculum was loosely defined, and faculty members were given the flexibility to suggest topics and focus areas based on their expertise. While including the core faculty from last year (Prof. Frerks, Dr. Smith and Dr. Jayasundara-Smiths), academics from the South Asian region was also included in the faculty. Thus, experts in the field of migration were reached out to based on recommendations from CEPA's existing networks.

Determining Method of Delivery

Whilst the faculty members designed their own lectures, CEPA also suggested methods of making the lectures more interactive and helped with resources such as the online software to create interactive presentations and get live virtual input from participants. CEPA also took care of the backend work such as setting up breakout groups for discussions and running quizzes and polls.

Selection of Participants

Out of 41 applicants 30 were selected through a vigorous selection process. The panel of CEPA researchers selected the participants based on educational qualifications and experience in the related field. Government participants were sourced through contacts in relevant ministries. Fourteen participants were given full bursaries to attend the course. Apart from the seven government participants, seven other participants were also given bursaries based on the quality of their statement of interest in their applications. 26 participants successfully completed the course.

KEY OUTPUTS

ONLINE TAUGHT SESSIONS

Nine lectures were conducted covering various aspects and discourses on migration. CEPA was privileged to have an eminent group of lecturers join from different parts of the world to deliver these lectures. Their areas of expertise ranged from labour migration, migration and conflict, citizenship and belonging, migration development, disaster displacement, climate-induced migration, women, peace, and security, nationalism to securitization. Following are the details of the lectures along with short bios of the faculty.

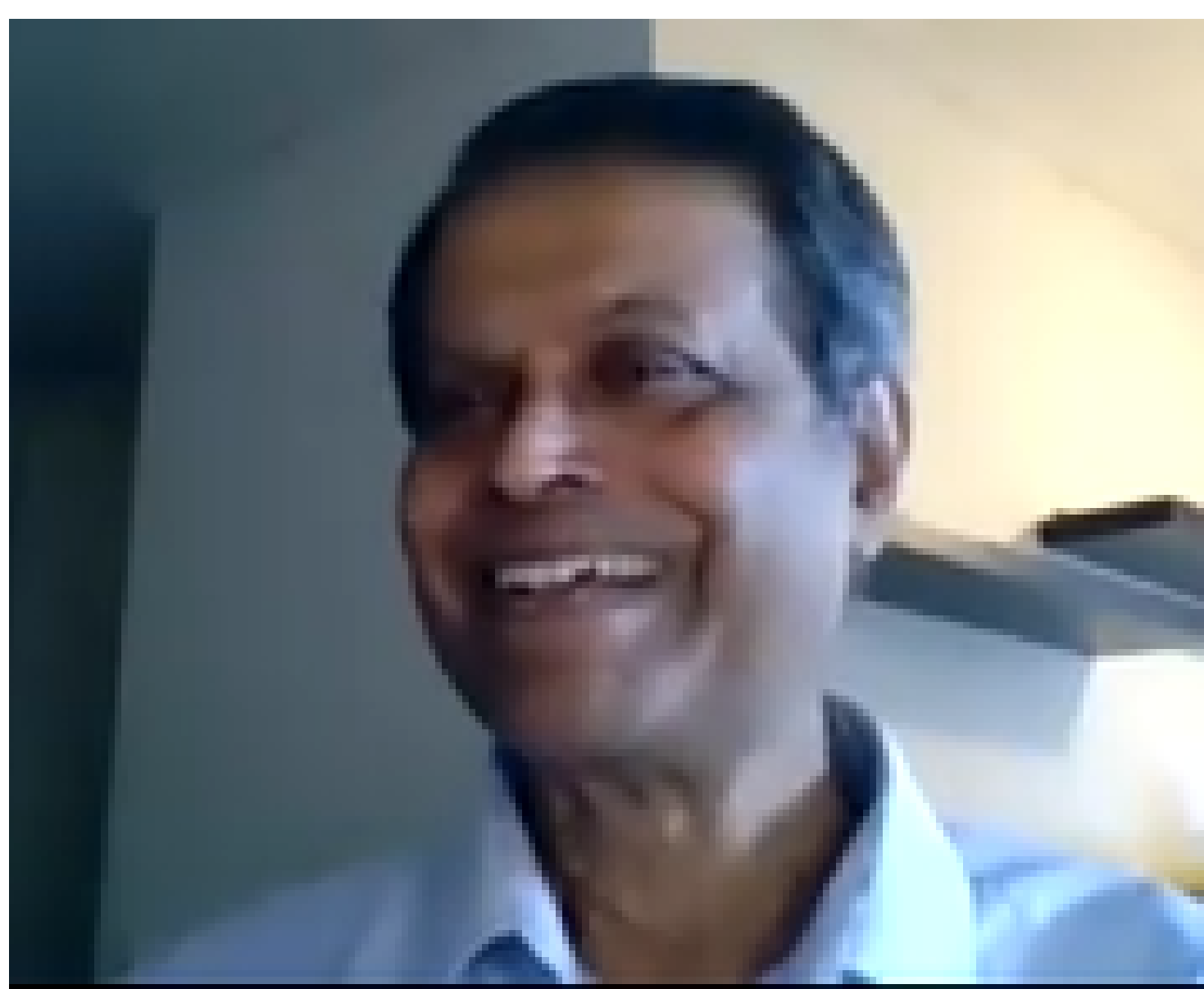


Migration and Development: An Overview

Prof. Binod Khadria

This lecture gave an overview of **migration and development**. Prof. Khadria focused on how migration and development are not only interrelated, but the global agenda has gone through many phases. He also explored how statistical dimensions of migration to and from India, Sri Lanka and the other South Asian countries reflect both historical and contemporary scenarios vis-a-vis the rest of the world. He situated the issues in the context of the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** and the **Global Compact for Migration (GCM)**.

Prof. Khadria is Distinguished Professor and Director of the Centre for New Initiatives and Research (CNIR) at SGT University, India. Previously, he was a Professor of Economics and International Migration for over three decades, and Chairperson at Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). His fields of interest include international migration and diaspora, economics of education, international trade in services, transfer of technology, and law and governance in education.



Global Governance of Migration With Special Focus on the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (SDG) and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)

Dr. Piyasiri Wickramasekara

This lecture focused on the conceptualisation of **global governance** and its relevance; the evolution of governance attempts; **SDGs and migration** and **GCM** and its relevance. Dr. Wickramasekara also explored the issues surrounding the **COVID-19** pandemic and the relevance of global frameworks in this regard.

Dr. Wickramasekara is the Vice President of the Global Migration Policy Associates (GMPA) – an international network of migration experts. His expertise in international migration covers Asian labour migration, governance of migration, migration and development, bilateral labour agreements, temporary and circular migration schemes, irregular migration, rights of migrant workers, and migration statistics. He has contributed extensively to the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) thinking on labour migration issues, especially its rights-based approach, and was one of the architects of the ILO flagship product, *The Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration: Non-Binding Principles and Guidelines for a Rights-Based Approach to Labour Migration*.



Global Citizenship, Local Belonging - Why Diasporas Still Matter

Dr. Lothar Smith

This lecture explored the concept of **diaspora**, and why it has always been the subject of much scrutiny. The idea that a segment of a population has a foothold in two societies at once (or even more) is the cause of much unrest for states with sedentary approaches to **societal development** and **security**. In his lecture Dr. Smith started off by unpacking the concept to its very essence, before asking what role it plays in a current world of multi-scalar **transnational** initiatives that increasingly hybridize notions of collective, singular, and unidirectional goals.

Dr. Smith is a human geographer based at the Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands. In both research and education he takes a special interest in the globalization-development nexus and its multifarious influences on the global south, notably where this concerns everyday livelihoods, particularly when this links urban and rural through processes of mobility.

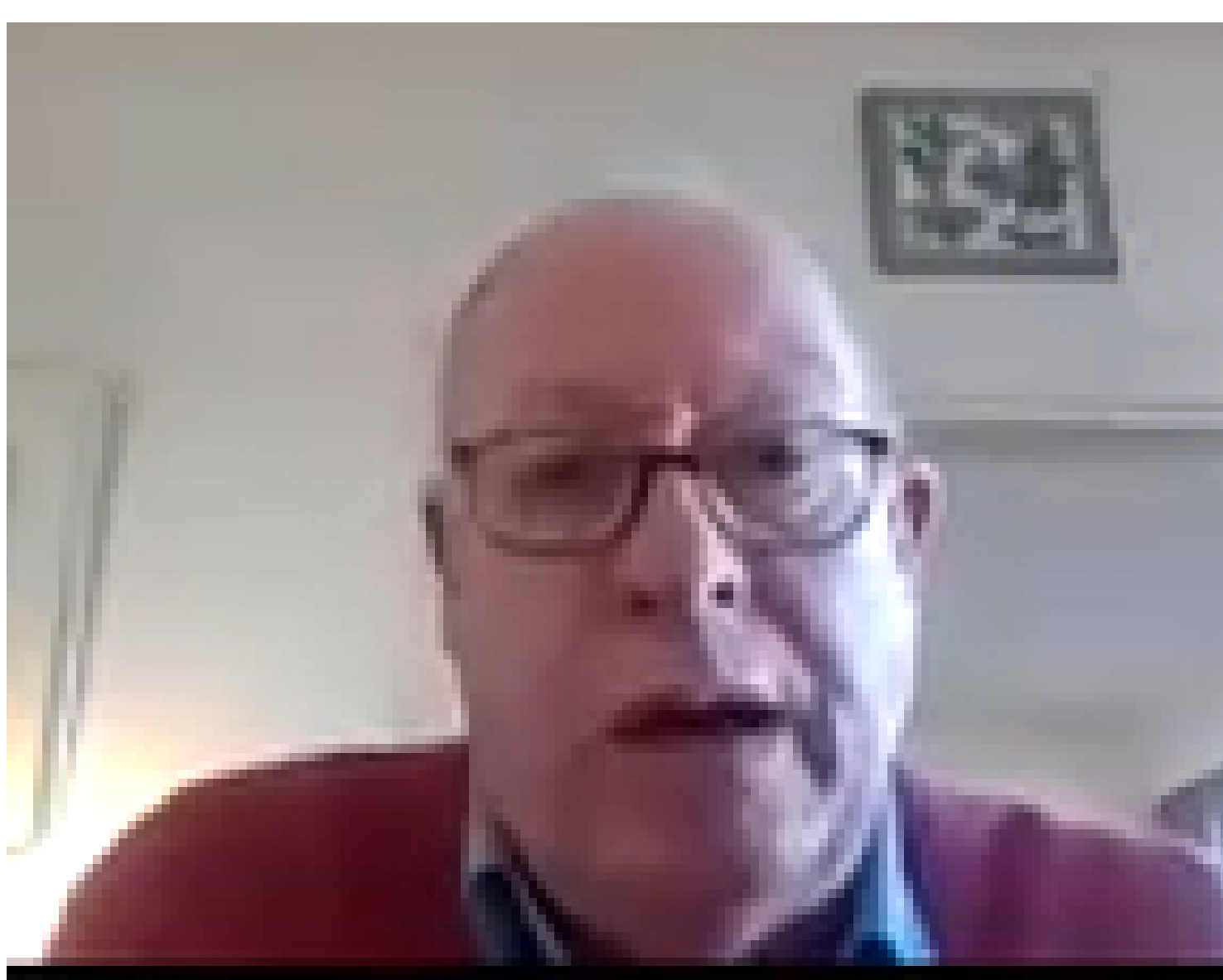


Migration, Media and Politics of Representation

Dr. Shyamika Jayasundara-Smits

Dr. Jayasundara-Smits drew from Stuart Hall's work on **representation in cultural studies** together with **feminist** and **critical security studies**. She discussed how migrants are represented (textual and visual) in media, historically and in the contemporary times, politics underlying specific representation strategies and their consequences for migrants and on the **media-politics-society relations**.

Dr. Jayasundara-Smits is an Assistant Professor in Conflict and Peace Studies at ISS/Erasmus University Rotterdam. Her current research focuses on intersections on Violent Conflict and Development and a wide variety of topics there under, such as, Politics of State Building, External Interventions, European Union Foreign and Security Policy, Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Challenges of Post-war Transitions.

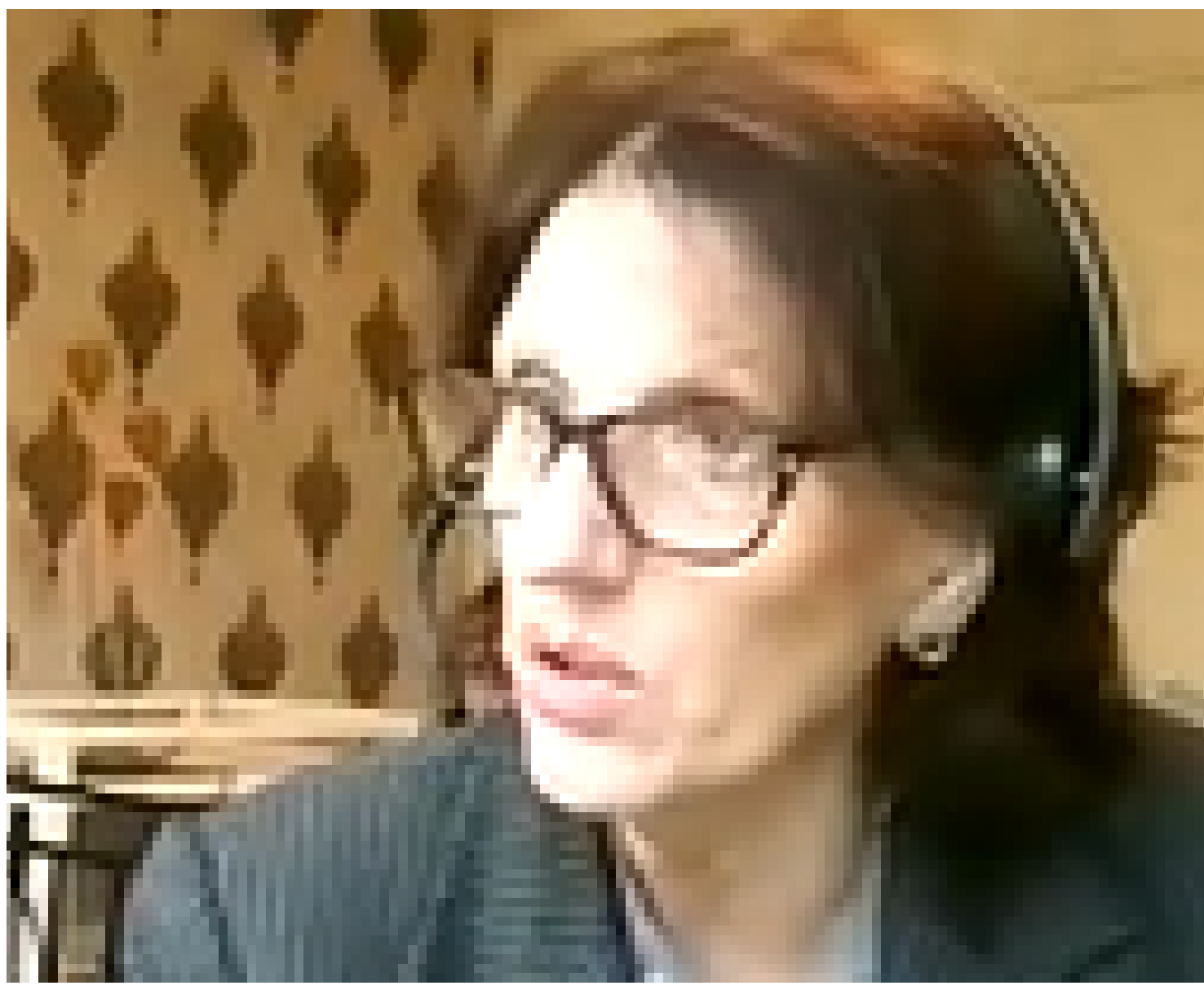


Refugees: Conceptualisation

Prof. Georg Frerks

Prof. Frerks covered how the **conceptualisation of 'refugee'** has developed over time, from the historical discourse post-cold-war and the politicisation of refugees currently.

Prof. Frerks holds a chair in Conflict Prevention and Conflict Management at Utrecht University and a chair in International Security Studies at the Netherlands Defence Academy. He served for nearly twenty years in the Dutch Foreign Service and was head of the Conflict Research Unit of the Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael'. His focuses are on contemporary intrastate conflicts and international and national conflict policies and interventions. This includes the issue of displacement and refuge.

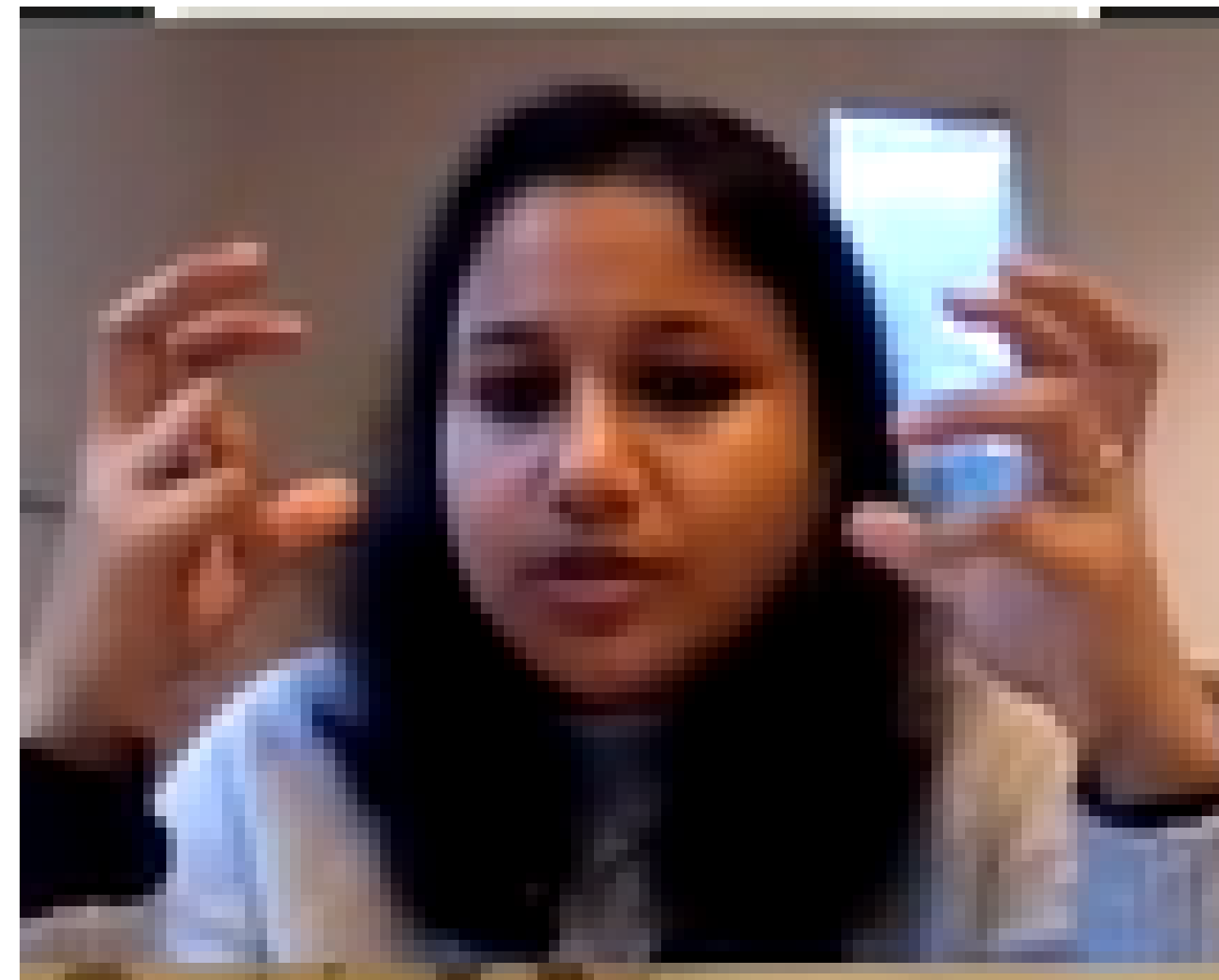


Climate-Induced Migration and The Role of Humanitarian Action

Prof. Dorothea Hilhorst and Ms. Mausumi Chetia

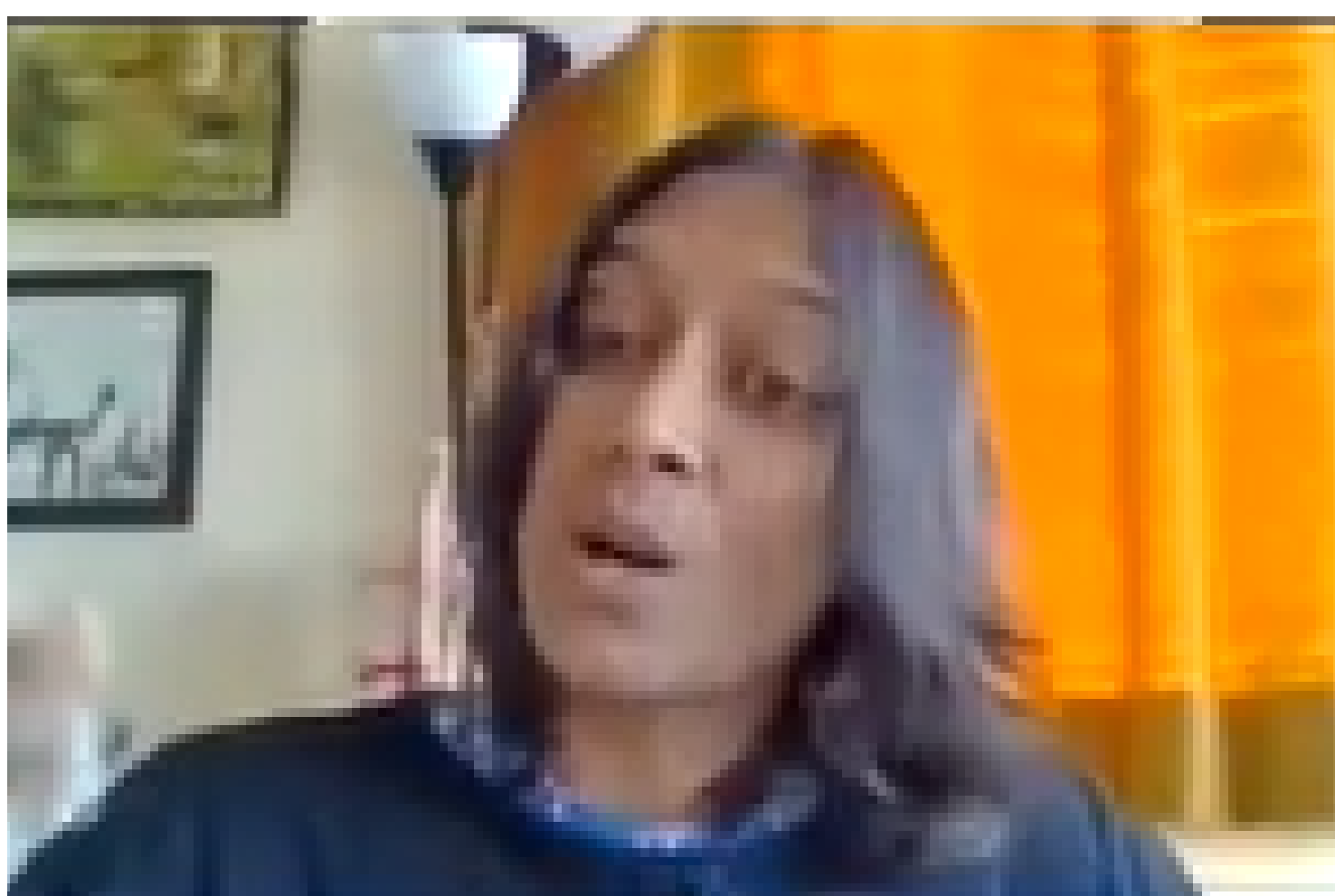
This lecture was based on international humanitarian action, as well as national legislation and provisioning that the number of countries, foresee in **rescue, relief, and the provision of services** to people who are **displaced because of a disaster related to a natural hazard**. Prof. Hilhorst unravelled how climate change is rarely a direct cause but is known to contribute to factors that lead up to displacement, and how it can lead to displacement of a different nature. She explored critical questions such as what does this mean for the entitlements of displaced people? How do international and national actors deal with this? While answers to these questions are still elusive, the lecture brought out some of the dilemmas that will increasingly bother states and international bodies in the near future.

Joining Prof. Hilhorst to present a case study was Ms. Chetia, who presented the case of displacement resulting from riverbed erosion In India, drawing from her recently completed fieldwork among displaced families in Assam.



Prof. Hilhorst (above) is a professor of humanitarian studies at ISS of Erasmus University in The Hague. Her focus is on aid-society relations; studying how aid is embedded in the context. She has a special interest in the intersections of humanitarianism with development, peacebuilding, and gender-relations. Currently, her main research programme concerns cases where ‘conflict meets disaster’, that studies disaster governance in high-conflict, low-conflict, and post-conflict societies.

Ms. Chetia is a PhD Researcher with the Erasmus Initiative called *Vital Cities and Citizens*, based at ISS in the Hague. Her research focuses on populations facing long-term disaster-displacement in her home state of Assam, in India’s northeast region (NER). Prior to joining academia, she was engaged as a practitioner in development/humanitarian aid in India.



Representation of Migrants in Economics: Women, Wellbeing and Vulnerability

Dr. Nadeera Rajapakse

At this lecture, Dr. Rajapakse discussed how the phenomenon of **migration has been addressed in economic theory, analysis, policy-making and empirical studies**, mainly based on the neoclassical, neo-liberal representation of “agents”. Adding to the new theoretical and empirical perspectives that have emerged,

she discussed how Amartya Sen’s Capability Approach provides a better, more meaningful representation of migrants.

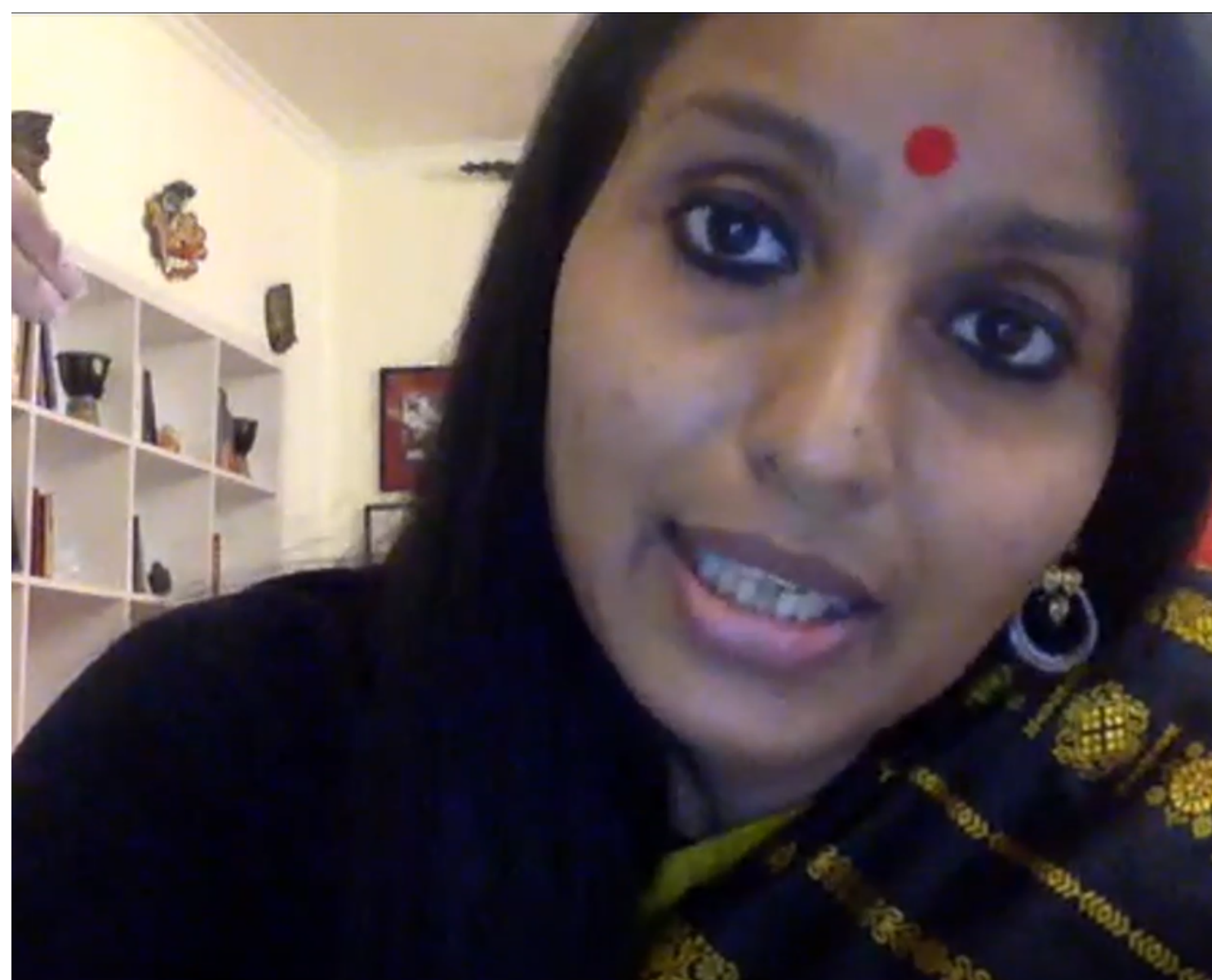
Dr. Rajapakse is a Senior Lecturer in Economics at University Pantheon-Sorbonne in Paris and member of Philosophy, History and Analyses of Economic Representations (PHARE). She specializes in the history of monetary thought and religious discourse. Her more recent research focuses on ethics in economics and the work of Amartya Sen. She teaches courses in History of Economic Thought, as well as Migration and Identity.

Making of Natives and Migrants: A Case Study from The Arab Gulf States

Dr. Idil Akinci

Through case studies from the **Arab Gulf States**, this lecture critically analysed the **impact of immigration** and access to welfare benefits in **defining citizenship regimes** and shaping the 'content' of **national identities**. Moving away from the tendency to treat and study Gulf societies as exceptional sociological cases, this lecture drew connections with other immigration countries, where boundaries between migrant and citizens populations are constructed as a response to social, political, and economic events, despite being presented often as a primordial condition. By illustrating the similar processes that elucidate the inclusions and exclusion of certain individuals to/from the boundaries of a nation, this lecture stressed that national boundaries are not absolute and fixed, even in the Gulf States, where exclusion of migrants from citizenship might suggest so.

Dr. Akinci is a Teaching and Research Fellow at the University of Edinburgh, Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies and Sociology. Her research expertise centres on migration and citizenship, with a focus on the Arab Gulf States. She holds a PhD in Migration Studies from the University of Sussex (2018), where she explored the everyday experiences of national identity and citizenship by young Arab communities and Emirati citizens in Dubai.



Critical Perspectives on Securitization and Refugees

Dr. Shweta Singh

This lecture provided critical insights on how **refugees are discursively located as 'victim' and/or 'threat'**. Dr. Singh introduced participants to the securitisation framework and highlighted how securitizing moves hinge on gendered and racialized representations of refugee threat and vulnerability. She drew from cross-cutting comparative insights from South Asia, and beyond.

Dr. Singh is Senior Assistant Professor of International Relations at the South Asian University (New Delhi, India). She was recently appointed as the UN Women International Expert on Populism, Nationalism, and Gender (regional office for Asia and the Pacific). She is co-editor of a Rowman and Littlefield book series titled *Feminist Studies on Peace, Justice and Violence*.

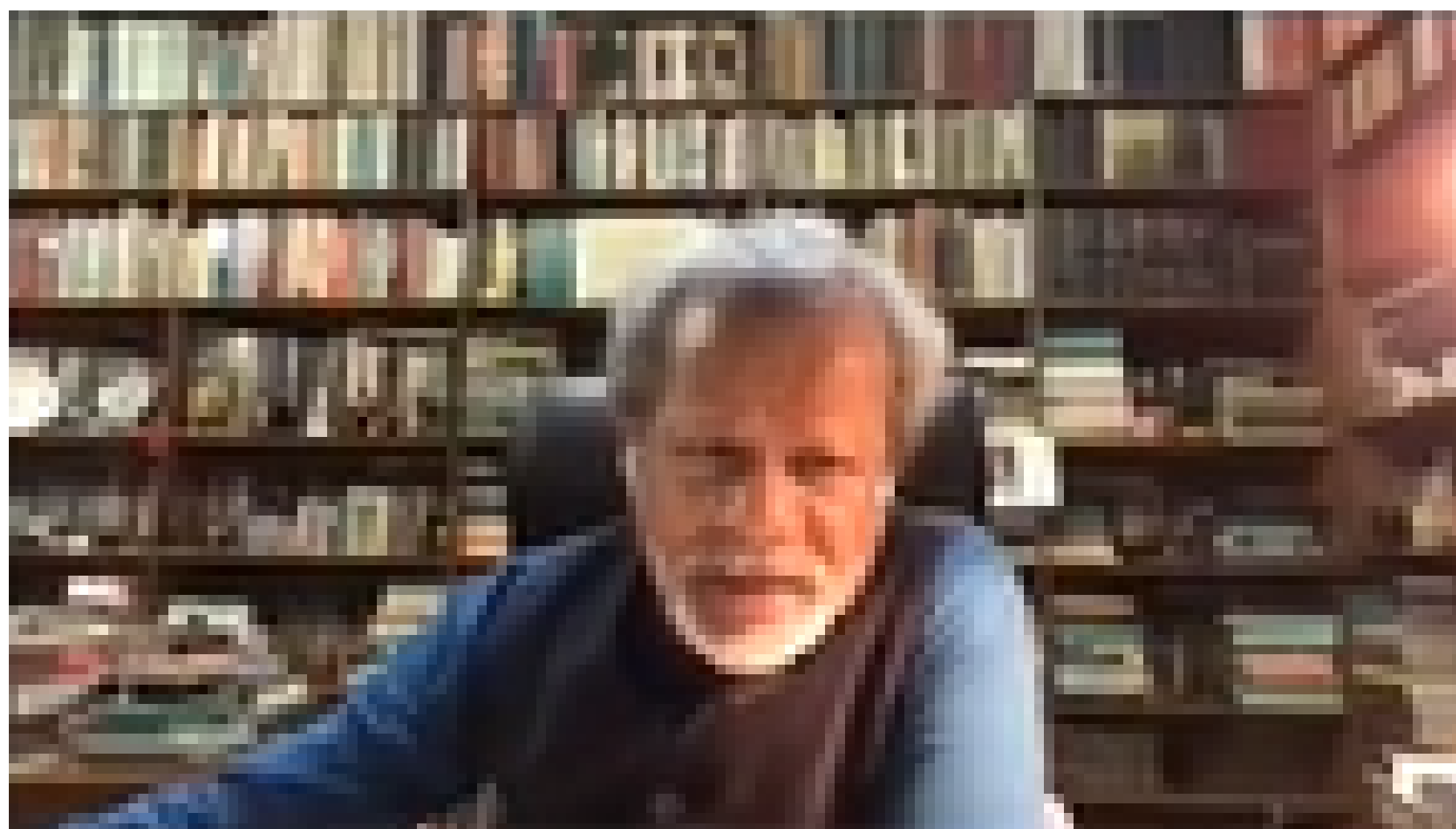
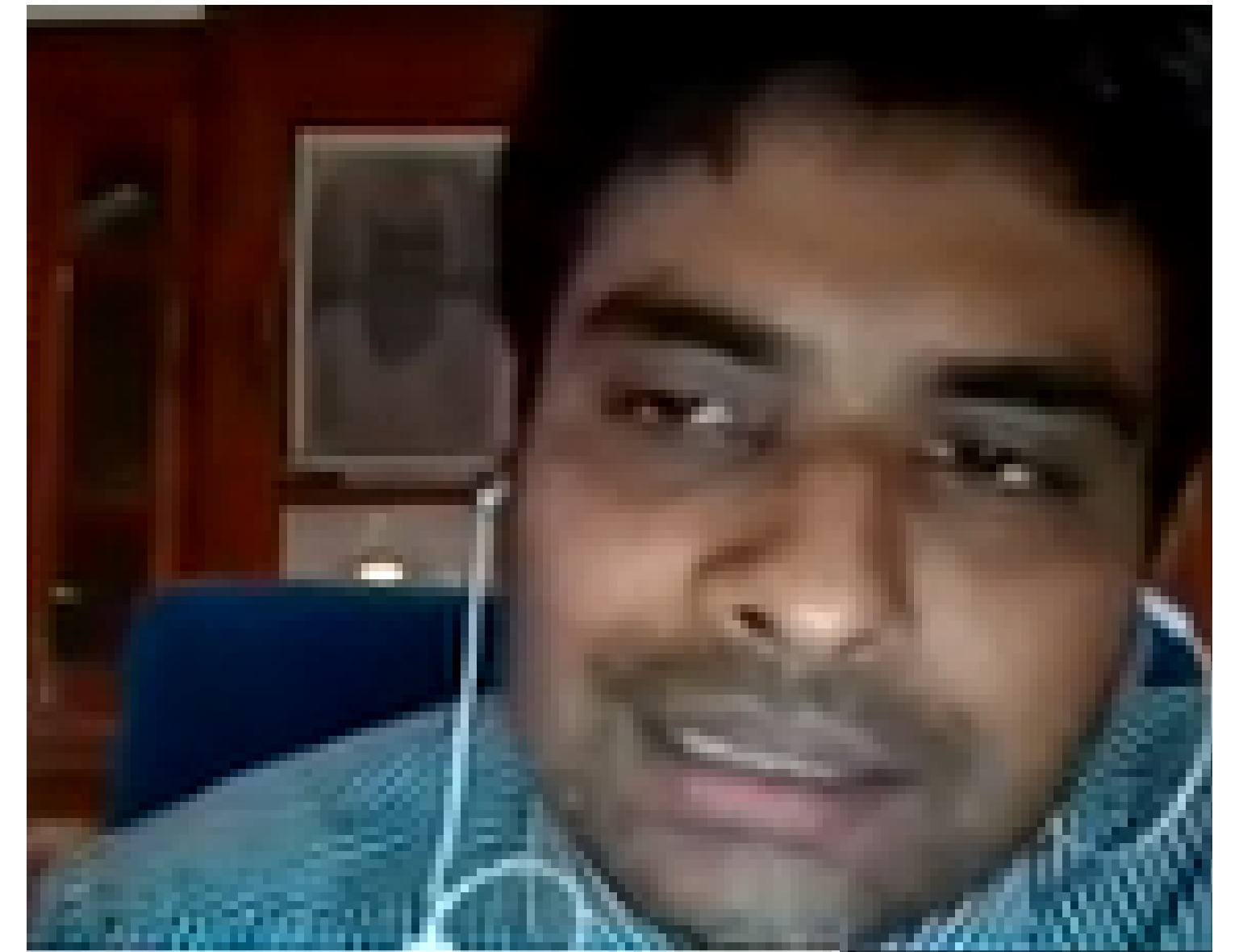
PRACTITIONER PANELS

Two panels were held during the course, where two crucial and timely topics were discussed by experts and practitioners.

Refugees in South Asia

The panel started off with Mr. Ravindra Rathnayake of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) presenting the **legal framework for International Refugee Protection**, and UNHCR's operationalization of its protection mandate in Sri Lanka.

Mr. Rathnayake (right) represents UNHCR, Sri Lanka as a Refugee Status Determination (RSD) Associate. Prior to that he was an Authorized Officer (popularly known as Immigration Officer) at the Department of Immigration and Emigration, Sri Lanka. He holds two bachelor's degrees: one majoring in International Relations from University of Colombo and other, LLB from the Open University of Sri Lanka. In addition, he is an Attorney-at-Law.



Next, Prof. Imtiaz Ahmed focused on the past, present and futures of the **Rohingya crisis**.

Prof. Ahmed (left) is Professor of International Relations and Director, Centre for Genocide Studies at the University of Dhaka. He is also currently Visiting Professor at the Sagesse University, Beirut.

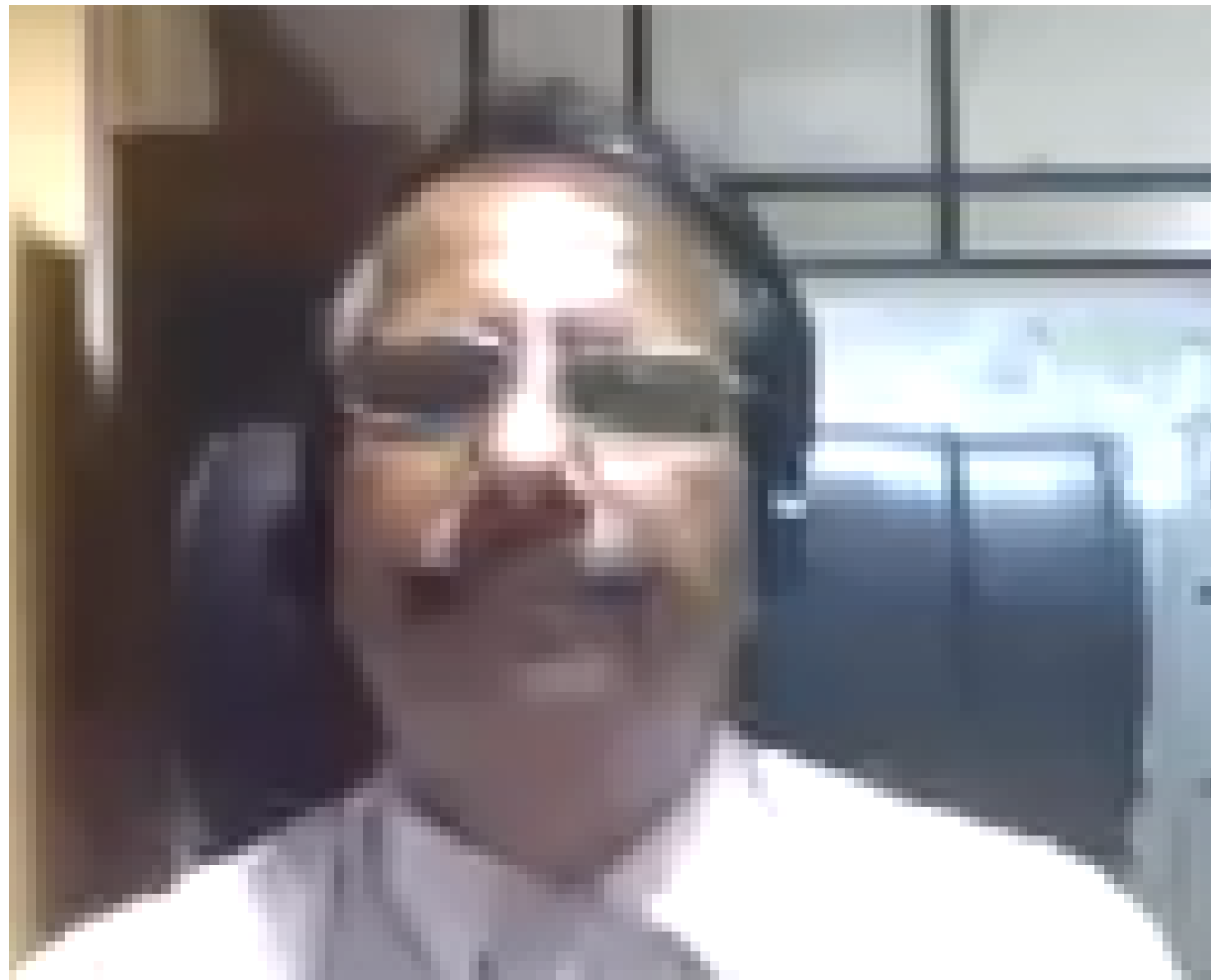
Dr. Gladstone Xavier ended the panel discussion by focusing on **refugees in South Asia** with specific reference to **India, Afghanistan, and Tibet**.

Dr. Xavier (right) is the Head of the Social Work Department of Loyola College in Chennai, India, and has served as the Dean of the Arts Faculties of the same college. He is an expert in the field of conflict and peacebuilding and has done substantive work providing training on trauma awareness and recovery, arts-based approaches to peacebuilding, sustainable development, strategic planning and management, and restorative justice, as well as working with community-based organizations. Dr. Xavier has travelled and worked in Sri Lanka for 14 years where he volunteered with Sri Lankan refugees.



Impact of COVID-19 on Migration

This panel focused on an extremely timely topic by analysing the impact COVID-19 has had on migration, with a special focus on labour migration.

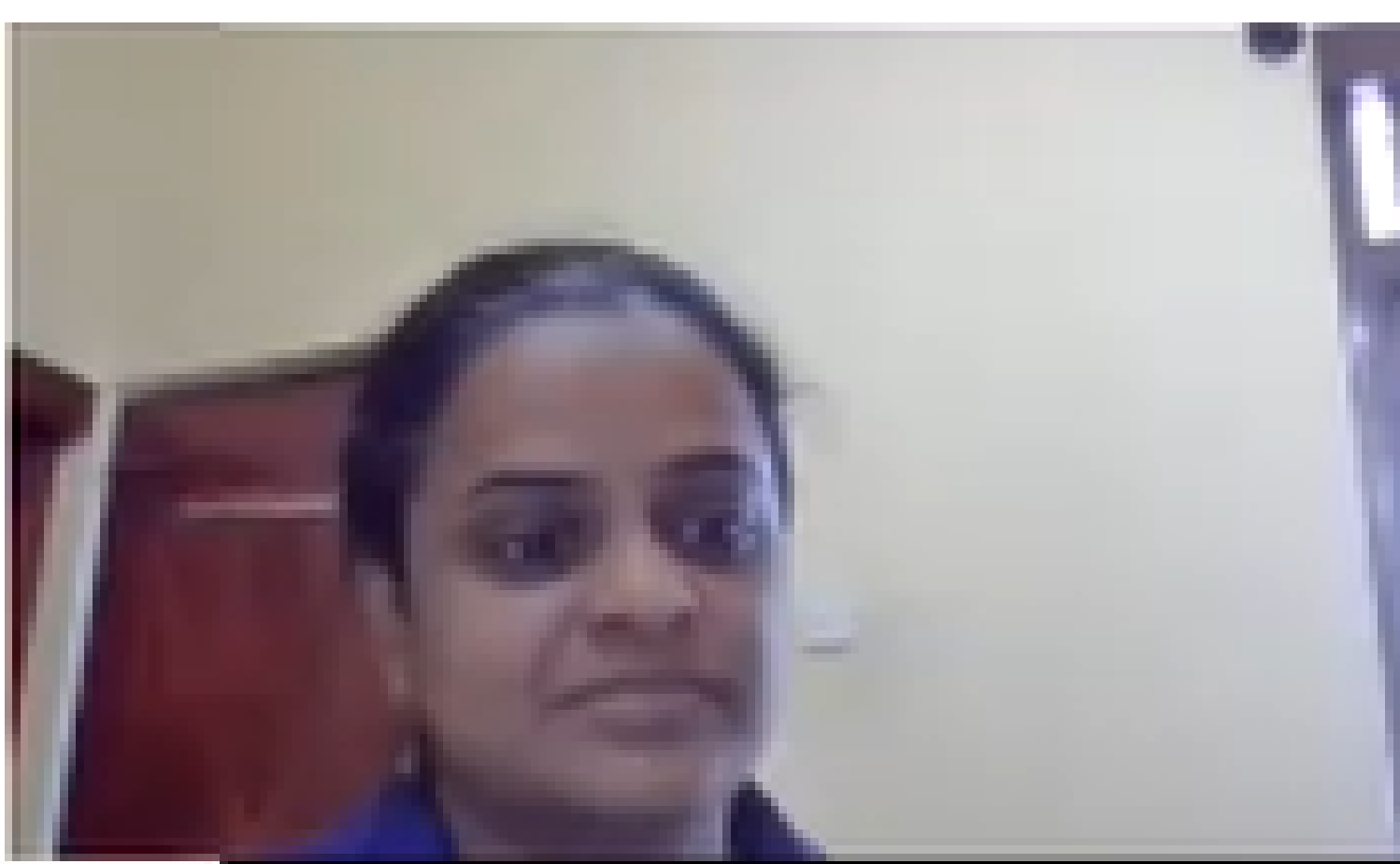
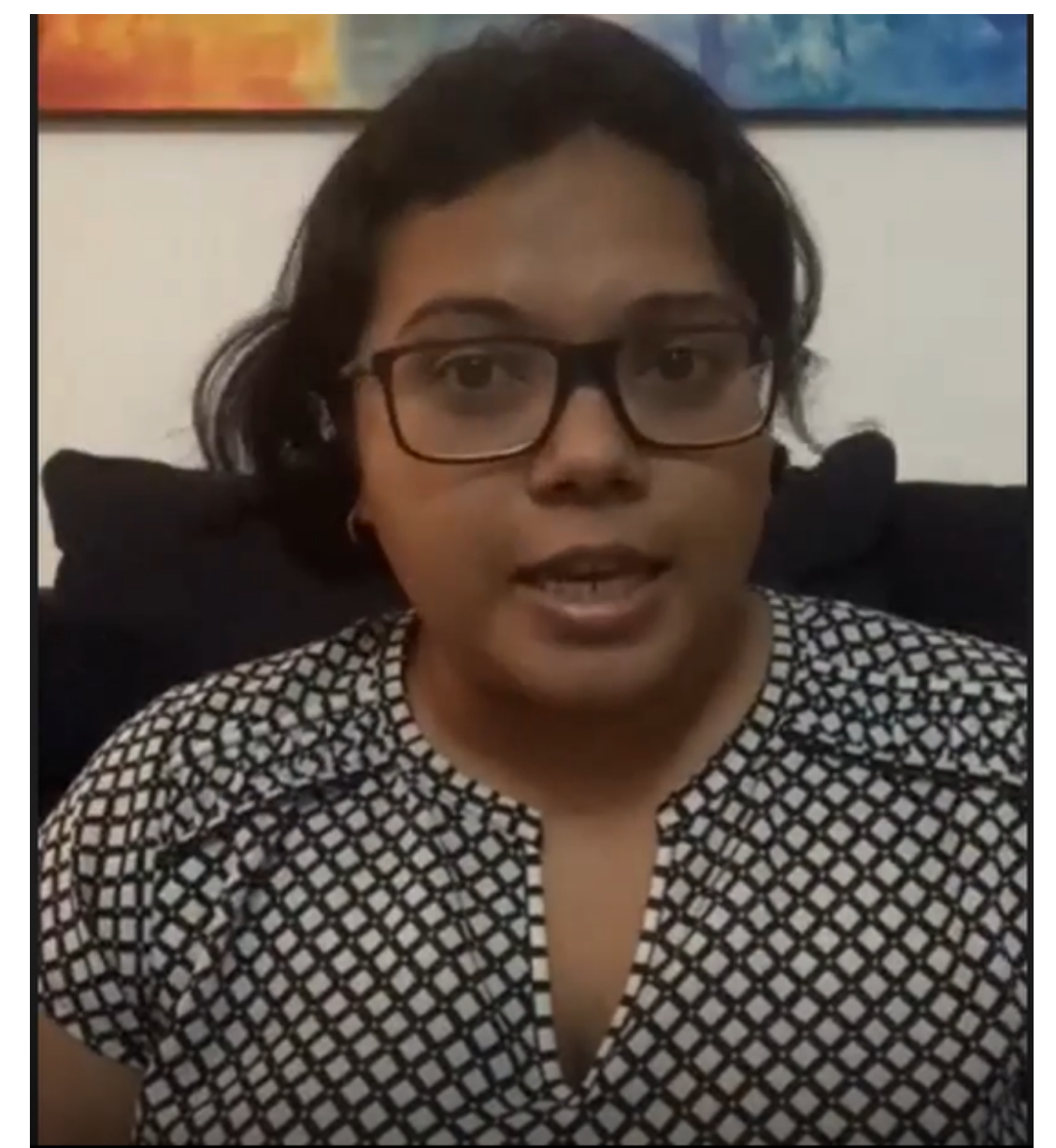


The first speaker, Mr. W.M.V. Wansekara of the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE), focused on the **major shifts** SLBFE is projecting in light of the COVID-19 pandemic for **outward labour migration**, and what they have been doing to support the migrant's workers returning to Sri Lanka and stranded in host countries.

Mr. Wansekara (left) has served in SLBFE for 35 years in various capacities. He is currently the Additional General Manager for International Affairs at the Bureau. He has also served in Sri Lankan Missions abroad as Counsellor - Employment and Welfare.

Next, Ms. Madushika Lansakara of the Embassy of Switzerland to Sri Lanka and Maldives, spoke about **regional and global platforms** on migration and development, as well as **civil society engagement** to address concerns of migrant workers due to the pandemic.

Ms. Lansakara (right) has over 15 years' experience working with NGOs, the Red Cross Movement, and the United Nations. For the past five years, she has been working for the Global Programme Migration and Development of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, implementing the Safe Labour Migration Programme in Sri Lanka.



Finally, Ms. Chandima Arambepola of CEPA, made a case for the importance of **shifting away from the remittance's lens** and the migration for development agenda/discourse we all have accepted as the norm and rather, advocate for a focus on the migrant workers themselves. She questioned, among **migrant workers**, who would be **disproportionately affected by the pandemic** (by skills level, by type of sector and countries of destination and by gender); how their families and households will be affected; and how failing institutional responses and

protections can be strengthened or realigned to facilitate migration for work in a post-pandemic situation?

Leading CEPA's labour migration research thematic, **Ms. Arambepola's** (above) research has focused mostly on the effects of government policies on female and male Sri Lankan migrant workers seeking work overseas. Her recent work has straddled both internal and external labour migration processes, looking at migrant workers in the apparels industry in Sri Lanka and migrant workers seeking better employment opportunities in the tourism industry overseas. She is currently involved in a multi-country study focusing on access to services for victims of human trafficking.

VIRTUAL FIELD VISIT

This year the course introduced a field visit element. Since it was not possible to do a physical field visit, a virtual field visit was planned instead. Past participants who are working in the field of migration were reached out to, and a topic that was crucial but was not widely covered in the lectures was focused on; i.e. **Trafficking in Persons (TIP)**. This was an extremely interesting interactive session as the resource persons presented insights from their practical experience on the field. The following were the resource persons for this session:

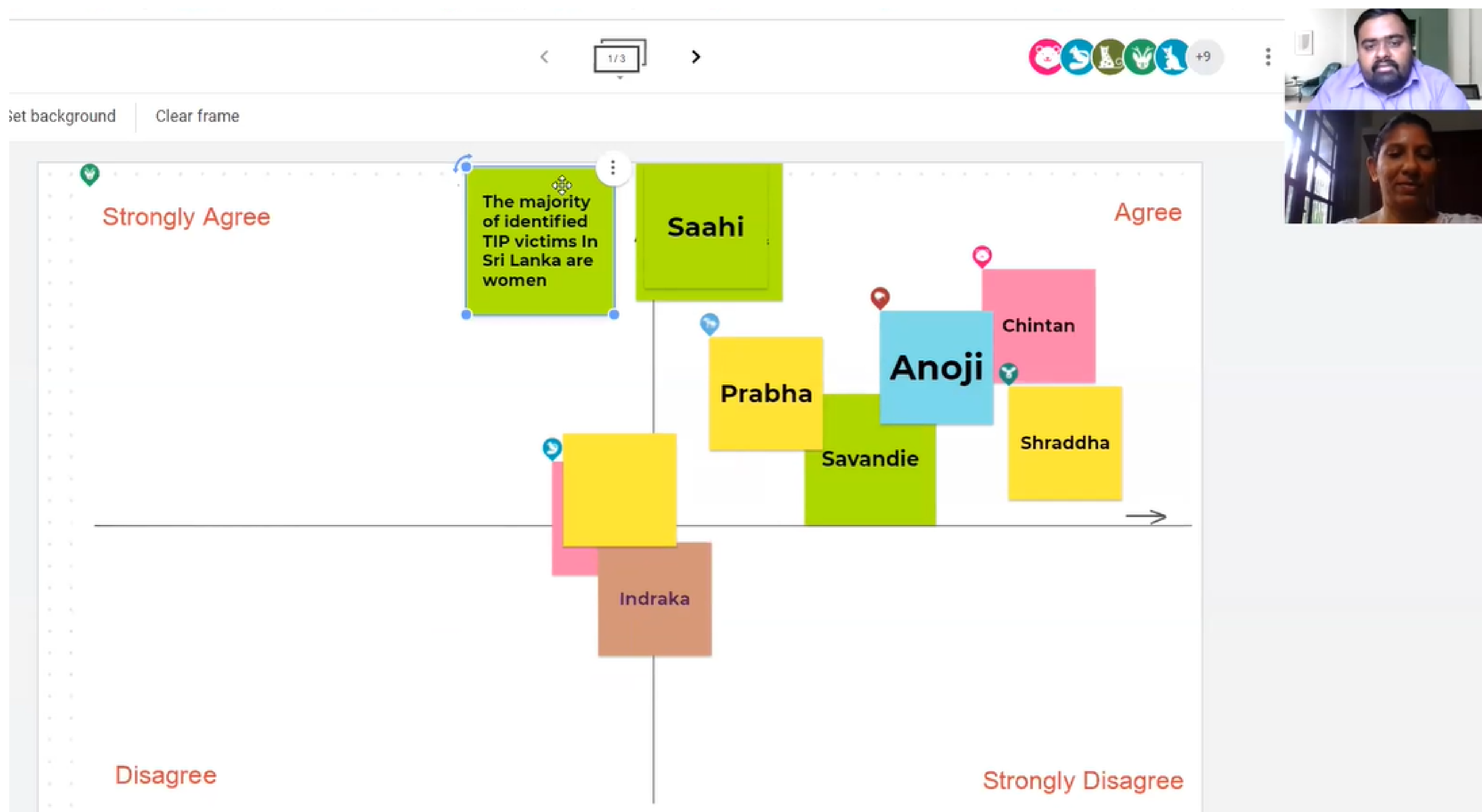
Ms. Chaithri Ranatunge joined The Asia Foundation (TAF) in 2013 and has worked on the Victims of Trauma Treatment Program on both a full- and part-time basis. Currently as a Program Manager of the Gender and Justice Program she contributes to TAF's work in combatting human trafficking in Sri Lanka.

Ms. Umanga Settinayake currently works as a Senior Program Officer for the Gender and Justice Program of TAF. She joined TAF in 2018 and has worked on the 'Equipping Sri Lanka to Counter trafficking in Persons' project since then and contributes to TAF's work in combatting human trafficking in Sri Lanka.

Mr. Indraka Ubeyasinghe is currently a project manager at Helvetas Intercooperation. He has over 12 years of experiences in the development sector in varied capacities as a development practitioner, researcher, and project manager.

Mr. Ganeshanathan Saahithiyanan (Saahi) is a project officer at Helvetas Intercooperation. He works on areas such as Migration, Information rights and digital governance. Prior to his assignment at Helvetas, he worked for IOM. He is also an industry coach and trainer and leads many professional and volunteer networks, especially in the areas of social innovation, climate change and digital literacy.

Additionally, one of the participants **Mr. Prabath Aluthge**, Deputy Controller of the Department of Immigration and Emigration, joined the discussions sharing his practical field experience in identifying the first victim of human trafficking in Sri Lanka.



An interactive activity used in the session

FLIP CLASSROOM SESSION

The final session of the course was a flip classroom session where the participants shared knowledge and insights on a topic of their choice. The participants were divided into five groups, and the assignment was given to them during the second week of the course. They were expected to work together and present on the following topics:

- Group 1 - Migrant Labour Vulnerabilities
- Group 2 - Diaspora
- Group 3 - Impact of COVID-19 on Migration
- Group 4 - Climate Induced Migration
- Group 5 - Human Trafficking

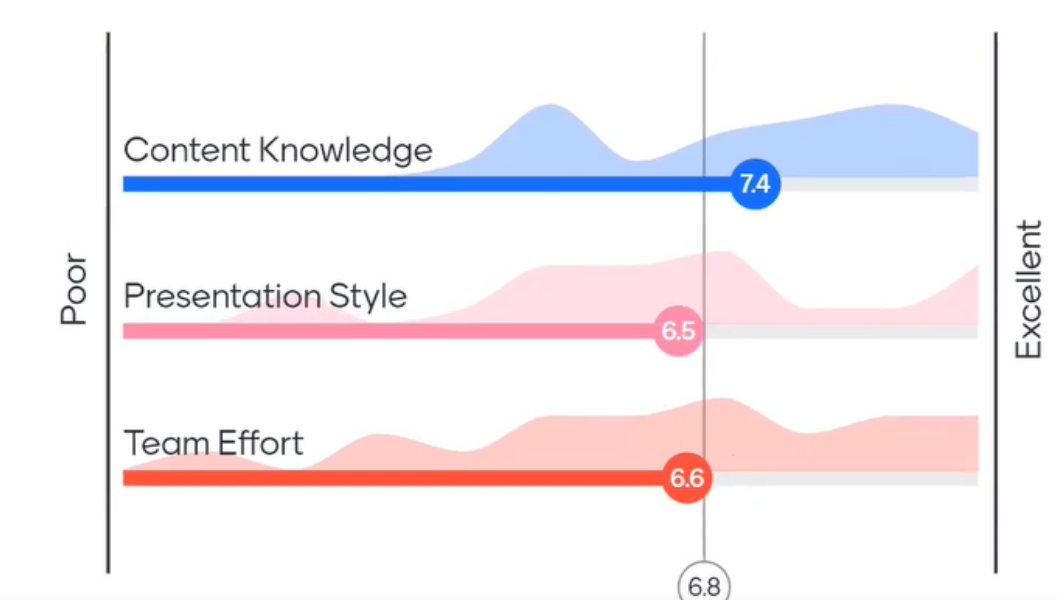
Each group was given a score out of 10 from their peers. They were evaluated by the course participants on content knowledge, presentation style and team effort. Below are snapshots of the presentations and the ratings for each group.

Kafala system & migrant labor vulnerabilities

- The Kafala (sponsorship) system emerged in the 1950's to regulate the relationship between employers and migrant workers in many countries in West Asia
- It remains the routine practice in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Jordan and Lebanon.)
- It makes a migrant worker's immigration status is legally bound to an individual employer or sponsor (kafeel) for their contract period.
- The migrant worker cannot enter the country, transfer employment nor leave the country for any reason without first obtaining explicit written permission or NOC from the kafeel.
- Often the kafeel exerts further control over the migrant worker by confiscating their passport and travel documents, despite legislation in some destination countries that declares this practice illegal.

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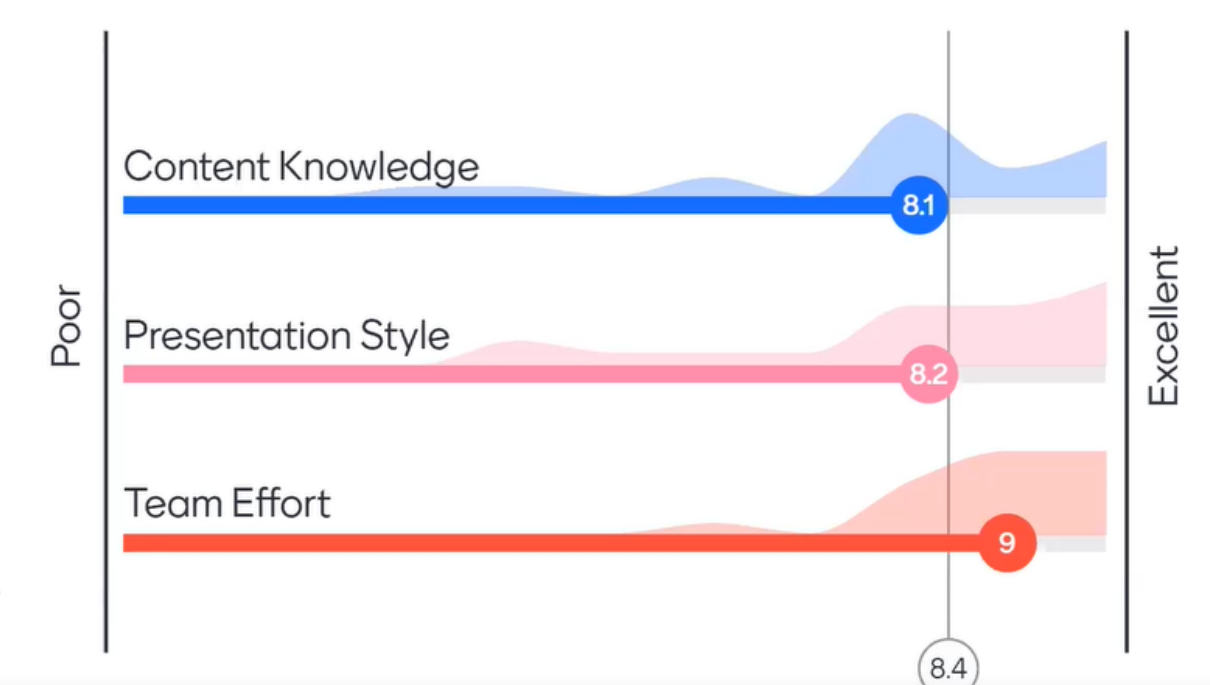
Rating for Group 1 - Migrant Labour Vulnerabilities



Diasporic Discourses for Peace

Group No: 02

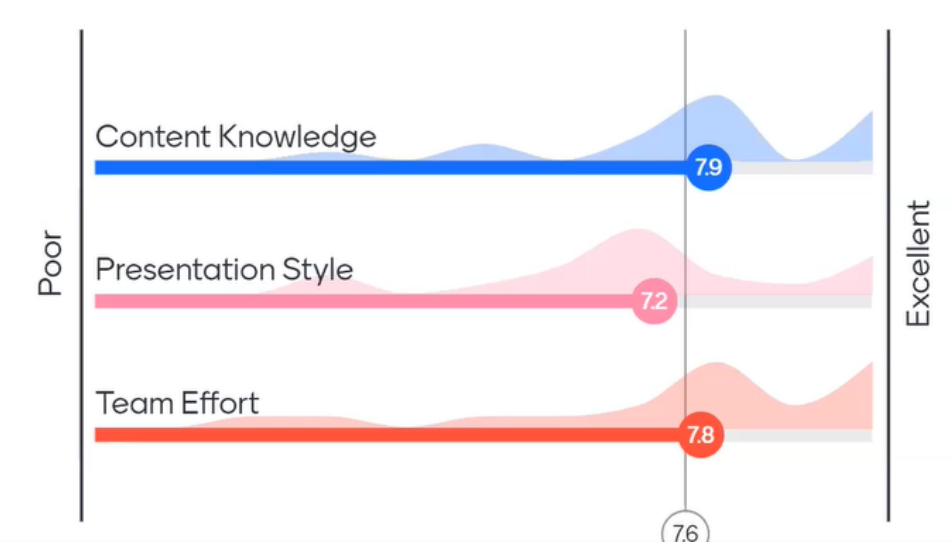
Rating for Group 2 - Diaspora



IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MIGRATION

Rating for Group 3 - Impact of COVID-19 on Migration

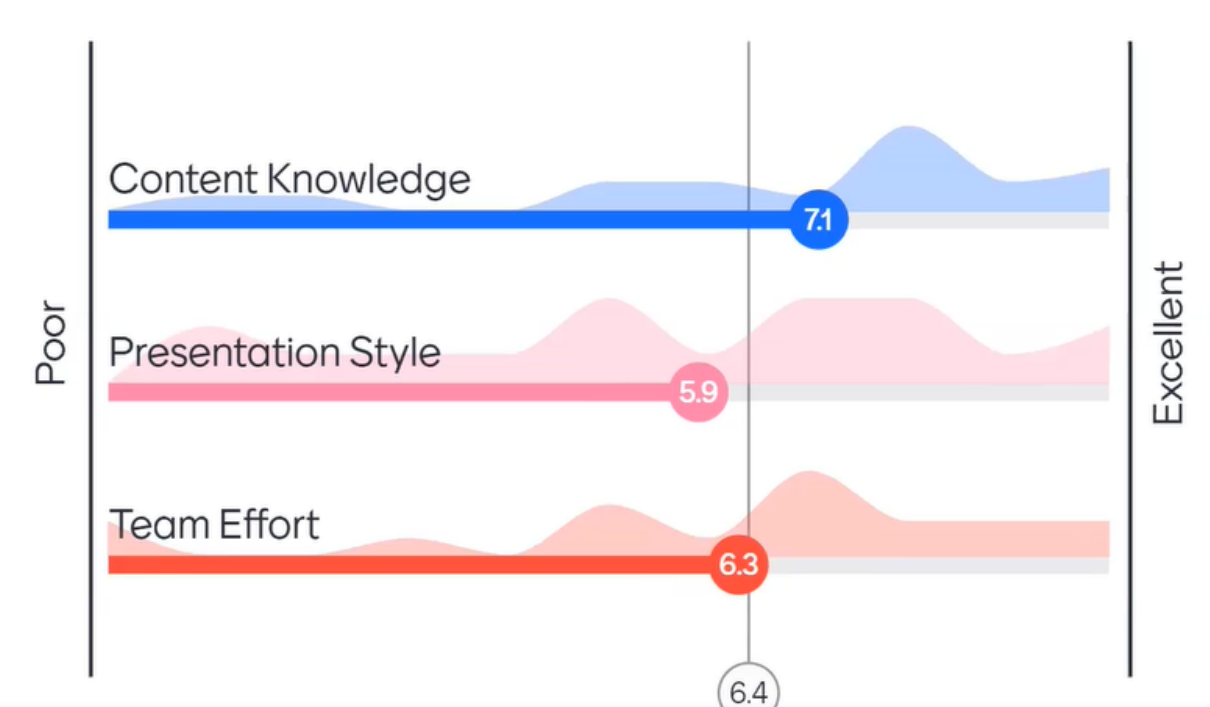
Group Members -
Anoji Ekanayake
Duleep Galewela
Nirosha Hapuarachchi
Rashima De Silva
Shradha Pokharel
T. Jeyakanthan



Link between climate change and climate induced migration

- The World Bank's 2018 report on South Asia's - 800 million people, that is, half the population of South Asia, could see their living standards worsen by 2050 due to the impacts of rising temperatures and unpredictable precipitation due to climate change.
- There could be between 100-200 million climate refugees by 2050.
- The report added that 19million Sri Lankans could be living in moderate or severe hotspots by 2050.
- Back in 1990, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) had noted that the single greatest impact of climate change will be on human migration. In 2018, of the new 28 million internally displaced people in 148 countries, 61 per cent were due to

Rating for Group 4 - Climate Induced Migration



Factors contributing to Human Trafficking

PUSH FACTORS

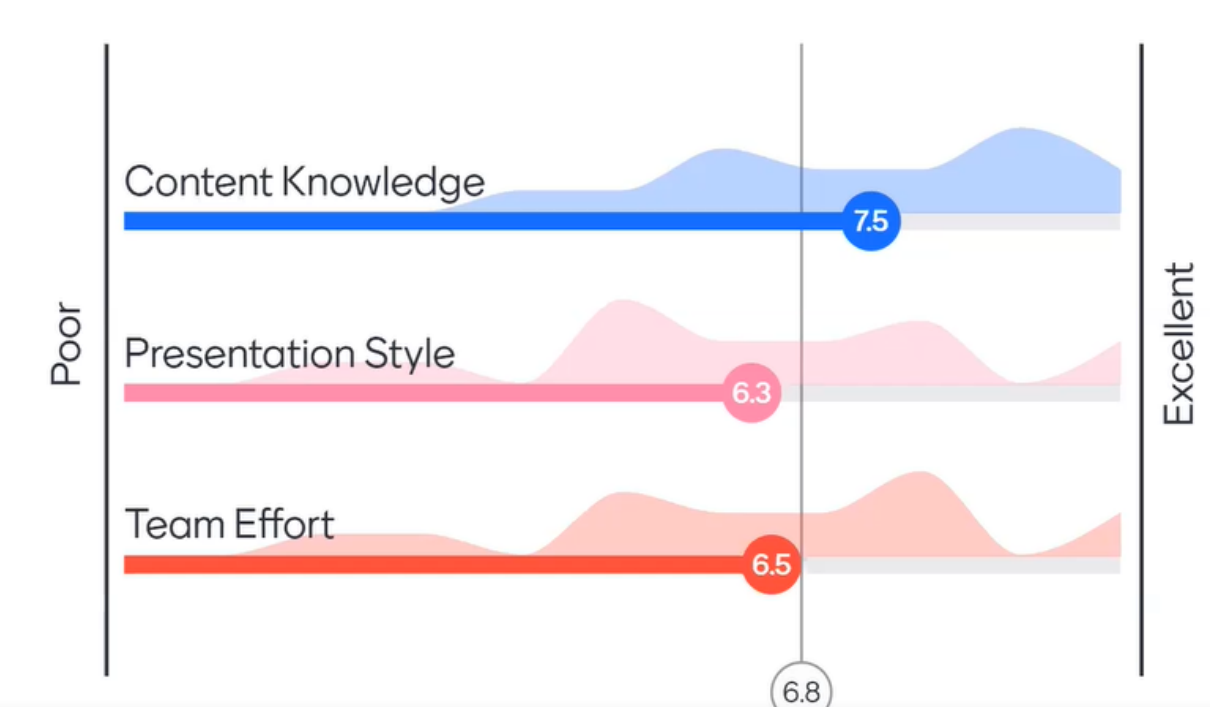
- Poverty
- Lack of Education
- Unemployment
- Recruitment Debt



PULL FACTORS

- High demand for labour
- Weak labour protection policies

Rating for Group 5 - Human Trafficking



A mini evaluation was conducted at the end of each session asking participants to rate the usefulness of the particular session. The table below represents the percentage of participants who found the sessions useful.

SESSION	USEFULNESS %
Lectures	
Migration and Development: An Overview	96%
Global Governance of Migration with Special Focus on the 2030 SDG and GCM	90%
Global Citizenship, Local Belonging - Why Diasporas Still Matter	88%
Migration, Media, and Politics of Representation	100%
Refugees: Conceptualisation	82%
Climate-Induced Migration and The Role of Humanitarian Action	100%
Representation of Migrants in Economics: Women, Wellbeing and Vulnerability	86%
Making of Natives and Migrants: A Case Study from The Arab Gulf States	92%
Critical Perspectives on Securitization and Refugees	91%
Practitioner Panels	
Refugees in South Asia	95%
Impact of COVID-19 on Migration	100%
Other Sessions	
Virtual Field Visit: Human Trafficking	77%
Flip Classroom Session	91%

KEY OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

A course of this nature that focuses particularly on migration and its related issues, is not offered by any mainstream academic institutions or university in Sri Lanka. Therefore, CEPA was able to conduct this course by pooling its human resources and networks to deliver in a way that is effective and impactful. Following are the outcomes of the course, and how the course was able to create an impact in relation to these outcomes. The following reflections have been drawn from informal interactions, the formal evaluation, and post-course discussions with participants.

Participants gained a deeper understanding on historical causes, processes, and discourses on migration

The course introduced the participants to key debates and topics related to migration. By covering the theoretical concepts the course was able to sensitize participants to the use of appropriate vocabulary when studying and discussing migration. One participant said >

The course also created a ripple effect by providing the foundations of theories while linking them to practice. The curation of theories, concepts and case studies provided participants the opportunity to either refresh their existing knowledge base or equip them with new knowledge. The exposure to new knowledge acted as a trigger to create an interest in the topic and subtopics in this area.

Not only did participants get a theoretical grounding for their work, but by introducing expert panels to coincide with lectures the participants were able to connect the theory with real world experiences, giving them a critical edge in their thinking. Similarly, the lecturers also used case studies to illustrate the theories. One participant said, *“bringing in the case studies was a fantastic way of teaching. It was a good learning experience.”* The case studies also gave participants insight into what is happening in practice in the region, with a specific focus on Sri Lanka, India and Bangladesh. Moreover, the sessions on refugees in Asia helped participants understand regional issues better.

“The way we use language shapes our perception and our perception about migration shapes the language that we use...”

“The last session done on securitization was the best, mainly because it was highly relatable.”

“It was [...] intense but very interesting 5 weeks together, though virtually, a course that brought the larger spectrum of migration in an entirely different perspective. We had wonderful lecture panels and very interesting discussions.”

Participants gained a deeper understanding on the impact of COVID-19 on migration

Given the current COVID-19 context, it is highly relevant and important to talk about migration and mobility. This is particularly relevant for policy makers, development sector workers, researchers and academics who are working on various issues related to migration. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has created a bidirectional impact on migration, and migration takes the centre of COVID-19 infection management. The COVID-19 situation has changed national, regional, and global mobility patterns as governments have imposed travel restrictions both internally as well as internationally. Both visible and invisible borders have been reinforced, re-introduced, and re-imposed by states and authorities constraining mobilities across and within borders. Moreover, COVID-19 further legitimised state-imposed securitisation, social stigmatisation, and exclusion of certain migratory populations. These policies combined with already prevalent securitisation measures create complex outcomes on moving people and in the process of migration. These effects COVID-19 has had on migration was a running theme throughout the course. Whilst almost every lecture had an element of this built in, participants too brought up the issues during Q&A and discussions. Moreover, this issue was brought into clearer focus by introducing the panel on this topic, and also including it as a topic in the flip classroom session.

Participants gained analytical skills to assess policy responses and apply learnings in their work/practice

The course persuaded the participants to critically look at their ongoing work and helped them view problems with new angles and perspectives, which can inform and enhance their work further. The level of engagement, type of questions and responses after these sessions, particularly by the participants representing state institutions indicated that the sessions on securitisation and media representation of refugees were particularly useful in challenging their existing perspectives on migrants, refugees and migration issues. The participants also suggested the course gave clarity on the role of media in creating and maintaining a particular securitised narrative with regard to refugees. In a follow up interview with some participants, one participant who is a freelance journalist stated that ✓

"The module on media representation was quite useful for me... when addressing migration issues in my work I use the terminology and knowledge that I learned through this course"

One participant indicated that some of the elements that he has learned enabled him to think outside the box ✓

"It broadened my spectrum of understanding and introduced me to different frameworks that can be used in implementing my work"

Another participant who works in the government sector provided an example of how the theoretical learnings from the course can be applied in his work in Sri Lanka's border protection >

"As a practitioner, when you are in the field, not only experiences are important, but a strong theoretical background is important. If you identify a situation of human trafficking just identifying it is not enough, when you take it to the higher authorities you need strong knowledge to back it up"

Networking between participants led to synergistic collaborations

Although the course was delivered online, the faculty and CEPA ensured effective interaction by incorporating group work. Group assignments created the opportunity for cross fertilisation of ideas amongst participants. Although having the same level of interest in the topic, it was a diverse cohort of participants with varied backgrounds and experiences, which provided a rich base for discussion and sharing of knowledge and experiences. Whilst networking opportunities were created during the course through the interactive group work, participants suggested that having more informal 'ice-breaker' type elements would have helped create a stronger connection amongst participants. Similarly, CEPA intends to facilitate the continuation of the network beyond the course, by creating a contact database, creating a social media group and organising a mid-term reunion, so that ideas and new knowledge can be constantly shared, but also foster a sense of community amongst the group of participants. This would also help CEPA gain an in-depth understanding on the long-term impacts of the course.



CHALLENGES

Most of the challenges faced is related to the fact that this is the first time CEPA conducted a course online. We had to learn to **navigate and coordinate every aspect of the course online**, from sourcing faculty, to arranging course material, and ensuring that students receive clear and accurate information to easily access the learning material and sessions. We also had to come up with innovative ways to keep the lectures interactive, engaging, and interesting.

Scheduling sessions was a challenge. In previous years, the course was scheduled in advance, over 4-5 days, and resource persons and participants would allocate time to be at that particular location. However, this time the schedule had to undergo many edits to accommodate the availability of the faculty members – this may have slightly affected the flow of the entire course. The timing of the sessions had to be consistent every week, therefore we had to consider the time zones of all resource persons and participants to decide on a mutually agreeable time.

The next challenge was to **create the energy and atmosphere that usually is present in a physical setting** when everyone is present in one location. Similarly, after a course of one month, it is expected that participants will have created strong relationships by having the opportunity to network. In this online setting, it was difficult to create the opportunities to connect and network. However, CEPA tried to do this by having many breakout sessions where participants can discuss in smaller groups, and also by introducing the flip classroom session, where participants had to interact with their groups regularly to plan their presentations. However, there is a difference in interacting with a person face-to-face and through a screen, that could not be circumvented due to the situation we are currently facing.

Finally, it was challenging to **source speakers for the panels**. Although COVID-19 has proven that it is possible to access speakers from across the world, there are also other online events and webinars that take place regularly, therefore there were a few speakers who turned down the invitation. Similarly, due to the urgent situation that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) is dealing with in repatriating Sri Lankans stranded abroad, resource persons nor an adequate number of participants from MFA could not be secured for this year's course.

AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

These reflections regarding the points of improvement for next time are derived from feedback received from participants. Changes will be made accordingly in the next short course to be held in 2021.

1 To have a central portal for participants to access learning material, course schedule and directly join sessions, such as a platform like Moodle or Google Classroom ▼

2 To manage time better by setting guidelines for each lecture so that there will be guaranteed time for longer discussions.

3 Whilst some sessions were very interactive, some could have been improved. Therefore, to set guidelines on making sessions more interactive. For example, by making it mandatory to break the session up into three distinct components ▼

"The session on climate induce migration was more interactive compared to other sessions"

5 In terms of conceptual content, there could be more focus on climate induced migration and other areas such as human smuggling and bringing in a legal perspective of migration. Similarly, the focus tended to be on Sri Lanka, India and Bangladesh. Participants would benefit from bringing in case studies from other South Asian contexts such as Bhutan, Maldives, Afghanistan, Tibet etc. ▶

"Please focus on human smuggling too"

"LGBTQ migration and religious migration (all related to persecution)... could have been covered"

6 Whilst the flip classroom session was good way to validate knowledge, it would also be beneficial to include a short writing assignment and also encourage active participation in all sessions ▶

"Develop a learning management system like a Google Classrooms or a Moodle to enable the interaction among learners and facilitators, host contents and do Zoom"

4 Although the breakout groups were useful in having smaller group discussions. There were instances where the group was not as engaged. Therefore, it will be useful to include a facilitator from CEPA in each group to encourage more vibrant discussions.

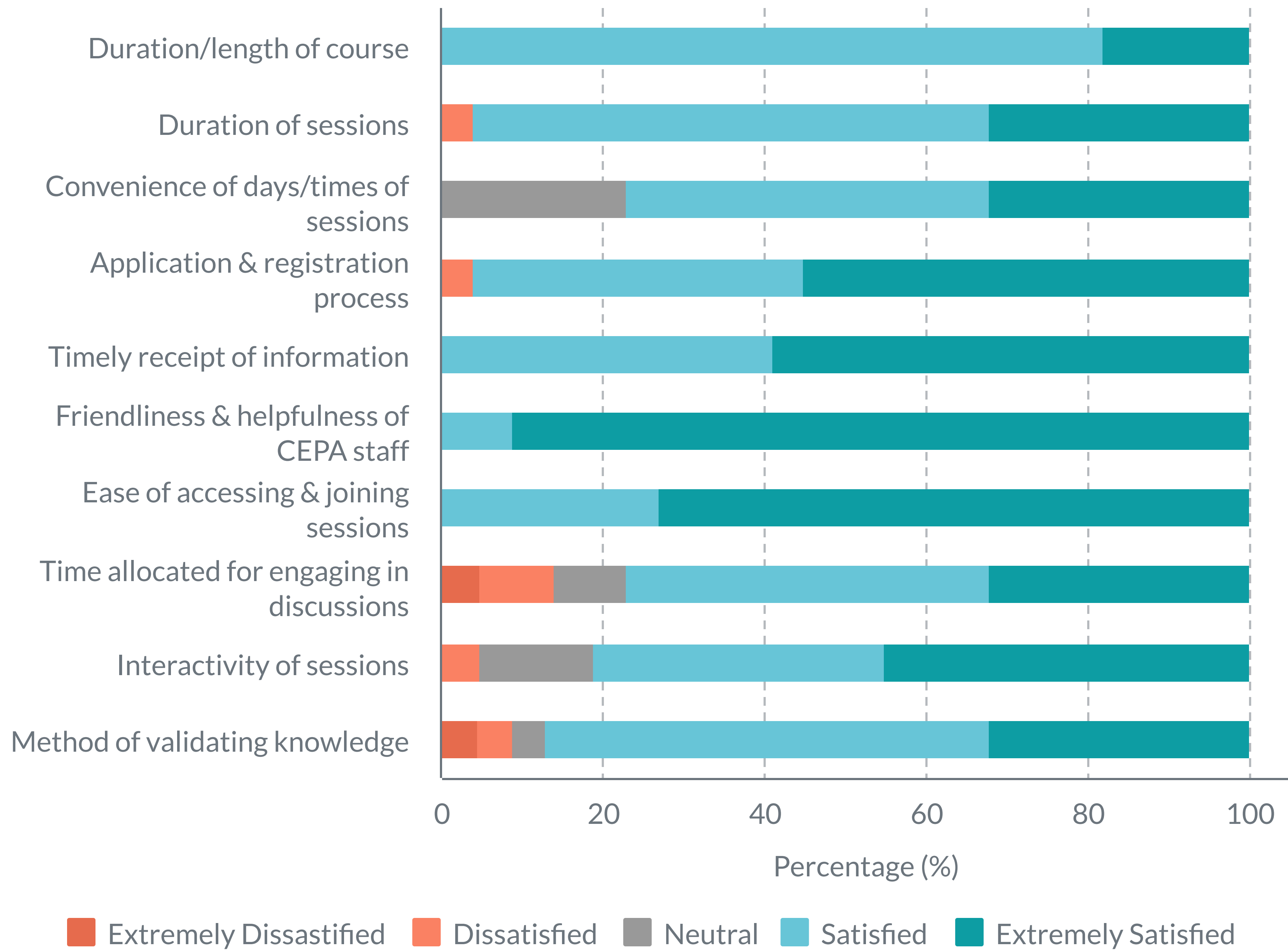
"I hope that CEPA will look at the concepts of 'Human Trafficking' and 'Modern Day Slavery' (critically), so that practitioners can overcome harmful conceptualisations, interventions and project frameworks"

"More sessions on climate change would have been appreciated"

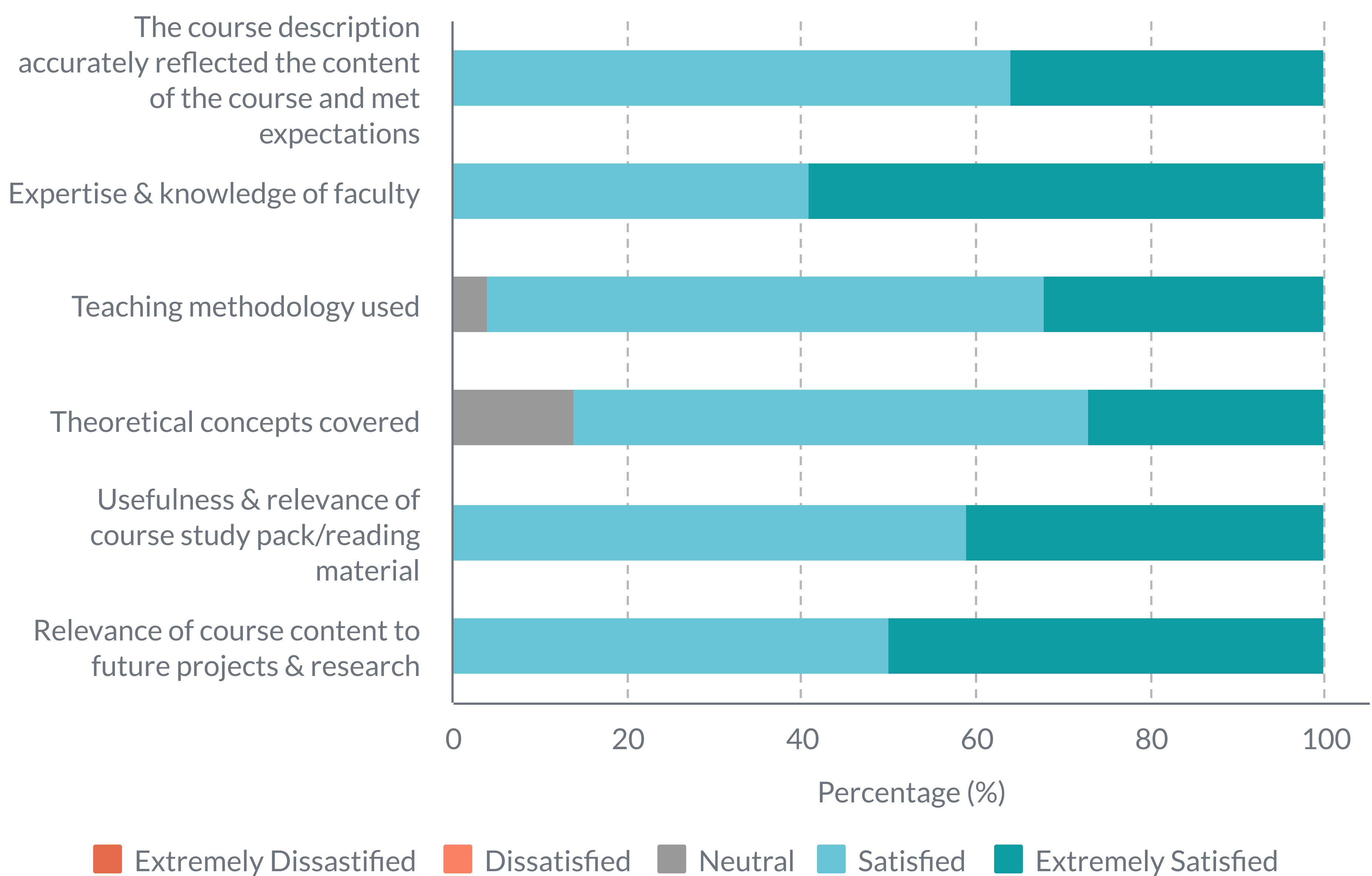
"In addition to presentations, a short assignment is recommended"

EVALUATION

Participants evaluated the level of satisfaction regarding the logistical aspects of the implementation of the course. Here are their ratings from a scale of Extremely Satisfied to Extremely Dissatisfied. Overall most participants were 'extremely satisfied' with the organizational aspects of the course.

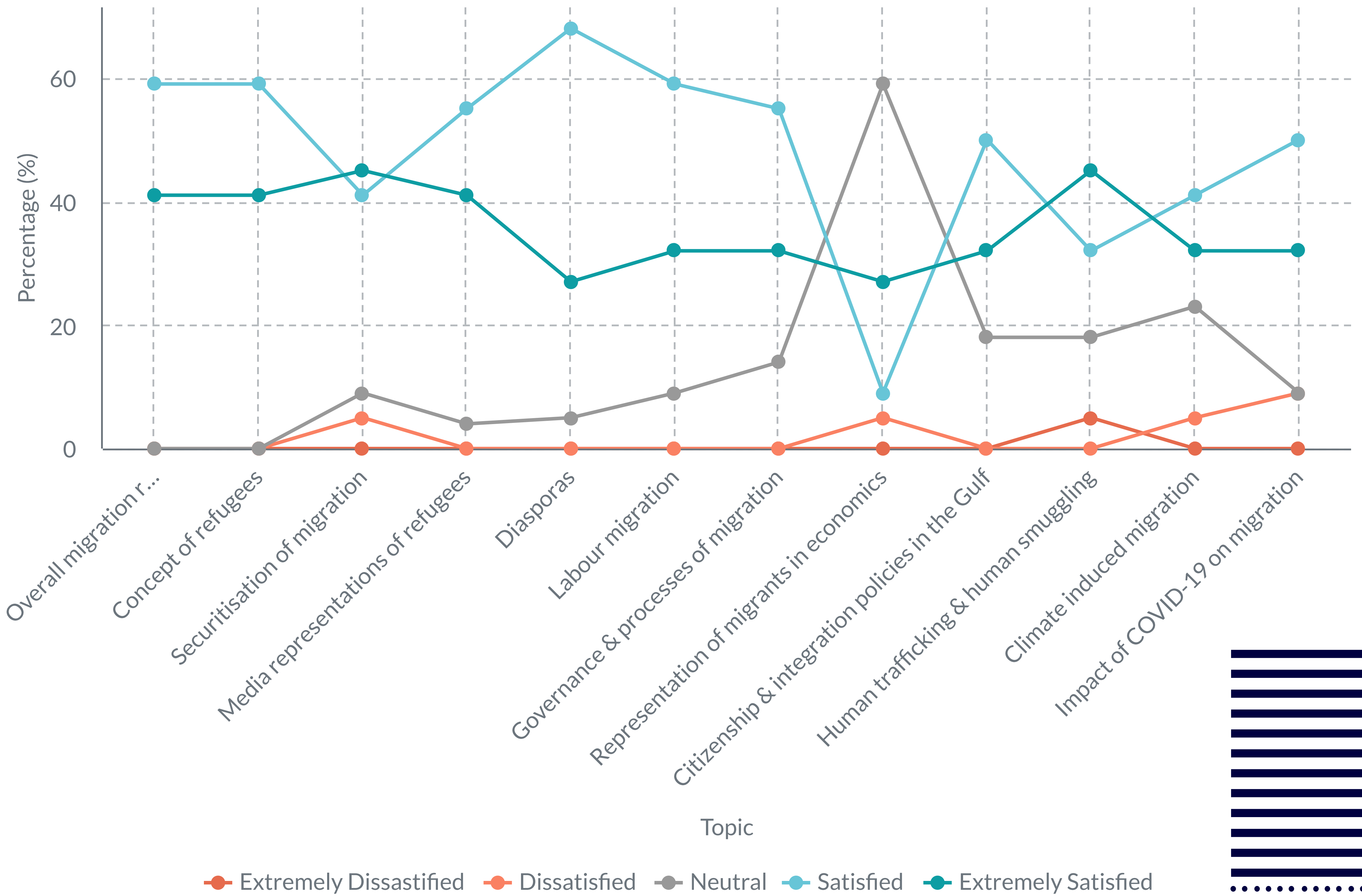


Participants rated their level of satisfaction with the course content from a scale of Extremely Satisfied to Extremely Dissatisfied. Overall majority of participants were 'satisfied' with the quality of the content covered in the course.



Participants evaluated their satisfaction with the topics covered in the course. They were asked to rate their level of satisfaction based on how each topic covered contributed to and enhanced their knowledge on the matter. Below are the ratings:

The course's contribution to my understanding of...



91%

of participants said they will participate in a similar course organised by CEPA

100%

RECOMMEND

courses organised by CEPA to their friends and colleagues.

8.9

OVERALL SATISFACTION

Note: The calculations are based on responses from 22 participants who completed the entire course. The overall satisfaction is scored out of a total of 10 points.

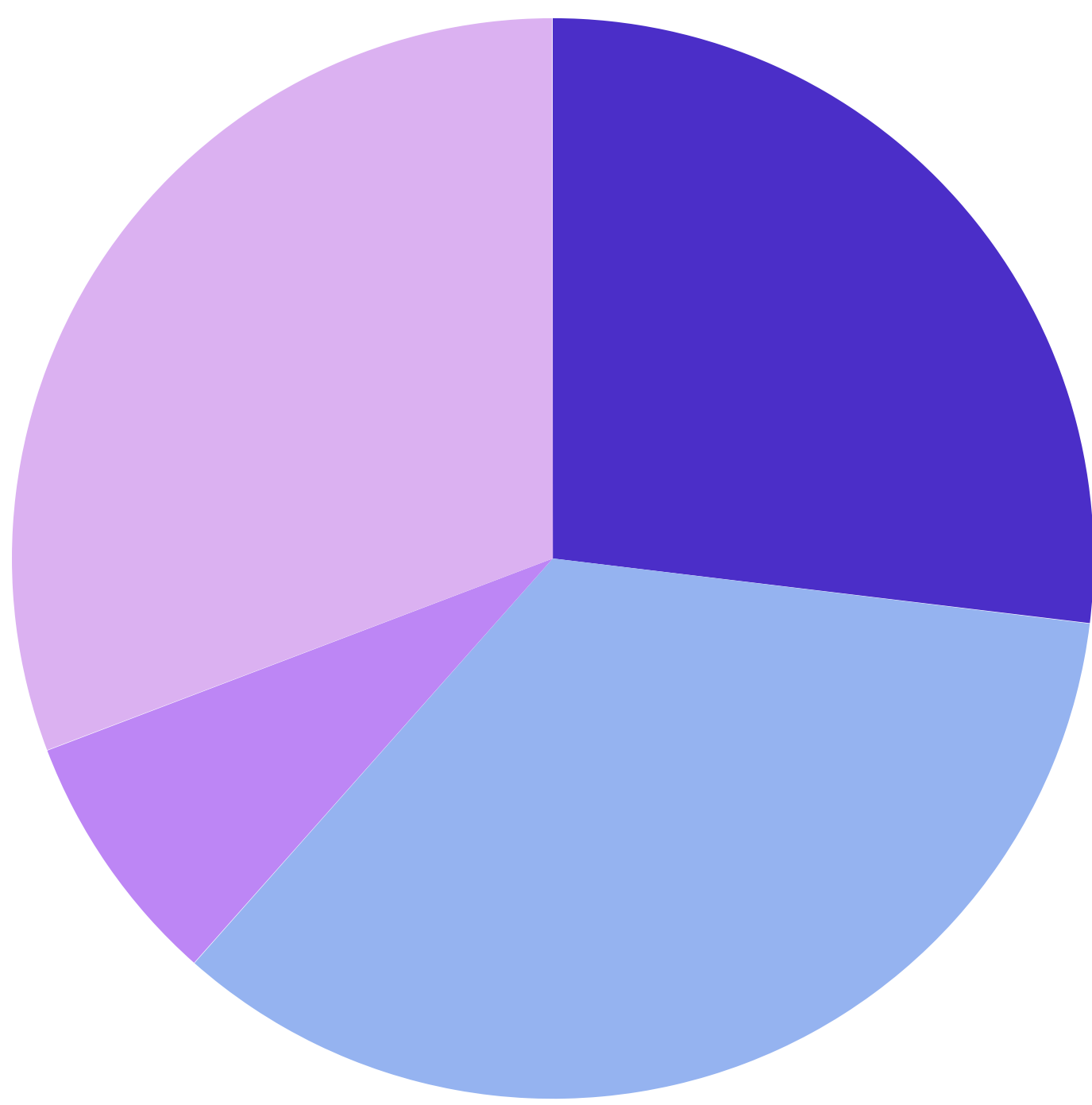
PARTICIPANT PROFILES

41
Applicants

26
Completed the Course

30
Participants Selected

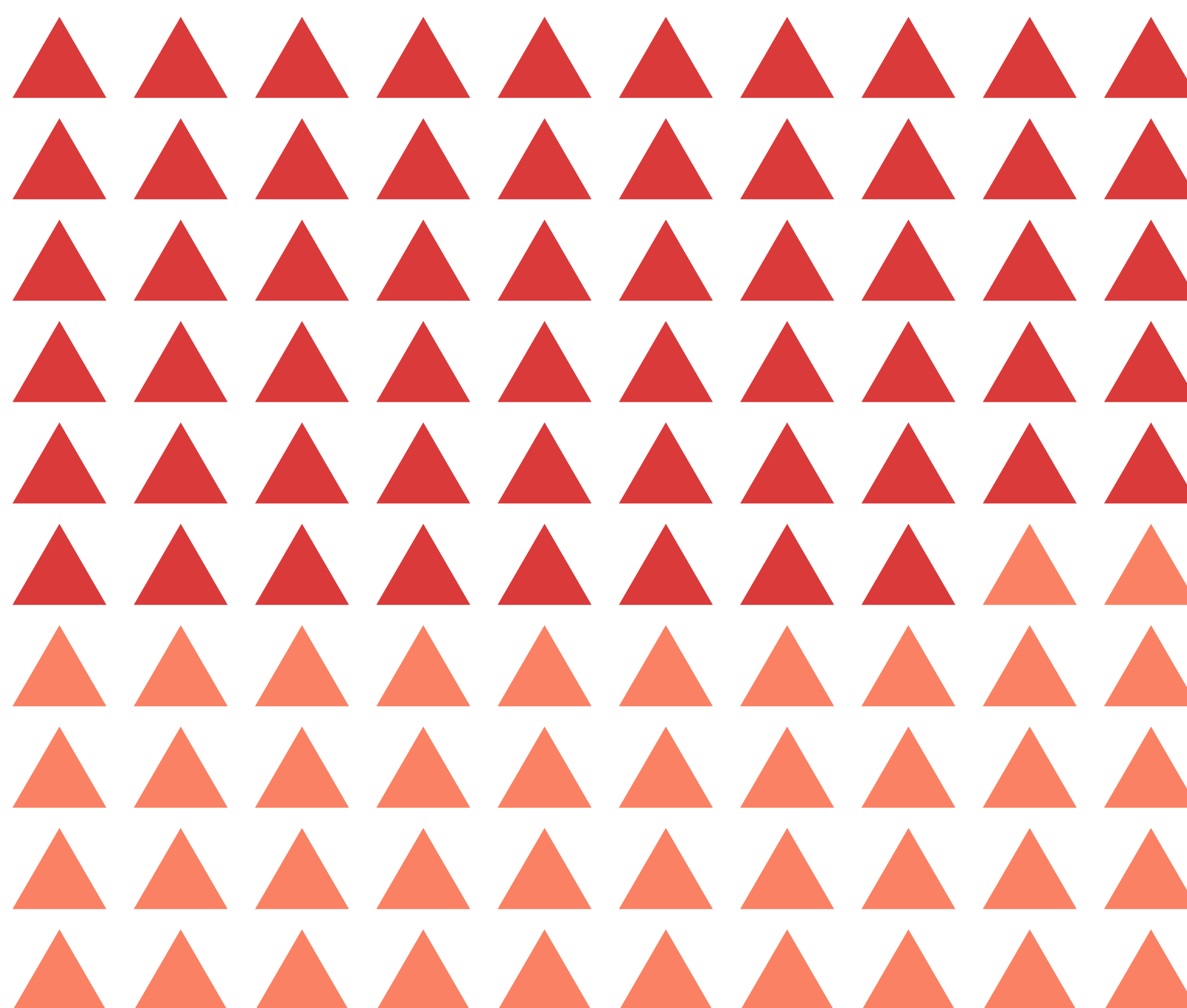
Background



■ Government Sector (26.92%)
■ INGO/NGO (34.62%) ■ Misson (7.69%)
■ Research/Academia (30.77%)

■ Participants with prior experience in migration (61.54%)
■ Participants without prior experience in migration (38.46%)

Men/Women Ratio



■ Men (57.69%) ■ Women (42.31%)

This report was prepared by the Centre for Poverty Analysis
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