

# Fleeing Conflict Zones & Global Migration: Effects on family relationships

National Council on  
Family Relations  
Conference,  
Orlando, Florida

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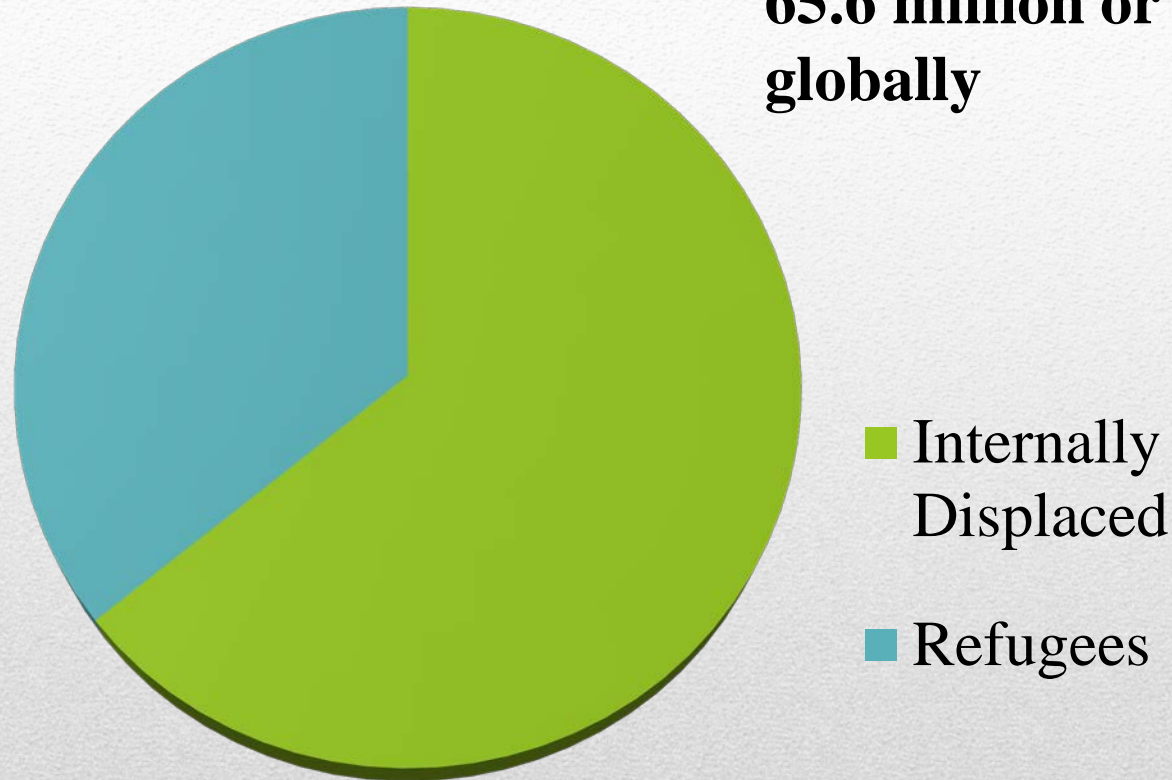


- Examine subjective effects of displacement and forced migration on family relationships
- Extend understanding of how to support healthy and resilient families and communities in a global context

# Aims & Goals

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**65.6 million or 1 in 113  
globally**



# Displaced Persons

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- **Losses –**
  - social networks, extended families, status
- **Collectivism –**
  - interdependence, tradition, fidelity
- **Adjustments and Coping –**
  - war, migration
- **Supports –**
  - health, safety, well-being

# Impact on Families

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- **30 participants**
- **13 female 17 male**
- **Countries of origin: Syria (14), Iraq (16)**
- **Age: 29-62 (mean 40 years)**
- **Household size: 4-8 family members**
- **In transit: 13 months – 8 years**
- **In Canada: 6 months – 7 years**

# Methods

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- **Semi-structured interviews conducted in Arabic**
- **Transcribed & coded in Arabic (part team)**
- **Codes with example quotes in English to full team**
- **Full team engaged in grouping codes – identifying primary themes and relationships**

# Interviews & Thematic Analysis

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- “The only thing that I can give my children after we left our country of origin is advice as I am unable to provide for them financially. ...When the person does not work to provide for oneself and family he will not feel joy. When I work and provide for my home I feel my essence and entity.”[P2-Male]

## Protection & Provision

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- “Now I want to work, the happiness inside me comes when I secure my family’s increased demands and provide them with happiness and thus they would love me more. My family is empathetic with my situation, and really, they do; yet, at the same time they are worried. They empathize with my reality and respect my situation that I am not working and I am unable to secure their needs, but worried at the same time, meaning they dream that I would get an opportunity to work and secure their demands.” [P7-Male]

## Protection & Provision

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- “We became distant because of our increased responsibilities and difficult life. Our concern is how to manage and provide for our children. We need to work and we want them to be happy, to provide their needs in schools and to pay for their school trips. We need to learn how to navigate and get to new areas but our language is not very good, and I can say that after three years in Canada, we got integrated a bit into the society.  
[P20-Female]

## Marital Relationships

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- “I felt broken and disheartened. I did not excuse him in my country of origin, but finally and after what I have been through I excused my husband for failing me.”[P12-Female]

## Marital Relationships

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- “I am concerned not about their integration in the Canadian society that has lot of great things but this is the only bad thing (sex education) that I cannot accept. However, I cannot deny the good societal trait such as no one can discriminate against others or commit an offense in the society. I am taking good care of my children 99% and I wonder the wisdom behind it (sex education), and its impact I do not know, I do not know.”  
[P12-Female]

## Families' values, hopes, & dreams

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- “My wife and I are concerned about the grey area of our life in Canada. The ultimate freedom that Canada gives to individuals worries me. For instance, I have encountered some issues with a service provider around my children that I could not solve because my children have the right to decide.” [P18-Male]

Families' values, hopes, & dreams

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- “Despite that I was able to visit my family and, I used to visit my mother and see her and she visited me with my sisters, so we visited each other, so I was not feeling (lonely) and they supported me when I got sick, when I delivered my daughter, and when my daughter was admitted to the hospital and underwent a surgery. In Canada, I decided to depend on myself, and for everything I decided to depend on myself and endure. [P10-Female]

## Families' values, hopes, & dreams

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- **During war, in transit and post-migration settlement**
- **Parenting: Protection and Provision**
- **Gender, Social Norms – new family structures**
- **Families' Values, Hopes, and Dreams**

## Changes in Spousal & Parent-Child Relationships

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- **Context of migration and trauma/life in conflict zone:**
  - **Risk assessment**
  - **Couple and family counselling**
  - **Settlement**
  - **Child Welfare and Education systems**

# Implications for Practice

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- **Identify BOTH risk and resilience**
- **Allow time for change**
- **Learn from creative responses to complex and traumatic situations in past**
- **Consider collectivism**

## **Implications for Practice**

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Funding for research provided by Doha  
International Family Institute, Qatar



Support for research provided by  
Muslim Resource Centre for Social Support and Integration, London, Canada  
University of Guelph, Canada  
University of Calgary, Canada

