



## **GENDER BASED VIOLENCE: Fact Sheet**

### **What is Gender Based Violence (GBV)?**

- The United Nations (1996) defines gender-based abuse, stating it is “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.”
- While not the only form of gender-based violence, violence perpetrated by an intimate partner is a concern. The 2010 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey found that in the United States, 35.6% of women have experienced rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner at some point in their life (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014).

### **Intersection between HIV infection and GBV**

- The risk of HIV infection among women who have experienced violence is up to 3 times greater than for women who have not been abused (Global Health Council, 2006).
- Women living with HIV experience intimate partner violence at a rate that is double that experienced by all women in the United States (Machtiger, Wilson, Haberer, & Weiss, 2012a).
- Experiencing trauma can impact health outcomes and risk behaviors of women living with HIV. For example, recent trauma is associated with increased chances of antiretroviral failure. Additionally, women who experienced recent trauma were more likely to not use a condom with a partner whose HIV status was negative or unknown, than women who had not experienced recent trauma (Machtiger, Haberer, Wilson, & Weiss, 2012b).
- While uncommon, violence is also reported after a woman discloses her HIV positive status. The proportion of women reporting violence following HIV disclosure range from .05-4%. Additionally, a very small proportion of women may not get tested for HIV because they fear violence if the results are positive (Koenig & Moore, 2000).
- Additionally, violence is a concern when adopting behaviors that can prevent HIV. For instance, 5% of women fear that violence could result from asking their partners to use a condom and 4-5% experienced violence as a result of condom negotiation (Koenig & Moore, 2000).
- Perpetrators of intimate partner violence have used HIV stigma as a form of abuse (National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 2013).

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