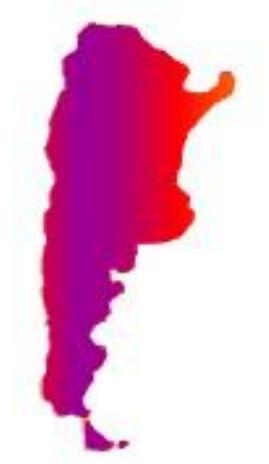




## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND FEMINIZATION OF HIV/AIDS IN ARGENTINA

*Two sides of one reality: Violence against women and feminization of HIV/AIDS in MERCOSUR* is a project being developed since 2008 in four countries of the Mercosur: Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay. Its main goal is to make visible the magnitude of the linkages between violence against women and HIV/AIDS as well as to promote public policies that comprehensively address care and prevention of both. In 2008 secondary information was collected and a research in each country was carried out.

The research is an exploratory and descriptive quantitative and qualitative study, to explore the existence of situations of violence in women living with HIV/AIDS and linkages between them. In Argentina, the fieldwork took place between the months of October to December 2008. The survey was administered to 101 women living with HIV over 18 years of age who were receiving care in public health services of the City of Buenos Aires and the north and west area of the Province of Buenos Aires.



### We found:

- Scarce and dispersed statistics on violence against women, particularly sexual violence.
- In regard to HIV, in 2006 the male-female ratio dropped to 2.4 men per woman in AIDS cases and to 1.5 men per woman in HIV infections. In 2006, 62.9% of HIV transmissions were via heterosexual intercourse.
- There are no government programs to articulate strategies for mitigating violence and HIV/AIDS in women. Only in some jurisdictions (City of Buenos Aires, Rosario and others) the protocol for care for victims of sexual violence was incorporated with the provision of Emergency Hormonal Contraception-EHC-to decrease the risk of pregnancy and post-exposure prophylaxis for HIV prevention.
- The prevention and care services of violence against women are provided in a fragmented and disjointed way among specific agencies working on the topic, as well as between them and health services.
- There are no public policies to integrate HIV/AIDS into sexual and reproductive health services. Sexual and reproductive health and HIV services are carried out through separate programs with little connection.
- There is no national protocol for the care of victims of sexual violence that specifies the provision of EHC (emergency hormonal contraception), Post Exposure Prophylaxis for HIV prevention, and psycho-social care.



# VIH/SIDA+VIOLENCIA



## Main quantitative findings:

- 93.1% of the women surveyed reported to have experienced violent situations:
  - 87,7% psychological violence.
  - 76.2% suffered physical violence.
  - 43.6% sexual violence.
  - 36.6% suffered abuse in childhood.
- The different forms of violence often occur in association:
  - 29,8% suffered psychological and physical violence.
  - 18.1% suffered psychological, physical and sexual abuse.
  - 22.4% suffered psychological, physical, sexual and child abuse.
- Out of the 37 women who suffered childhood sexual abuse 97.3% suffered other forms of violence later in their lives.
- The percentage of violent situations is similar across all socioeconomic groups.
- In all the forms of violence studied, men specifically couples, husbands and close relatives are identified as the main aggressors. Psychological violence is perpetrated in 76.4% of cases by ex-husbands or former partners or husband or current partner. In the case of physical violence the percentage is 89.7%
- In 81.9% of sexual violence cases the perpetrators were people close to the women: husbands, partners, parents, uncles, brothers.
- 79.2% of the women surveyed suffered some form of violence before their HIV diagnosis.
- Out of the women surveyed who suffered physical violence 57.4% experienced this type of violence before the HIV diagnosis, 68.3% in the case of psychological violence and 67.3% in the case of sexual violence.
- The highest incidence rates occurred in younger age groups.
- Nearly 70% of the women surveyed witnessed violence towards her mother by her husband, partner or boyfriend during childhood.
- As regards injuries received during the history of violence, 52.08% reported a frequency between once and twice and 33.33% reported more than five times.

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