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**WHERE THERE IS VIOLENCE  
AGAINST WOMEN, THERE IS  
AIDS**

Given the disproportionate impact of HIV and AIDS on women and girls, it is imperative that Congress give gender-based violence high priority when it reauthorizes the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) in early 2008. A new fact sheet from the Family Violence Prevention Fund, Global AIDS Alliance and International Center for Research on Women outlines changes needed in the legislation, including increased funding to stop gender-based violence, legal reforms, and enhanced technical assistance to indigenous women's organizations in PEPFAR countries.

Advocates who monitor PEPFAR activities are deeply concerned about the implementation of its strategies, the new fact sheet says. Specifically, they are concerned about the quality, availability and effectiveness of some programs; the expertise in gender-based violence of those implementing projects addressing this issue; and the willingness of the Office of the Global AIDS coordinator (OGAC), which oversees PEPFAR implementation, to fund stand-alone projects to address gender concerns.

Advocates also are concerned that OGAC feels it cannot fund many primary prevention programs designed to improve women's social, legal and economic status, end violence against women and girls, and change male attitudes and norms, if those programs do not show an immediate and direct relationship with lowering the rate of HIV/AIDS infection. They worry that that gender issues will not be recognized as

central to the success of broader PEPFAR goals around prevention, care and treatment.

Given the disproportionate impact of HIV and AIDS on women and girls, it is imperative that women be at the center of PEPFAR in the next reauthorization, and that gender-based violence in particular be given high priority, the groups say. They recommend:

- **Increased Funding for Gender-Based Violence:** OGAC says it spent \$104 million on gender-based violence, but how the money was actually spent is unclear. Even if all of these funds were directed toward gender-based violence, it would still be a small share of PEPFAR's overall budget of about \$4 billion
- **Recognition of Gender and the Prevention of Gender-Based Violence as Central Strategies in the Prevention of HIV:** PEPFAR will not reach its prevention, care or treatment goals unless it addresses how gender-based violence and coercion influence women's decision-making and their access to health services. In addition, PEPFAR must increase the proportion of funds spent on prevention, specifically addressing violence against women and girls as an essential part of prevention.
- **Technical Assistance:** PEPFAR should require and fund increased technical assistance for understanding and responding to gender-based violence, and partner more closely with indigenous women's organizations in PEPFAR countries to make interventions

culturally relevant, effective and sustainable.

- **Legal Reforms:** PEPFAR should encourage national governments to adopt and strictly enforce laws prohibiting violence against women and girls, and partner with local organizations that help women seeking legal solutions.
- **Measuring Effectiveness:** PEPFAR should require that OGAC develop and track useful indicators that measure effectiveness of programs addressing gender-based violence and their integration with and into HIV/AIDS programming.
- **Information and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis:** PEPFAR should promote universal access to post-exposure prophylaxis, and women

should not have to prove that they have been raped to get it. Access to information on prevention, care and treatment must be available to girls and women, including married women.

- **Transparency:** Information on who is receiving funding, and what programs they are conducting, must be made public.

*To view the full fact sheet and recommendations, go to*  
<http://www.endabuse.org/press/releases.php?Search=Article&ID=214>.

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