

ALCOHOL AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



What is violence against women?

Violence against women 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”¹



Intimate partner violence is the most common type of violence against women

- **Physical and/or sexual violence** against women by male intimate partners is highly prevalent globally and it remains a widespread public health and human rights problem in the Americas.
- In many countries, emerging data indicates an **increase** in risk of **domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic**.
- **Alcohol use** is a risk factor associated with sexual violence and intimate partner violence.



Women face severe consequences in alcohol-related violence.

- **Women are more likely** than men to suffer from their partner’s drinking behavior and **harmful consequences**, such as domestic violence.
- The effects of alcohol use on male perpetrators may also increase the severity of aggression toward a female partner.



The problems with heavy drinking

- Men overall drink a higher total volume of alcohol and have more harmful patterns of drinking, including heavy episodic drinking.
- Heavy drinking contributes to perpetration of violence, including increased risks of intimate partner violence and sexual assault².



How the harm CAN BE ADDRESSED

- **Implement policies** to screen and prevent excessive alcohol use that may lead to perpetration of violence against women and girls.
- **Guarantee** access to comprehensive **health and social care services for women** who have experienced violence.
- **Advocate for evidence-based policies, laws and regulations** to control alcohol use and its availability.

Sources:

1. World Health Organization. Violence Against Women. Geneva: WHO; 2022. Available from: https://www.who.int/health-topics/violence-against-women#tab=tab_1
2. Hoaken PN, Stewart SH. Drugs of Abuse and the Elicitation of Human Aggressive Behavior. *Addict Behav.* 2003 Dec;28(9):1533-54. doi: 10.1016/j.addbeh.2003.08.033. PMID: 14656544.

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