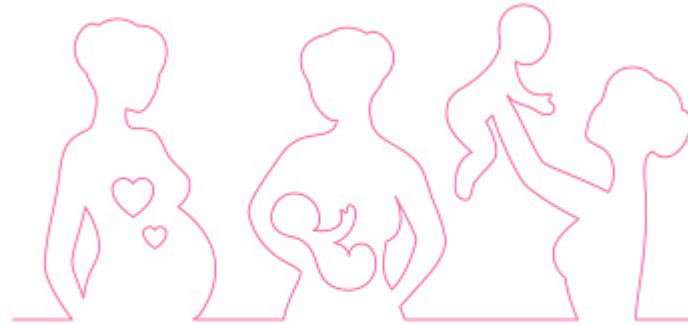


# HIV Prevention Research for Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women: Why it matters

## Pregnancy and breastfeeding and HIV risk



**Sufia Dadabhai, PhD MHS**

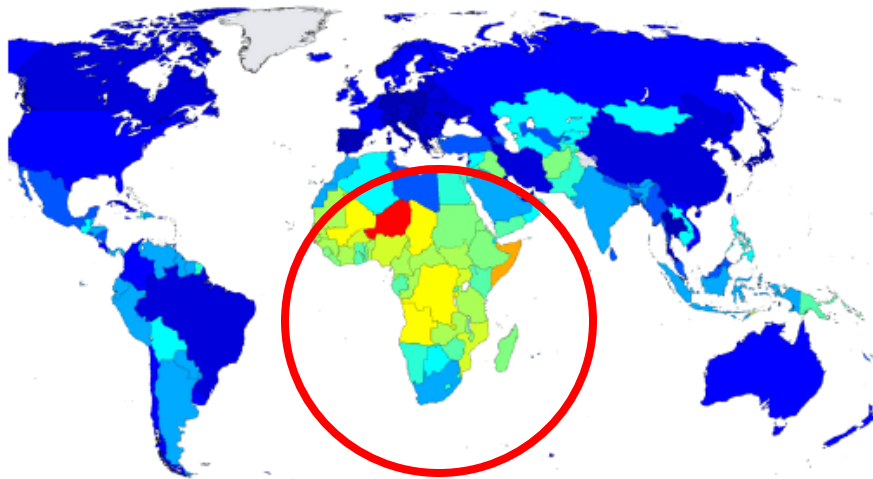
**Johns Hopkins Research Project, Country Director**

**Blantyre Clinical Research Site Leader**

# What do we know well?

(1) Countries where women have high fertility (several babies) and long breastfeeding periods also have high HIV prevalence.

Total fertility rate



■ <2    →    ■ 5.5 to 6

Adult HIV prevalence - 2017



■ <1%    →    ■ >10%

# What do we know well?

## (2) Women are at higher risk of acquiring HIV than men.

- In Malawi... For every one new infection in a man, there are **two** new infections in women
- In Malawi... Among 25-29 year olds, # of current infections is about **three times** greater in women than men. For every 100 men, 5 are living with HIV. For every 100 women, 14 are living with HIV.

# What do we know well?

## (3) Women spend a significant part of their lifetime pregnant or breastfeeding

	Malawi	South Africa	Uganda	Zimbabwe
Average life expectancy (years)	60	66	64	62
Total fertility rate	5	2.3	5.7	3.9
Years pregnant or breastfeeding per pregnancy	1.75	1.75	1.75	1.75
Total time pregnant or breastfeeding (years)	About 9	About 4	About 10	About 7
Percentage of lifetime	15%	6%	16%	11%
Percentage of reproductive years	26%	12%	29%	20%

# What do we know well?

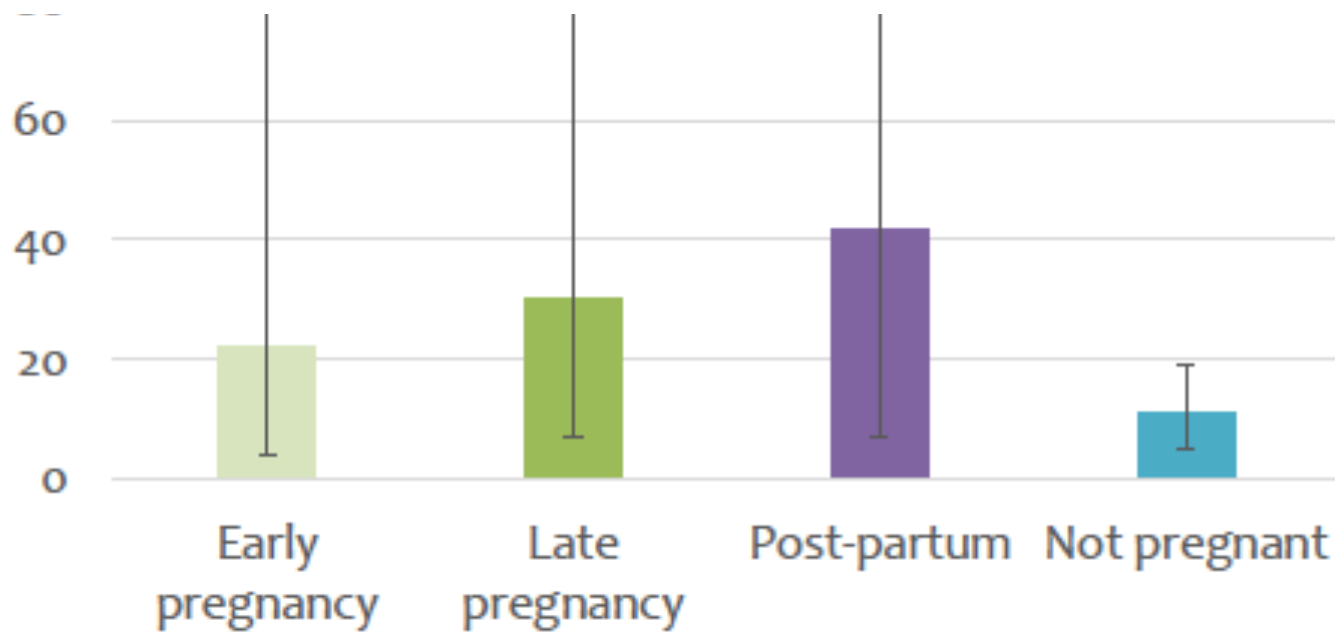
## (4) Malawi is a leader in PMTCT, 1<sup>st</sup> to introduce option B+ in Africa

- If a woman gets HIV during pregnancy or breastfeeding, she is **2 to 3 times** more likely to give her baby HIV than if she got HIV before she was pregnant
- Best way to avoid mother to child transmission of HIV is to **prevent infection in the woman** in the first place.

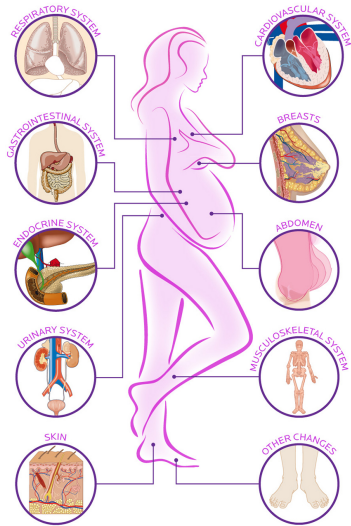
# What does the new research from last year show us?

- Compared to a when a woman is not-pregnant, her risk of getting HIV is **2-3 times** greater during **pregnancy**.
- Compared to when a woman is not pregnant, her risk of getting HIV is **4 times greater** during **breastfeeding**.
- Overall, about **1/3 new HIV infections** in women happen during late pregnancy or breastfeeding
- When a woman is at higher risk for HIV, so is her baby.

# Increased risk of HIV-1 acquisition



# Why do we think this is?



- Body undergoes many changes during pregnancy and breastfeeding

## *Social issues...*

- Pregnant women may face more challenges when negotiating condoms with partners.
- In some cases, male partners of pregnant/breastfeeding women have more sex partners outside of the relationship, adding to HIV risk
- Increases in partner violence during pregnancy/bf may contribute to an increased risk of HIV transmission.



# Take Home Messages

- Women have a **2-4 times higher risk** for getting HIV while pregnant/breastfeeding
- Women in Malawi spend **8-9 years** of their lives pregnant or breastfeeding
- Pregnant and breastfeeding women need...
  - HIV prevention tools that they know are safe for them and their babies (PMTCT agenda)
  - HIV testing throughout pregnancy (beyond 1st trimester) and after
- Without strategies for pregnant and breastfeeding women, control of HIV epidemic will be difficult.

# Acknowledgements

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