

# **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG SURVIVORS IN LEBANON**

ABAAD—Resource Center for Gender Equality, Global Women's Institute at George Washington University



## PARTNERSHIP WITH GWI



- Part of GWI's Project, Building Safe, Ethical GBV Research Capacity in Humanitarian Settings (funded by US DoS BPRM)
- Research priorities were set by stakeholders
  - GBV +MH

## OBJECTIVE + RESEARCH QUESTION



**Objective:** To better understand mental health among adult women survivors of GBV in Lebanon

**Question:** What mental health needs do adult women GBV survivors have, and how do these affect their ability to access GBV and MHPSS services in North Lebanon and the Bekaa?

## LEBANON CONTEXT

- 1.5 million Syrian refugees
- Economic and political instability
- High level of stressors, poverty, statelessness, lack of job opportunities
- These stressors + displacement are associated with GBV
- Lebanon Crisis Response Plan unifies response, but still unable to reach most vulnerable

# BACKGROUND



- Environmental vulnerabilities and GBV services
- Studies have shown association between GBV and MH
- No such studies in Lebanon
- Connection between GBV and MH can increase awareness/sensitization about best practices from the field, improve access/quality of service in both fields.

# METHODOLOGY



- Mixed methods study (quantitative and qualitative)
- Two locations: Northern Lebanon and Northern Bekaa
- Quantitative: 975 administered surveys
  - Target population: randomly selected women (ages 18-65) in the above regions accessing Abaad's psychosocial support/awareness services
- Qualitative: 15 focus group discussions
  - Target populations: community members, community leaders, GBV/MH service providers

# THE SURVEY

Contents of the survey (by category):

- Socio-demographics (e.g. age, marital status, age of marriage and/or pregnancy, number of children, educational attainment, etc.)
- Intimate partner violence (economic, emotional, physical, and sexual)
- Non-partner violence (physical and sexual)
- Mental health + functionality
- Access to violence + non-violence services
- Coping mechanisms

# DEFINITIONS

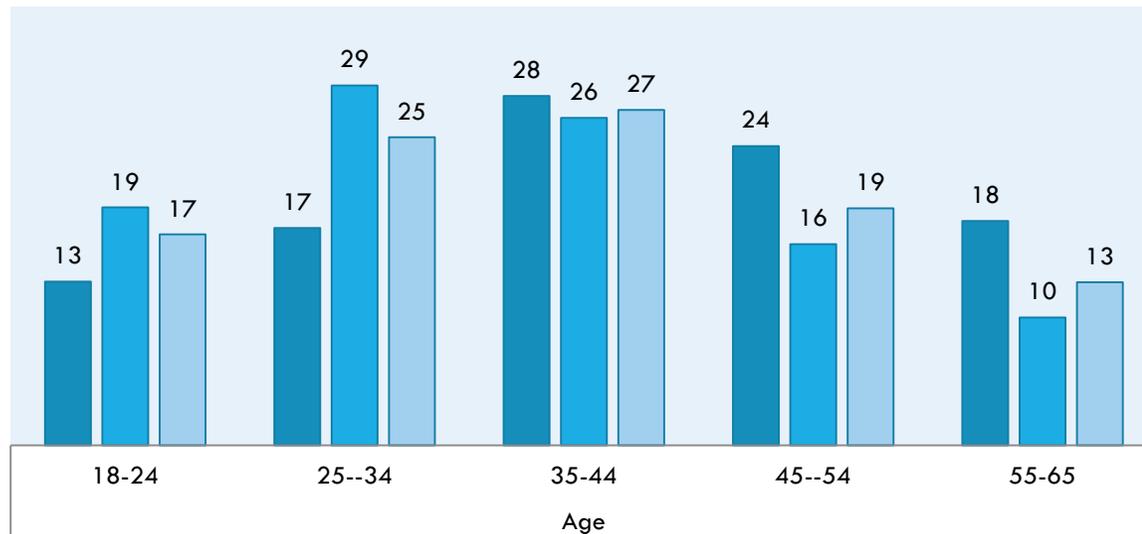


- GBV: any violence (i.e. economic, emotional, physical, or sexual) committed against a person on the basis of their gender.
- IPV: violence committed by an intimate partner such as a husband or a life partner
- NPV: violence committed by a non-partner (e.g. military personnel, family member, etc.)
- Child marriage: forced marriage under the age of 18

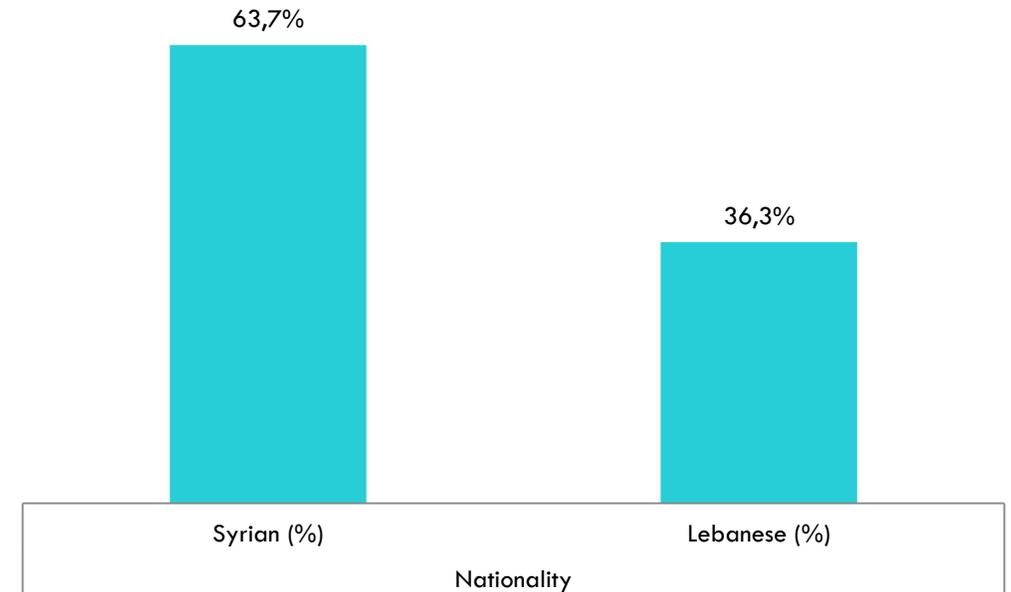
# RESULTS: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS

### Age of Participants by Nationality

■ Nationality Lebanese (%)   ■ Nationality Syrian (%)   ■ Nationality All (%)

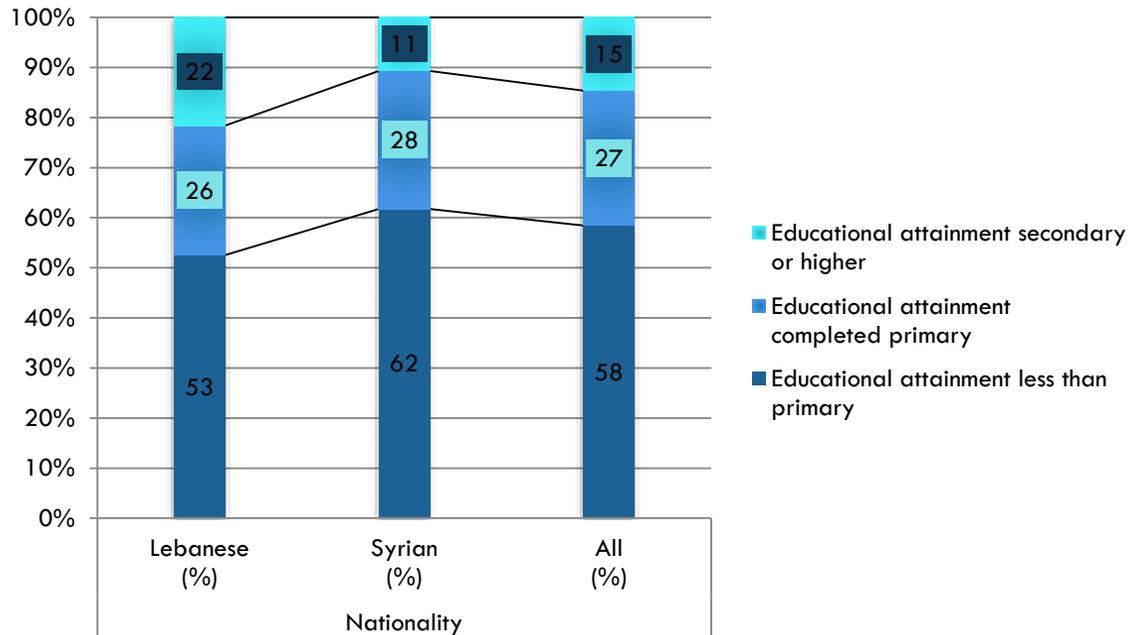


### Nationality of Participants

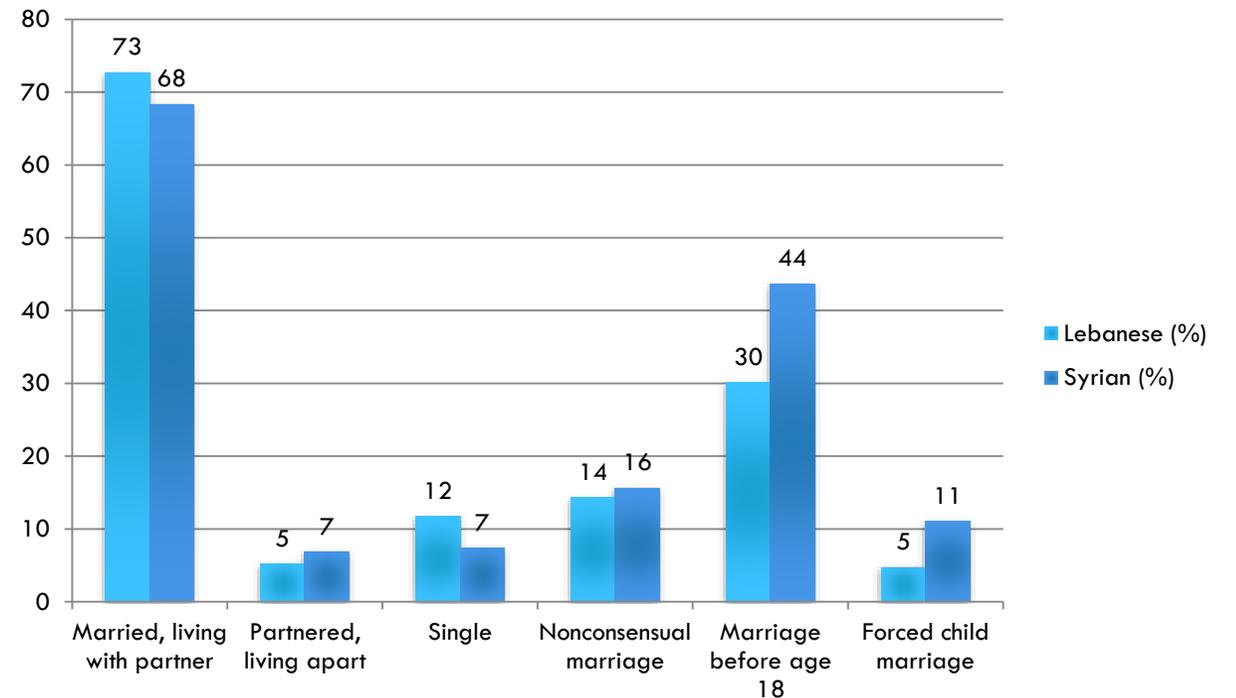


# RESULTS: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS

## Educational Attainment of Participants by Nationality

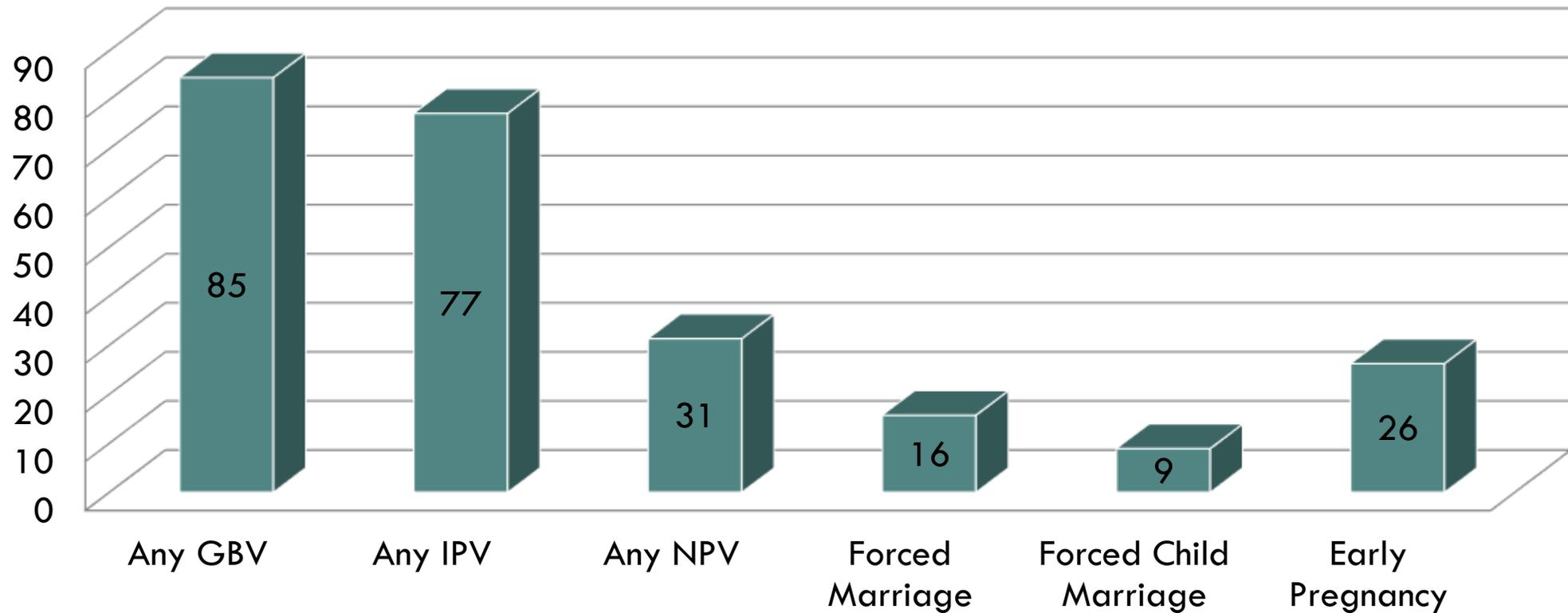


## Marital Status of Participants by Nationality



# RESULTS: GBV

## Types of Violence Experienced by Participants



# RESULTS: FACTORS THAT EXACERBATE GBV

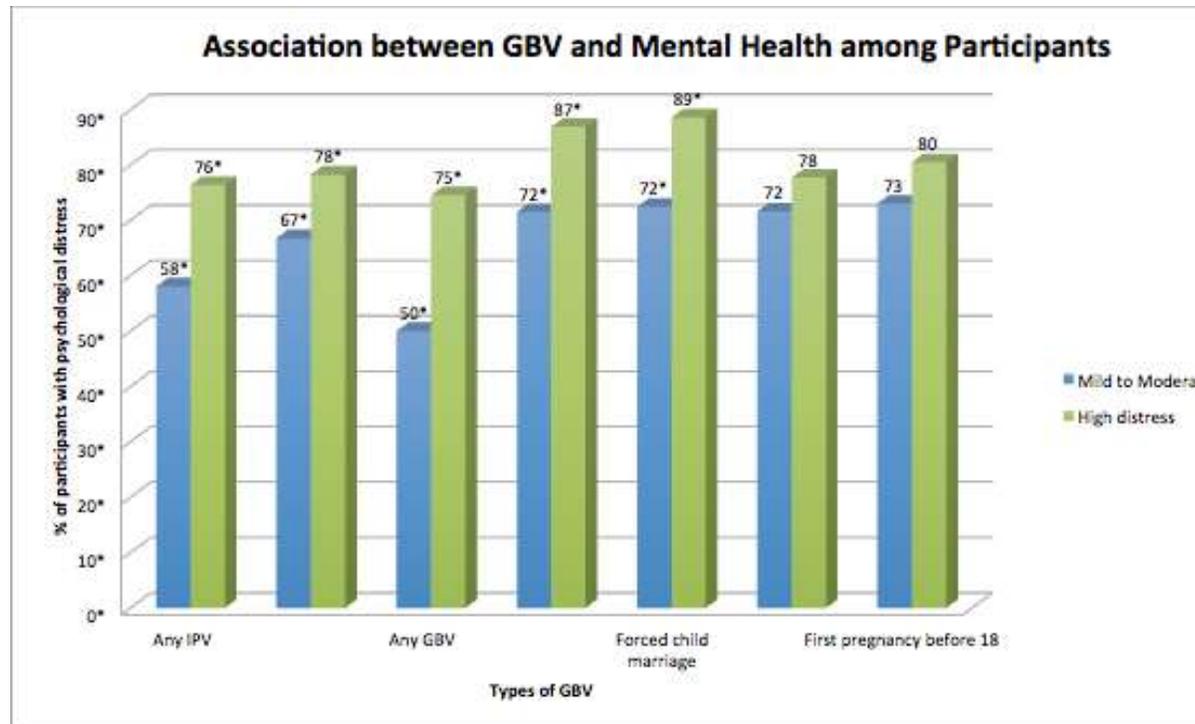
- Significance for factors varies by nationality
- Lebanese: all but source of income are significant
- Syrian: only working for income is significant

Women's characteristics associated with sexual and/or physical IPV

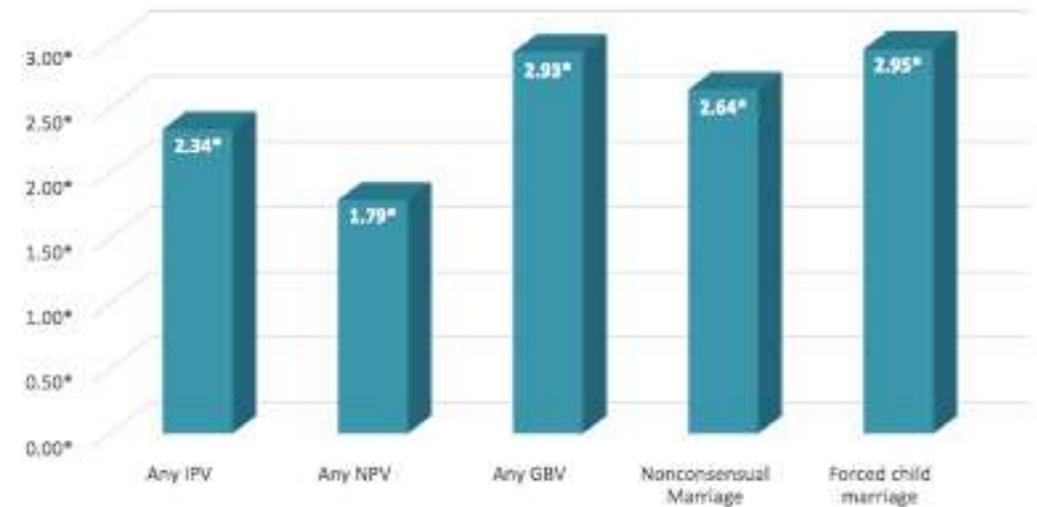
		Sexual and/or physical IPV		
		Lebanese (%)	Syrian (%)	All (%)
<b>All women, n=969.</b>				
Respondent Age (10 year group)	18-24	19*	52	46
	25--34	40*	58	54
	35-44	45*	60	55
	45--54	53*	51	51
	55-65	56*	42	49
Educational attainment	less than primary	54*	58	57*
	completed primary	37*	51	46*
	completed secondary	23*	46	38*
	higher	41*	47	44*
Does she work for money or engage in income generating activities?	no	45	52*	50*
	yes	51	72*	63*
main source of income	no income	57*	43	48*
	money from own work	55*	64	60*
	husband/partner	39*	48	42*
	humanitarian aid	78*	58	59*
	other source	49*	53	51*

\*Chi-square statistic significant at  $p < 0.05$ .

# RESULTS: GBV AND MENTAL HEALTH



Likelihood of severe distress among women who have experienced different forms of GBV<sup>o</sup>



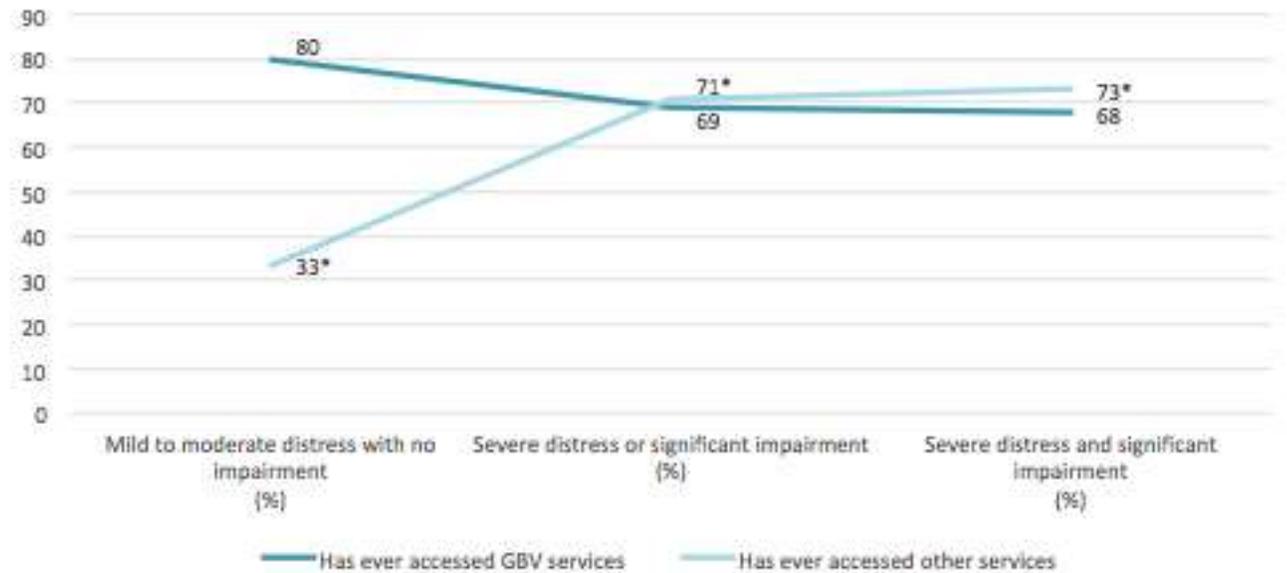
<sup>o</sup> Compared to women who have not experienced violence

\*Odds ratio significant at  $p < 0.05$

## RESULTS: MH AND ACCESSING SERVICES

Among those who have experienced GBV, women who report distress are half as likely to seek services related to violence, except for those who report mild distress (as opposed to severe)

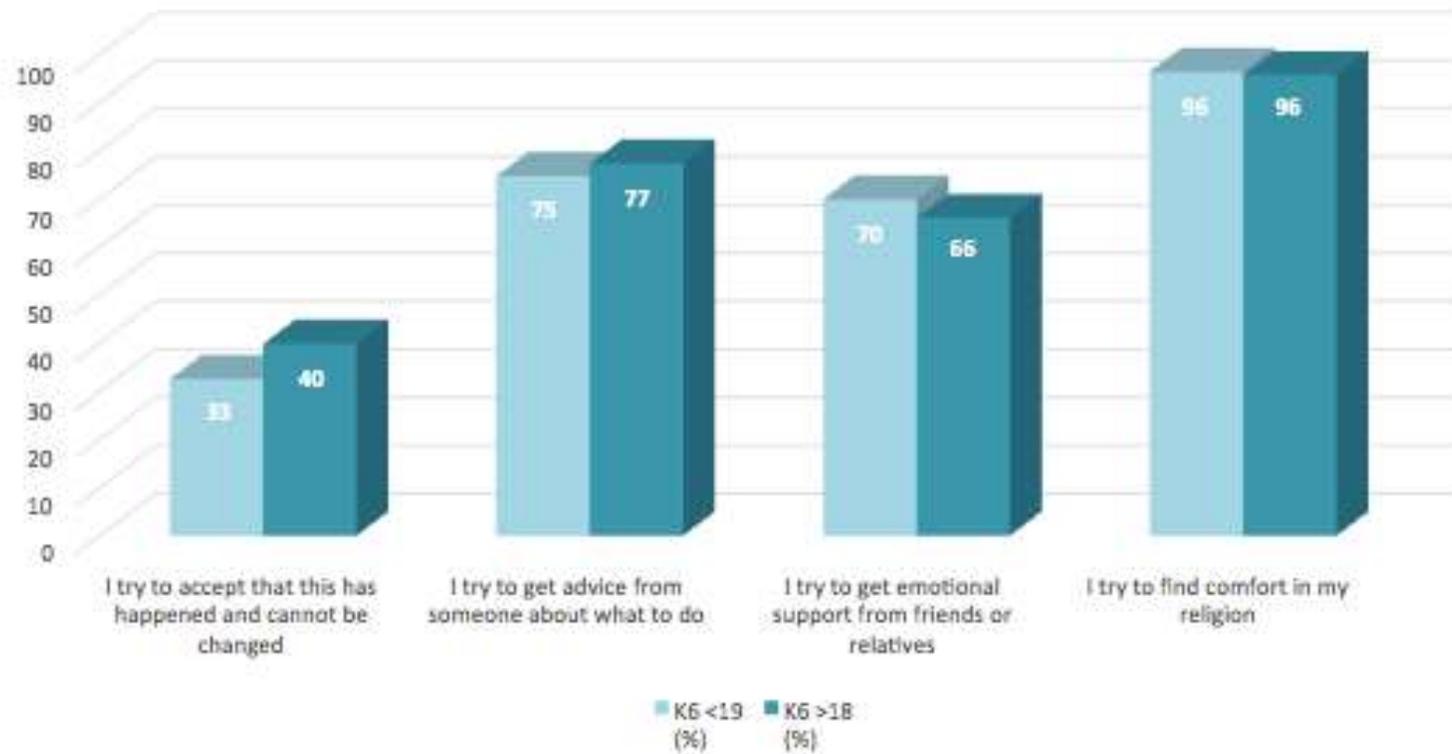
Service uptake by severity of distress and impairment



\*Chi-square statistic significant at  $p < 0.05$

# RESULTS: COPING

Percentage women using coping mechanisms by severity of distress



## CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

- Strong association between experiencing any act of GBV and severe distress among participants
- Strengthen existing safe referral pathway between GBV and MH services, as well as from other services to GBV + MH
- Conduct further research on conceptualization of forced versus child marriage in Lebanon
- Individual efforts *alone* may not better mental health. Requires further research on best practices, policies, institutional structures, resources/services might better MH

# THANK YOU!

For any questions regarding the study, kindly reach out to  
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Or find us at the conference!

