

Support programme for women with disabilities against sexual violence

CAMEROON – KUMBA / LILIAN DIBO ASSOCIATION (LDA) – DISABILITY VOICES AGAINST RAPE

In 1990 the Lilian Dibo Association (LDA), a women-led disability organization based in Kumba, Cameroon, founded the Disability Voices Against Rape (DIVAR) programme. DIVAR raises awareness on unreported sexual crimes committed against women with disabilities using an infotainment campaign on local radio and TV stations, as well social media such as LinkedIn and Facebook. In 2022, DIVAR has some 1,000 direct beneficiaries.

Problem targeted

Cases of sexual violence against women and girls with disabilities often go underreported in Cameroon.

Solution, innovation, and impact

DIVAR works directly with women and girls with disabilities in Kumba, Cameroon, who have been affected by rape and other forms of sexual violence. The programme has three key components: (1) training, (2) focused group discussions, and (3) therapy sessions facilitated through storytelling. The DIVAR training is conducted by experts who raise topics such as body safety rules, safe and unsafe touches, breaking the silence, safety network, and referral pathways for survivors of rape. It is only after these educative lectures that some of the participants even realize

“I want to thank you so much for what you have done in my life and that of the others. This is a blessing I never expected.”

Ms. Kopea Mariana, Cameroon Network of Women with Disability

that they were actually raped or sexually assaulted. The focus group discussions have helped persons with disabilities to develop strategies on how to curb sexual violence and rape perpetrated on women and girls in their respective communities. This direct work with women is complemented by a larger awareness-raising campaign that includes infotainment content, which is disseminated through radio, television,



DIVAR helps women with disabilities who have been affected by sexual violence.

and social media. All content is created exclusively by an editorial team made up of women and girls with disabilities who engage in all aspects of DIVAR.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

DIVAR is funded with a grant from Rescue Women – Cameroon, a women-focused NGO also based in Kumba. LDA aims to expand DIVAR to other parts of the country to reach more beneficiaries. Moreover, the organization plans to build a centre for women and girls with disabilities who have survived sexual violence and other forms of abuse, which will offer crisis accommodation, rehabilitation services, and skills-development training.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 1990

- On average, some 2,000 women and girls listen to DIVAR's radio content.
- Approximately 10,000 people have received vital information on how to build resilient communities devoid of sexual violence.
- *A project of Civil Society.*

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