

Tackling Violence Against Women Experiencing Multiple Disadvantage

VOICES OF SERVICE USERS

These quotes are from interviews carried out by the [AVA](#) team of Peer Researchers with service users of eight specialist UK projects that were supported by Comic Relief from 2020-2022 to tackle violence against women and girls experiencing 'multiple disadvantage', ie. multiple and intersecting barriers which include, but are not limited to, homelessness, poverty, drug and alcohol misuse and addiction, prostitution/sex work, contact with the criminal justice system, mental ill-health, and individual and systemic experiences of discrimination and racism. The eight organisations that participated in the programme were [The Angelou Centre](#), [Cambridge Women's Resources Centre](#), [Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre](#), [Swansea Women's Aid](#), [Together Women](#), [women@thewell](#), [Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland](#), and [The Women's Centre Cornwall](#). Their interventions included case management, referrals, mentoring, counselling, group work, advocacy and training of 838 front-line professionals. 1,995 women directly benefited from the programme, of whom 899 saw their physical and mental wellbeing improve and 743 felt their confidence and resilience had increased.

The artwork was produced by survivors who participated in one of the projects, run by [Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland](#), called the '[Hear Her Voice](#)' project, in which survivors were invited to share their stories of domestic abuse and its lasting impact on their lives, families and future through words, song, creative art and photography.

Comic Relief is grateful to AVA's Peer Researchers who conducted the interviews, the service users for sharing their experiences, and the women working with Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland who consented to the use of their artwork. For more information on the programme, please see the [learning report](#).





"I've always felt comfortable here. Everyone comes from similar walks of life so it's just a nice place to be and not feel judged."

"It gave me perspective, it gave me goals. It makes you look at your situation differently."

"They offered me all different kinds of classes and all different kinds of help to try and rebuild myself."

"I just kind of really naturally flourish within that environment, and then comes the growth and development."



"They've gone above and beyond for me since I needed them at the start."

"I'm trying to sort my life out again. But they're still there for me, you know? They check in and give me anything I need."



"It's like they weren't able to rest until they knew I was in a safe place."

"Everything was dealt with how it needed to be dealt with."

"I feel very safe with my worker and the service. I felt from the first time we met [she has] a warm and caring energy. With my worker I know I can be myself and share all of my emotions and thoughts, as I know I will not be judged."



"Thank you to everyone who has helped me along the way. My journey is just beginning."

"I just sort of feel now that there's a support network there and it's always there if I need it, which is amazing."

