

Avon And The Avon Foundation For Women Boost Global Commitment To Ending Domestic Violence With Their Largest Single Donation To Front-Line Services
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LONDON, March 6, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- The Avon Foundation for Women, the world's largest corporate-affiliated philanthropy focused on issues that matter most to women, has today pledged its largest single donation, nearly £2 million, for female victims of gender-based violence. £1 million of these funds will be granted across four countries, Argentina, Romania, South Africa and the UK, to help front-line domestic violence services.

In addition, a nearly £1 million grant to Vital Voices Global Partnership will support The Justice Institute on Gender-Based Violence, an innovative training program which aims to facilitate effective coordinated criminal justice responses to addressing violence against women in countries around the world. This donation forms part of Avon's commitment to ending domestic violence and supporting survivors worldwide, and marks the launch of a new global Avon campaign focused on a range of issues of importance to women over the coming years.

Combating global domestic violence

As an official partner of International Women's Day, Avon is committed to speaking out against domestic violence and supporting the #BeBoldForChange global initiative. In the UK Avon has joined forces with Refuge, the UK charity committed to a world where domestic violence is not tolerated. Together Avon and Refuge have carried out an in-depth study that looks at a recently recognised area of coercive control, particularly impacting women aged 16 - 21, and the findings will form the basis of a new campaign to shift the dial on this type of abuse.

Globally, Avon has been addressing the social issues that matter most to women for over 130 years. The new UK research reflects wider insights gathered across other countries in which Avon is active. In Brazil, a recent study found that 42% of university students feared being the victim of violence in an academic environment. In Romania, new insights found that young adults struggle to find healthy relationship role models, and two thirds of teenagers said they had witnessed a physical or verbal violent episode between a couple.

[The new research will be shared with an influential audience made up of global experts and stakeholders working to combat domestic violence at an event at Somerset House in London on Monday 6 March. The event and adjoining exhibition celebrates the collective efforts of Avon, its Representatives, partners, associates, consumers, and supporters around the world that continue to fundraise and raise critical awareness for its causes.]

Funding commitments

Since Avon was founded more than 130 years ago, the company has been breaking barriers and empowering women by offering a path to financial independence and improved health and safety. This year's International Women's Day focuses on the #BeBoldForChange initiative, and as part of this, Avon Foundation for Women's global commitment includes:

- The Avon Foundation's grant of £1 million for front-line services in the UK, South Africa, Romania and Argentina*. In the UK, this includes a grant of £250,000 to Refuge** to support its front-line services, which will fund the equivalent of over 4,800 nights in a refuge for a woman and her children.
- Globally, nearly £1 million in new funding will expand The Justice Institute on Gender-Based Violence, an innovative training program within Voices Against Violence – a public-private partnership between Vital Voices Global Partnership, the U.S. Department of State, and the Avon Foundation for Women – which aims to facilitate effective, coordinated criminal justice responses to addressing violence against women in countries around the world.
- The Justice Institute is a ground-breaking initiative which convenes judges, court officers, prosecutors, law enforcement officers, representatives of government agencies and non-governmental service providers with the aim of making the laws keep their promise. Through its multi-disciplinary training style, the Institute fosters collaboration between allied professionals and seeks to improve both victim protection efforts and criminal justice responses to violence against women around the world.

- To date, the Avon Foundation has invested more than £2 million to launch and convene 10 Justice Institutes in eight countries including Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, India, Mexico, Nepal, Philippines and South Africa.

Sheri McCoy, Avon CEO says, *"To date, Avon and the Avon Foundation for Women have contributed more than \$1 billion to the causes that matter most to women. This new landmark donation from The Avon Foundation builds on a legacy of work to speak out against domestic violence and support victims around the world. Since 2004, the Avon Foundation's Speak Out Against Domestic Violence initiative has been a powerful voice for women, with programmes in 50 countries. We've already served 11 million women, educated 29 million about domestic violence, and contributed nearly \$60 million to empowerment programs. This new donation expands our impact further the will make a significant difference to NGOs supporting women in need of help."*

Notes to editors

*The markets of South Africa, Romania and Argentina are in the process of selecting their charity to work with as part of the #BeBoldForChange initiative

**The donation of £250,000 to Refuge is the largest one off corporate donation that Refuge has ever received.

About Avon Products, Inc.

Avon is the Company that for 130 years has proudly stood for beauty, innovation, optimism and, above all, for women. Avon products include well-recognized and beloved brands such as ANEW, Avon Color, Avon Care, Skin-So-Soft, and Advance Techniques sold through nearly 6 million active independent Avon Sales Representatives. Learn more about Avon and its products at www.avoncompany.com.

About Refuge

Refuge opened the world's first refuge in Chiswick, West London, in 1971. Since then it has grown to become the country's largest single provider of specialist support to women and children escaping domestic violence and other forms of gender based violence. On any given day Refuge supports almost 5,000 women and children.

Refuge's national network of specialist services include: safe emergency accommodation through refuges in secret locations across the country; community-based outreach services; culturally specific services for women from South Asian, African and Caribbean, Eastern European and Vietnamese backgrounds; independent advocacy services for women at the highest risk of serious injury and homicide; a range of single point of access services for women, children and men across entire regions; and the Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline, run in partnership with Women's Aid.

Refuge also runs award-winning public awareness campaigns, advises governments and was voted 'Charity of the Year' 2016 at The Charity Times Awards.

For more information please visit www.refuge.org.uk or follow Refuge's work on www.facebook.com/RefugeCharity and Twitter @RefugeCharity.

Avon Foundation for Women

Avon is a global corporate leader in philanthropy focused on causes that matter most to women. Through 2016, Avon and the Avon Foundation for Women have contributed over \$1 billion in over 50 countries. Avon global philanthropy programs focus on funding breast cancer research and advancing access to quality care through the [Avon Breast Cancer Crusade](#), and efforts to reduce domestic and gender violence through its [Speak Out Against Domestic Violence](#) program. Avon's global markets sell special products to raise awareness and funds for breast cancer and domestic violence, conduct hundreds of events for these causes, and educate women around the world through its global army of nearly six million Avon Representatives.

About Vital Voices Global Partnership

The leading non-governmental organization that identifies, invests in and brings visibility to extraordinary women around the world by unleashing their leadership potential to transform lives and accelerate peace and prosperity in their communities. Founded in 1997 by former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the organization trains and mentors women leaders as agents of transformative change in economic development, human rights and political participation.

About Voices Against Violence: The Global Gender-Based Violence Initiative

A public-private partnership between Vital Voices, the U.S. Department of State's Office of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labour, and the Avon Foundation to address all forms of gender-based violence through short-term financial support to victims of extreme violence who are in urgent need for technical assistance and training.

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