

# Navigating pathways to empowerment

By [Nadia Mahommed](#), issued by [DNA Brand Architects](#)

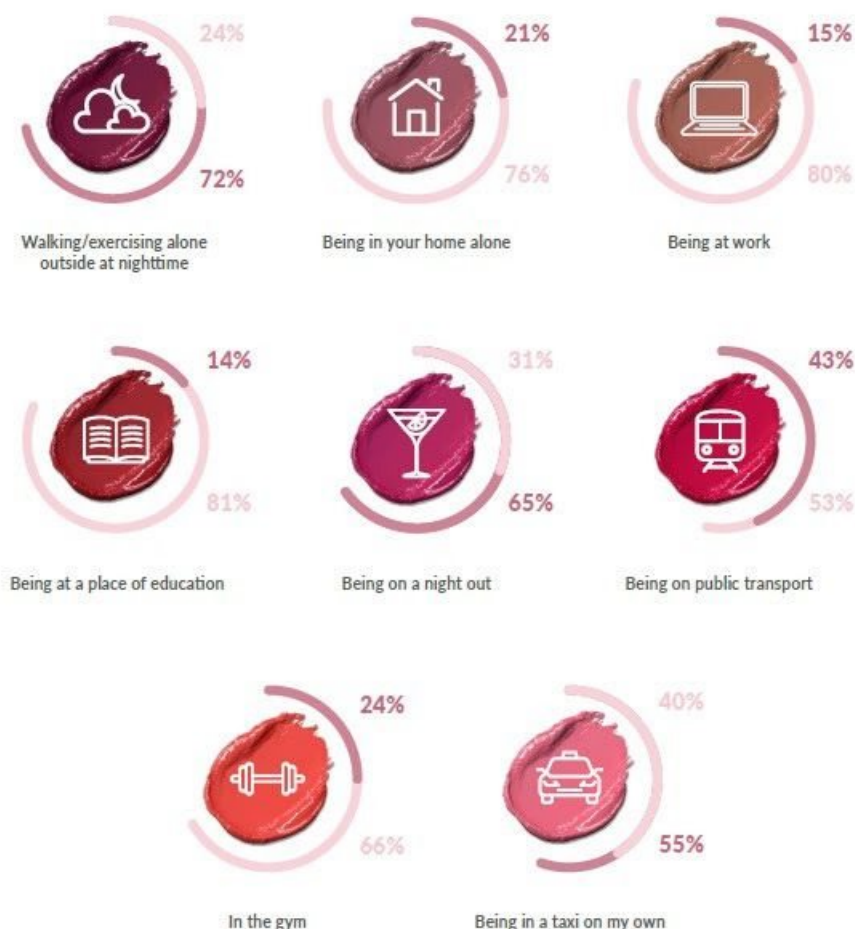
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*A reflective journey on women's progress and Avon's pioneering role in the last 25 years*

Avon's Global Progress for Women Report 2024

**AS A WOMAN, HOW SAFE, IF AT ALL, DO/ WOULD YOU FEEL IN EACH OF THE FOLLOWING SETTINGS?**

Safe<sup>10</sup>  
Not safe<sup>10</sup>



In the lead up to International Women's Day, it is an opportune time to engage in a thoughtful reflection on the strides made and the persistent challenges encountered in the pursuit of gender equality. Avon's recently unveiled 2024 Global Progress for Women Report serves as a catalyst for contemplation, urging us to delve into the nuanced landscape of women's empowerment.

The report, a culmination of extensive research across diverse countries, including the dynamic terrain of South Africa, reveals a disquieting reality: despite concerted efforts, the journey towards equitable opportunities and pay parity for women remains an uphill battle. In certain instances, there is evidence of regression, painting a stark picture of the enduring challenges faced by women in our contemporary society.

In the South African context, where the resonance of the gender equality struggle is palpable, the statistics are both revealing and thought-provoking. An overwhelming 91% of women perceive a societal bias in favor of men concerning opportunities, be it in the workplace or in educational pursuits. Moreover, over half of the surveyed women observe a tangible gender pay gap between themselves and their male counterparts within similar professional spheres. These statistics, while sobering, act as a clarion call for urgent action to deconstruct systemic barriers and forge a more inclusive societal landscape.

One poignant avenue towards empowerment unfurls through entrepreneurship. The encouragement of women in venturing into entrepreneurial domains not only diversifies their representation across sectors but also lays down avenues for financial independence and self-determination. Avon, with its enduring commitment to women's empowerment, emerges as a guiding light in this regard.

Avon's business model stands as a unique and adaptive response to these challenges. Over the past 27 years, Avon has been at the vanguard of propelling equality in South Africa, providing women with opportunities to contribute meaningfully to the economy while realising their untapped potential. Through flexible earning opportunities, Avon empowers women to seize control of their financial destinies, fostering a ripple effect that extends to their confidence, health, and overall well-being.

The transformative role that Avon has played in supporting women's entrepreneurial journeys is particularly noteworthy. By offering comprehensive training, resources, and a supportive community, Avon equips women with the tools necessary to thrive as entrepreneurs. Whether through direct selling, digital platforms, or the recent foray into retail, Avon facilitates women in building their businesses on their own terms, establishing pathways to economic empowerment and self-sufficiency.

Undoubtedly, the importance of financial independence cannot be overstated, especially in a country where nearly half of households are led by single women. These women face the added challenge of contending with limited income compared to their male counterparts due to factors such as gender pay gaps, unconscious biases, and marginalisations. The impact of economic empowerment extends far beyond individual livelihoods; it resonates through communities, catalysing positive change and setting the stage for a more inclusive and prosperous society.

As we reflect on the revelations presented in the 2024 Global Progress for Women Report, let us recommit ourselves to the cause of gender equality. Let us amplify the voices of women, advocate for their rights, and earnestly work towards sculpting a world where every woman has the opportunity to flourish. Together we can weave a future where gender ceases to be a determinant of opportunities or outcomes - a future that gleams with brightness and equity for all.

### **About Nadia Mohamed**

Executive director – General manager, Avon Justine PTY Ltd

Nadia Mohamed started her orientation as head of commercial marketing responsible for as of 1 June 2023. Appointed general manager of Avon Justine Pty Ltd on 1 October 2023. Her previous roles include vice president of marketing at Mondelez International: Africa, and prior to that the role based in Canada of commercial and marketing director for McCain Foods Retail and Foodservice Africa, Middle East. Furthermore, she has worked for global telecommunications brand Vodafone and retail and FMCG organisations such as Marks & Spencers, Woolworths, AVI and more recently returned from Australia after being chief marketing officer of Tyme Digital at Commonwealth Bank of Australia – the world's 10th largest bank. Nadia holds several qualifications among them two IMBA's in strategy and marketing, an agricultural MBA from the Canadian Ivy League Academy and currently a PhD fellow. Her passion for empowering communities, her achievements in marketing and strategy, and her commitment to social impact make her a trailblazer and a driving force for positive change. Nadia is one of six siblings with an abundance of nieces, nephews, her Chow-Chow fur children. Her unbridled passion is playing the piano.

### **About Avon South Africa**

At Avon, we believe a better world for women is a better world for all. We are the beauty brand for women embracing their power, inspiring their confidence and providing opportunities to realise their potential. Millions of independent sales representatives across the world sell iconic Avon brands through their social networks and more than 20% of every sale helps to create better futures for women\*. We stand for progress for women: we believe in listening to women's needs, speaking out about issues that matter and creating positive change. Through Avon and the Avon Foundation, we've donated over \$1.1bn, with a focus on tackling gender violence and breast cancer.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nadia Mahommed is the executive director - General manager at Avon Justine PTY Ltd.

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