

Celebrity 'no make-up selfies' raise cash—for wrong charity

March 25 2014

A social media craze involving women around the world posting selfies while wearing no make-up has raised millions of pounds for a British cancer charity—despite some money accidentally going to the United Nations children's fund.

Several celebrities including R&B superstars Beyonce and Rihanna and British model Cara Delevingne joined the grassroots #nomakeupselfie movement on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

It is unclear how the hashtag first started trending, but it took off last week and grew organically. It then became associated with [cancer](#) awareness, and users began making spontaneous donations.

Finally the charity Cancer Research UK set up a text number to make donating easier, and announced on Tuesday that the trend had sparked an "unprecedented increase" of donations that raised £8 million (\$13.1 million, 9.5 million euros) in the space of six days.

The charity said the money would be spent on clinical trials.

"We've been overwhelmed by the support people have been showing us through the #nomakeupselfie trend," said Harpal Kumar, the charity's chief executive.

It later emerged that some people intending to donate to the charity had accidentally sent their cash to UNICEF instead.

Others had mistakenly enquired about adopting a polar bear with the World Wildlife Fund.

All three charities allow people to donate via the same British SMS number, but using different words. Those texting "donate" instead of "beat" to the number found their money sent to UNICEF, while those texting "bear" accidentally made adoption enquiries of the WWF.

Mike Flynn, director of individual giving at UNICEF UK, said there had been a "genuine mix-up" and that it was working with Cancer Research UK to transfer £18,625 which was donated by mistake.

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