

Case Study on
Breakthrough: NGO in Delhi



breakthrough

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Introduction:

Breakthrough's multimedia campaigns address global issues including violence against women, sexuality and HIV/AIDS, and immigrant rights and racial justice. Breakthrough envisions a world in which all people enjoy their human rights and live with dignity, equality, and justice, with motto "*We can build this world by making violence and discrimination against women and girls unacceptable*".

Started by Indian-American human rights activist and cultural entrepreneur Mallika Dutt founded Breakthrough in 2000 with Mann ke Manjeeré: An Album of Women's Dreams, an album and music video on women's rights. Their mission is to prevent violence against women and girls by transforming the norms and cultures that enable it. It creates innovative, relevant multimedia tools and programs from short animations to long-term leadership training that reach individuals and institutions where they are, inspiring and equipping them to build a world in which all people live with dignity, equality, and justice.

Approach:

Breakthrough's approach is that HUMAN RIGHTS are universal and fundamental. More than a matter of oppression in far-off lands, they are intrinsic to the way we treat each other in our communities, in our families, and in our homes. They use pop culture, multimedia, community mobilization, and leadership training to reach people where they are and ignite change in the world around them.

It seeks to make discrimination and violence against women and girls unacceptable everywhere and in all its forms, including domestic violence, sexual harassment in public spaces, early marriage, and gender-biased sex selection. Their mission is to prevent violence against women and girls by transforming the norms and cultures that enable it. We carry out this mission by building a critical mass of change agents worldwide-the Breakthrough Generation-whose bold collective action will deliver irreversible impact on the issue of our time. Breakthrough is unique in its strategy - that of combining a sophisticated media campaign with grass-roots community mobilization efforts - to bring issues of human rights to mainstream audiences

Campaigns and initiatives:

- **Bell Bajao:** It was developed in pro bono partnership with Ogilvy & Mather, it is a domestic violence awareness on men and boys to act as partners in ending violence against women. Since 2008, Bell Bajao has reached more than 130 million people in India through a series of popular television advertisements. On March 8, 2013, Breakthrough launched Ring the Bell, a global extension of their Bell Bajao campaign and involves many celebrities in it to raise awareness.
- **Nation Against Early Marriage:** Early marriage is a widespread problem in India, and is linked to an array of other gender-based issues, including low female education levels, domestic violence, teen maternity, and female disempowerment. Nation Against Early Marriage aims to address these challenges through eradicating early marriage by promoting healthy gender norms, male-female relationships, and acceptance of female sexuality. Breakthrough produced public service announcement videos about the harms of early marriage. These Hindi-language videos urge fathers to reconsider if early marriage is best for their daughter. Breakthrough also produced mini-documentaries about girls who were confronted with early marriage, which are posted on Breakthrough's website.
- **Gender-biased sex selection (GBSS):** It is a result and an expression of cultural preference for sons. Son preference, in turn, is an expression of deeply rooted and long-held biases against women and girls. These biases are related to societal beliefs, norms, and practices that position girls as risks and burdens, and less worthy than sons of family investment. Bottom line, girls are not valued. These norms and practices run deep and their consequences reach far. Effective laws and enforcement are needed to combat GBSS, which is illegal in India. But Breakthrough believes that to reduce and prevent the practice for good, we need culture change. We need to challenge the norms and practices that devalue girls. Breakthrough works to inspire and support families and communities to stand up and say “Daughters are welcome here.”

Some other campaigns:

- Under domestic violence program were ‘**Kanpur village requires protection officer**’ which focused in the villages near Kanpur (U.P) to raise awareness and sensitize people nearby and ‘**protection instead of compensation**’ is to express the

pain of victims, as now days it is very common that court awarding compensation to the victim and the matter is perceived to be resolved, what breakthrough is trying to do is raising awareness about the protection and not just compensation.

- Under sexual harassment program were **'#Askingforit'**, **'Board the bus'**, **'#Shareyourstory'**, and **'#Standwithme'** were awareness campaigns against sexual harassment, for instance motto of #Askingforit is to express that victim is not asking for the harassments or she is not permitting the offender to harass her. All these campaigns were planned in a way to portray the realities of society, how people react and their sentiments towards sexual harassment.
- Under Gender Biased sex selection: **'Mission Hazaara'** was started to raise awareness regarding the illegal sex determination tests and discrimination towards female child.
- Under Early Marriage program: **'Selfies4school'**, **'Early Marriage'** and **'Mydadmyally'** were introduced to raise awareness against the early marriage, breakthrough went to schools, villages, cities and raised awareness to stop early marriage customs.

Strategies used:

The five-pronged approach seeks to prevent and combat violence against women and effect behaviour change by focusing on changing hearts, minds and actions of individuals and other actors to create social change and bring human rights home. For Breakthrough, 'individuals and other actors' could include a corporate entity, a non-governmental organization, state or other community actors, in addition to people who are agents of social change. How they Breakthrough? Breakthrough has a five-pronged approach through which work towards their vision. These five strategies are highly integrated and should be understood as connected to one another at multiple levels. Breakthrough, in partnership with others, engages large audiences, particularly youth, through the power of attractive, persuasive and cutting edge media, popular culture and arts. They combine this use of media with on the ground and virtual community mobilization. Breakthrough then makes this approach and the lessons learned available to others. By doing this they catalyze broad public engagement, change social norms, and influence the public agenda.

Breakthrough's five pronged strategy includes:

- Uses media, arts, pop culture, and technology-animations, music videos, video games, social media and more-to reach mass audiences where they are, challenge norms, and make human rights values and issues real, relevant, urgent, and actionable. Create Public Dialogue through these as mentioned above which also includes the complete range of cultural expression from video to twitter to poetry to street theatre. Breakthrough's 360-degree media campaign comprises of television and radio spots, print media, video vans, digital and social media like websites, blogs, facebook and twitter and mobile phones. Pro-bono partnerships with major advertising agencies to develop the campaign and with the government agencies to disseminate campaigns further leverage mainstream resources and create new audiences and stakeholders to support the issue.
- Trains new generations of leaders in schools, neighbourhoods, and civil society groups to ignite change in the world around them. Through Leadership Development Breakthrough combines its mainstream communication and messaging strategy with leadership facilitation. It trains people from varied and diverse backgrounds and communities (such as youth from marginalized backgrounds, local leaders and opinion makers, service providers, staff of government agencies, teachers, health workers) to convey knowledge, share ideas and to reshape individual and community attitudes to VAW. The more intensive work done on the ground brings in new partners and gives depth to the media messages. Breakthrough, through its Rights Advocacy (RA) Training Program strengthens the ability of youth, community leaders and non-profit groups to become effective change agents in their own domains and enable individuals to act as human rights promoters and defenders.
- Develops strategic, game-changing partnerships with communities, governments, businesses, and entertainment leaders to reach maximum scale and lasting impact.
- Cultivate grassroots community engagement to raise awareness and inspire action for local and global human rights issues. Mobilize Communities, both on the ground and virtually - Breakthrough, along with trained Community Based Organizations/ NGOs /Stakeholders / Gatekeepers, undertakes community mobilization against VAW. The rights-based training attempts to change the attitudes and behaviour of the trainee and equip them to mobilize their communities to respect women and prevent and combat

violence. Mobilization could include shifting mindsets, building awareness in communities, transforming individuals and other actors into advocates to take action to prevent abuse or demand redress for a violation, or advocating for policy changes to facilitate the promotion of peaceful and just societies. Breakthrough's edutainment tools and media messages are shared by the trained Rights Advocates at various community events and forums. Online community mobilization activities include micro campaigns, blogs, tweets etc, encouraging greater public participation, especially among youth.

- Measure the impact and share lessons learned in the broader field of innovations for social justice and human rights.

Some glimpse of their work:

- A girl named Rashmi, who lives in a small village with only one dream of being able to complete her education till matric. Everyone laughed at this but his father was the lone supporter, which is enough for her to achieve her dream. (This video was released to raise awareness about the importance of girl child's education under #MyDadmyally).



Watch this at: https://youtu.be/0cDn5jj_msE

- Till now it has covered 7.5 million people through its video van and sensitised them. Breakthrough runs a video van, they select a particular area and raise awareness regarding the various programmes that breakthrough is into, it also records the feedback of the participants.



- Has trained 15000 youth and community leaders, for spreading awareness, through their training programs to make them capable of raising awareness in their particular areas.



- Reached 75000 people through community advocates for help, breakthrough has deployed its community advocates to help people in distress. This covers all the legal support to the victim.



- 240 million people are exposed to its multimedia campaign, breakthrough's reach is spreading very fast. It uses the multimedia platform to reach people through social networking websites.



Achievements:

- Making a Difference Award from Children's Hope India (Mallika Dutt), New York, 2013.
- YO DONA International Humanitarian Award (Mallika Dutt), Madrid, 2013.
- Avon Global Award for Excellence in Communications, 2012.

- Games for Change Transmedia Award Nomination, 2011
- Silver Lion, Cannes Film Festival (Bell Bajao), 2010
- Gold and Silver at Goafest, (Bell Bajao), 2009
- Karmaveer Puraskar: National Award for Social Justice & Citizen Action by the Indian Confederation of NGOs, (Mallika Dutt), 2009 A
- American Courage Award, Asian American Justice Center (AAJC), (Mallika Dutt), 2009
- Gold Spike, Spike Asia (Ring, Ring/Bell Bajao), 2009
- Young Achiever's Award from Advertising Club of Bombay (Bell Bajao), (O &M's Ryan Mendonca), 2009
- Best Integrated Campaign of the Year, Media Abby Award at Goafest for Public Service, Appeals and Charity (Bell Bajao), 2009
- Dogooder Nonprofit Award, Best Staff-Long Form Video (Death by Detention), 2009
- South Asian Media & Marketing Association (SAMMA) Trailblazer Award (Mallika Dutt), 2008
- The Woman of Color, Woman of Courage Award (IUP Women's Studies Program) (Mallika Dutt), 2008
- Bronze at the 41st Abby Awards in the Public Service, Appeals, and Charity Category (Is This Justice), 2008
- Radio & TV Advertising Practitioner's Association of India (RAPA) Award for Best Film with a Social Message (Is This Justice?), 2007
- Clinton Global Initiative - Reducing Twin Pandemics: HIV/AIDS and Gender Based Violence, 2006
- Clinton Global Initiative - Value Families Campaign, 2006
- Award for Distinguished Service, New York University School of Law, BLAPA Alumni Association (Mallika Dutt), 2006
- Link TV Award for Best Music Video (Mann ke Manjeere and Babul), 2005
- Best Cinematography—U Judge It! Film Festival (Mann Ke Manjeere), 2003
- Best Exhibition Award to Artist—Haku Shah—India Habitat Centre (Haman Hain Ishq), 2003 Spirit of Asian America Award—Asian American Federation of New York (Mallika Dutt), 2003

- Phoenix Award—New York Asian Women’s Center (Mallika Dutt), 2002
- Best Indipop Music Video—Screen Awards (Mann Ke Manjeere), 2001
- National Citizen’s Award (India) for Contribution to Women & Development (Mallika Dutt), 2001
- South Asian Women’s Creative Collection (SAWCC) Annual Achievement Award for Outstanding Contributions to the South Asian Community (Mallika Dutt), 2001

References:

- <https://www.inbreakthrough.tv/>
- Feldt, Gloria. "She's Doing It: Mallika Dutt Defines Her Terms for Global Human Rights".