

Breakthrough Trust

Breakthrough Trust works on culture-based change in India, focusing their programs on girls and boys aged 11 to 24. They partner with the government and help redesign school curricula to include material on gendered violence, as well as running mass media campaigns to reach a large audience.

Their annual demonstrated impact includes:

- Transforming gender norms by working in 13 districts and 4 states within India, including Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Delhi/NCR.
- Collaborating with state governments in Punjab and Odisha and education departments to embed a gender lens into the middle school curricula and train teachers and school leaders to build gender sensitivity

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Key Strengths: Scale, Durability

Multidimensional Poverty Index Indicators: Physical safety, Social connectedness, Empowerment, Assets, Psychological well-being

Other key outcomes: Early pregnancy rates, Early marriage rates, Healthcare utilization

Recent expense budget: US\$3,500,000

Year founded: 1990

Likelihood of girl's school enrollment greater by

89%

28% reduction in early marriage

Increase in girls age at marriage by nearly

2 years

17% increase in health facility visits

19% increase in mobility of girls, such as going to the market or visiting a friend

Shifts in student's attitudes on norms related to girl's higher education and paid employment

Active in **4 states and 13 districts**

in India through
direct
intervention,
and in 2 states
through
government
partnerships

Other ways to donate

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CORPORATE MATCHING PROGRAM

The Problem: Violence against women and girls in India.

Girls in India are born into a socio-cultural context steeped in discrimination and inequity that pushes them to the fringes of society with little control over their lives and an inability to reach their full potential.

Twenty three percent of women aged 20-24 years old are married before the legal age of 18 years ([NFHS-5](#)) and only one in four Indian women are able to join the workforce (World Bank). Gender discrimination

is also believed to have a direct effect on birthrates, with only 919 girls being born per 1000 boys ([Census 2011](#)).

Unfortunately, despite the evident and dire health, economic and social consequences of violence against women and girls, the issue has received relatively little global attention and funding.





The solution: Empowerment programs for adolescents.

High-quality studies have identified several specific interventions that are effective at preventing violence. In particular, community-based social empowerment programs that shift gender norms and attitudes have been demonstrated to be very effective from many randomized controlled trials — including Abramsky et al (2014), Dunkle et al (2020), Leight et al (2020), Wagman et al (2015), Ogum Alangea et al (2020), Le Roux et al (2020), and Chatterji et al (2020). These programs can lead to 30-50% reductions in violence in communities, with effects that can persist for many years.

These community mobilization programs involve training community volunteers to become activists who can work with individuals, families, communities and local governments to drive change in gender norms and attitudes. The programs are supported by evidence-based toolkits, frameworks, and technical assistance. They are also community driven and adapted to each local context.

Breakthrough Trust India is implementing the community-based approach into school curriculum and community-based programs targeting adolescents which have a similar level of effectiveness.





How Breakthrough Trust works

Breakthrough Trust implements community-based programs that target adolescents inside and outside the school system. Through their work, Breakthrough Trust has reached nearly 1.5 million adolescents in 13 districts and 4 states (Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Delhi/NCR) in India.

Breakthrough Trust uses the socio-ecological model where they work with different stakeholders, including local administration at the village and district level, frontline health workers and other community stakeholders like families and other community members who impact a girl's life. Breakthrough also works with young adults aged 19-25 years old in the community and creates youth leaders or Team Change Leaders (TCLs). These TCLs act as a bridge between the organization and the community and are extensively trained by Breakthrough to act as a support system for adolescents in the community.

In conjunction, through its systems change work on gender transformative school systems, Breakthrough Trust collaborates with state governments and state education departments to embed a gender lens into the middle school subject curricula. It is currently working with the governments of Punjab and Odisha to scale its programs at government schools and is involved in training teachers and school leaders to build gender sensitivity, work with middle management for effective implementation of the program and enhance parental engagement to increase value for girls' education and aspirations.





What makes Breakthrough Trust so effective

Partnership with government

Breakthrough Trust has worked with government on implementation of their programs and on educational curricula re-design. These government partnerships have enabled them to significantly increase the number of adolescents they are able to reach and offer a promising path to scale.

Strong organizational culture

Breakthrough Trust prides itself on being a non-hierarchical space that believes in everyone's capacity to lead and inspire. In recent years, they have developed a strong second line of leadership, the Emerging Leadership Team (ELT), that is increasingly taking over accountability for the organization's performance-based culture.

Participatory design

Breakthrough Trust works with adolescents to design and improve its work and programs. Not only does it aim to build collectives and joint leadership among young people, especially girls, to raise their voices. It also solicits youth and adolescent voices for regular and periodic review of their curriculum.