**Government of Punjab partners with Breakthrough and J-PAL South Asia to introduce gender sensitisation curriculum into all government schools in the state to reduce gender-based violence and discrimination in the long term.**

* *The curriculum will be based on Breakthrough’s iconic Taaron Ki Toli programme that is proven to make the gender views of both boys and girls more progressive.*
* *The curriculum will be introduced as part of the Moral Sciences, Social studies, and English syllabi for classes 6-8, covering over 4,500 government schools in the state.*
* *Under the programme, nearly 46,000 teachers will be trained on delivering the curriculum. The program is expected to reach over a million students in the state.*
* *The curriculum consists of a series of interactive, safe, and open discussions to empower adolescents to transform their gender attitudes, aspirations, and behaviors.*
* *J-PAL South Asia will conduct an independent process evaluation to generate insights for sustained, high-quality, government implementation.*

**New Delhi/Chandigarh, March 8, 2021**: The Government of Punjab’s Department of School Education today announced its partnership with Breakthrough and the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) South Asia to integrate a gender sensitisation curriculum for adolescents into the syllabus for all government schools in the state. Taaron Ki Toli (TKT) is a gender sensitisation curriculum for students between the ages of 10 and 14 years.

Breakthrough’s curriculum was first introduced into schools in Haryana in 2012 and in a rigorous evaluation by J-PAL South Asia, it was seen to significantly improve gender attitudes and behaviours of both boys and girls. Breakthrough has since introduced the curriculum into schools in Bihar, Jharkhand and U.P., reaching over 200,000 adolescents with a view to reducing gender-based discrimination and violence.

The partnership was launched by the Honourable Chief Minister of Punjab - Captain Amarinder Singh on the occasion of International Women’s Day. To mark the event, Shri Krishan Kumar, Secretary of the Department of School Education, Punjab, said, “In service of our mission to transform gender outcomes in the state and achieve gender parity, I am delighted to launch this initiative to directly address gender discrimination and encourage the growth of gender equitable mindsets in our young citizens. The expansion of Breakthrough's gender sensitisation programme throughout Punjab will bring about a ripple effect as this curriculum begins to shift gender norms and behaviors of our students, who will grow to shape the fabric of our state. “

In this visionary move to bring generational change in gender-biased perceptions, the Department of School Education, led by Shri Krishan Kumar, supported by Assistant Director, SCERT Mr. Maninder Sarkaria, will now embed Breakthrough’s gender equality curriculum in all state-run middle schools during the academic year 2021-22. This is an indication of the primacy the department is giving to gender equality in the state.

**Commenting on the partnership, Sohini Bhattacharya, President and CEO, Breakthrough, said,** “Breakthrough is honoured to partner with the government of Punjab and J-PAL South Asia to bring about systemic and lasting change to how we address gender equality. Breakthrough, over the last 20 years has been working towards making violence and discrimination against women and girls unacceptable. We know that gender perceptions get formed at a young age and therefore, we need to ensure that children, especially between the ages of 10-14 have access to the right information related to gender equality, legal rights, and healthy gender behaviors. The Taaron Ki Toli program aims to achieve this and has played a significant role in promoting gender-equitable behavior among school children. With Breakthrough’s partnership with the government of Punjab, we will continue to make efforts to build a society that is fair, equitable and does not allow gender-based discrimination.”

The Department of School Education will work with Breakthrough to train teachers to integrate the curriculum in classes 6-8. J-PAL South Asia will conduct an independent process evaluation to generate insights for sustained, high-quality, government implementation. In a randomized evaluation conducted by J-PAL South Asia in 314 government schools in Haryana, the curriculum was found to significantly shift the gender attitudes and behaviors of both boys and girls and led students to enact more gender-equitable behavior. The evaluation was led by researchers Diva Dhar (University of Oxford), Tarun Jain (IIM Ahmedabad), and Seema Jayachandran (Northwestern University).

**Shobhini Mukerji, Executive Director of J-PAL South Asia, said,** "Many gender gaps persist despite economic progress, making it important to intervene directly and early enough to change norms and attitudes in order to bring about a more gender equal society. In uniting the Government of Punjab’s commitment to improve gender outcomes with Breakthrough’s expertise in developing programmes to change gender norms, this partnership offers tremendous potential to close the gender outcome gap by empowering every student with a gender equitable mindset and the tools to act upon it."

**About Breakthrough:**

Breakthrough works towards making violence and discrimination against women and girls unacceptable. We change gender norms by working with adolescents and youth, their families, and their communities, as well as by using media campaigns, the arts and popular culture to build a more equal world around us and create a more enabling environment.

For more information, visit <https://inbreakthrough.org/>