



04

ENDING GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

YOUNG PEOPLE ARE THE CHAMPIONS OF PFI'S WORK TO
END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

As a natural extension of its overarching focus on women's rights and empowerment, PFI addressed gender based violence (GBV) with a year-long online campaign, programmes with rural communities, and by lending voice to movements sweeping through the country as well as globally. We focused on young people whose opinions are still being shaped and who will, in turn, influence social norms in the years to come. On the one hand we had film celebrity and youth icon Farhan Akhtar as an ally; on the other, we supported youth champions to amplify the movement to end violence against women and girls.

For the first time in its history, the annual **Economic Survey of 2018** dedicated a chapter to **gender equality** titled **‘Gender and Son Meta-Preference: Is Development Itself an Antidote?’**. It presented the concept of ‘son meta-preference’, a phenomenon where most couples continue to bear children until the desired number of sons are born. **More than two million women go missing every year** due to son preference, sex-selective abortion, disease, neglect, inadequate health and nutrition, harassment or violence. Plan India’s **Gender Vulnerability Index (GVI)**⁷ released in November 2017 presented an assessment tool that is designed to measure the vulnerability of girls and women based on poverty, education, health and survival and

protection. The latest 2016 National Crime Records Bureau data⁸ revealed a 15 per cent rise in cases of stalking and 27 per cent in cases of acid attacks, and an increase of 12 per cent in cases of rape.

While these numbers may be alarming, they also indicate that more women are finding the courage and voice to speak out and recognise that it is not their fault. PFI recognises that gender-based violence manifests itself in many ways, and therefore needs to be acknowledged and addressed using multiple strategies. Our approach is to draw attention to and build awareness on ending violence, especially against women and girls, and to give voice to champions who have spoken out. 2017 will be most

significantly remembered as the year of the **#MeToo movement**, when millions spoke out against sexual abuse through social media. In India, recognising the barriers women face in seeking redress when subjected to sexual harassment at the workplace, the Ministry of Women & Child Development launched **SHe-Box** (sexual harassment electronic box) – an online complaint management system that directly sends complaints to the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) or the Local Complaints Committee (LCC). PFI recognises that digital media has opened up avenues for women to speak out against violence, openly or in anonymity, and for their voices to be heard and noted.

⁷ www.planindia.org/sites/all/themes/plan_india/images/pdf/gender-vulnerability-index.pdf

⁸ Crime in India, 2016

Adolescent girls prevent child marriages in Bihar villages

‘Kishori Clubs’ (adolescent girls’ groups) formed under PFI’s Advocacy, Communication and Accountability (ACA) programme have been successful in creating a community of nearly 3,000 champions for equal rights across 292 villages of Bihar. The girls have been counselled on the effects of child marriage and its linkages to early and unplanned pregnancies, poor health, denial of education and reduced livelihood choices. As a result, the girls mobilised and were able to prevent 92 child marriages in their villages in the Nawada and Darbhanga districts by convincing the parents; if that failed, they raised the alarm with law enforcers, often encircling the wedding venue.



Members of adolescent girls' groups who have prevented child marriages in their villages | Photo: PFI

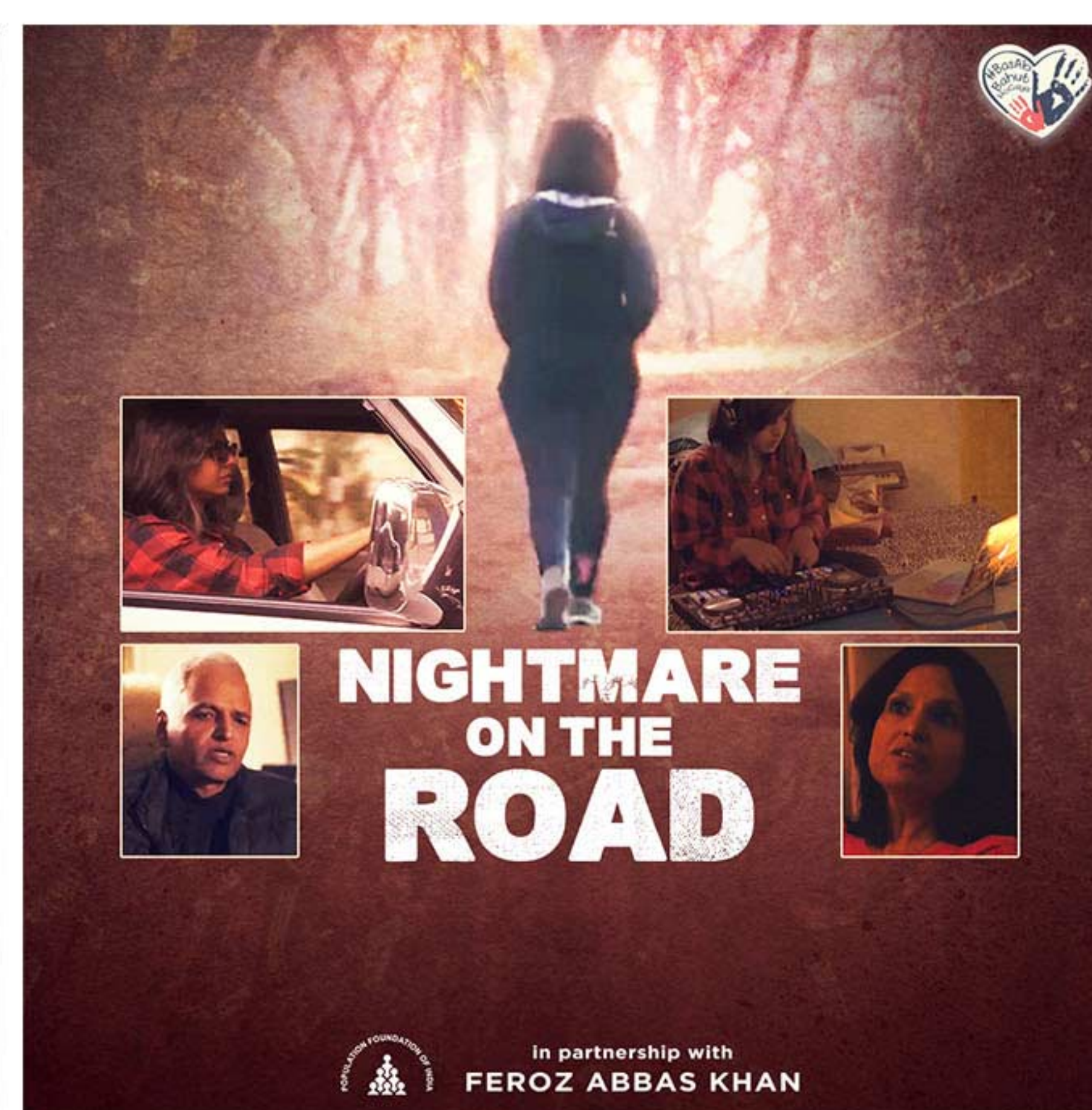
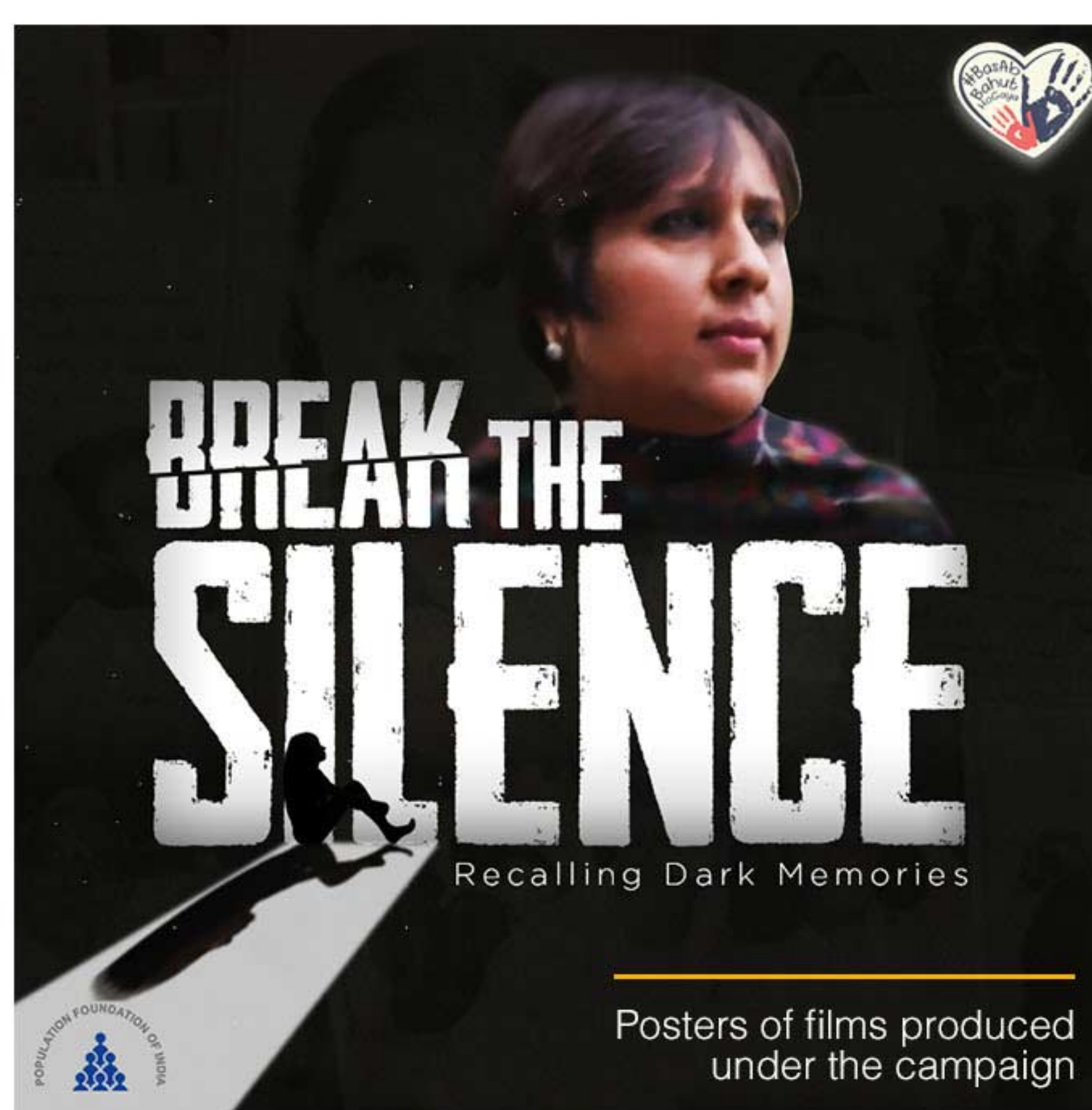
PFI'S PILOT DIGITAL CAMPAIGN SETS THE GROUND FOR A CELEBRITY-POWERED MOVEMENT

In May 2017 PFI launched a digital media campaign named **Bas Ab Bahut Ho Gaya** (BABHG - Enough is Enough) for **ending violence against women and girls** (VAWG). The objective was for men to accept that VAWG is a sign of weakness, not of strength; and for women to know that they do not, under any circumstances, deserve or should accept violence. PFI led the project in partnership with film actor Farhan Akhtar's social initiative Men Against Rape and Discrimination (MARD) and film and theatre director Feroz Abbas Khan. BABHG was **one of the winners of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's Grand Challenge**

initiatives, 'Putting Women and Girls at the Centre of Development'.

Bas Ab Bahut Ho Gaya was run as a digital campaign as PFI understands that our youth audiences are digital natives – they have grown up with easy access to the internet and familiarity with online activism. The 2017 UNICEF's State of the World's Children report, which focused on Children in a Digital World, points out that it is practically second nature for young people to use social media for social activism. With BABHG, PFI **reached more than 18 million viewers on Facebook alone** over 11 months. The core of the campaign was production.

and release of six short films on issues ranging from the need to value girls and boys equally, rape, child sexual violence, stalking, and harassment at the workplace. The six films together received **over six million views**. For the first time in an online social campaign of its kind, **real time viewer feedback** was collected through an embedded chat bot.



A **celebrity concert** streamed on Facebook Live as part of the campaign reached 4.8 million users. The concert featured Farhan Akhtar along with other film celebrities such as Salim-Sulaiman, Sukriti-Prakriti, Armaan Malik, Harshdeep Kaur, and a surprise appearance by Hindi film superstar Shah Rukh Khan. Real life changemakers, winners of the 'Real Hero' awards of PFI's transmedia initiative Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon (MKBKSH - I, A Woman Can Achieve Anything), shared their stories of

breaking stereotypes and promoting gender justice in their respective communities.

Bas Ab Bahut Ho Gaya reached out to college students through a promotion campaign in 600 colleges across India and panel discussions in selected academic institutions. 1,700 entries were received from across India for an online short film contest for students. Three winners were selected by a jury of eminent personalities Shabana Azmi,

Shekhar Kapur, Kiran Karnik and Feroz Abbas Khan. In addition, a **Viewers' Choice Award** was given to the most popular film selected through online voting. The **campaign anthem Chhulein Aasman** ('Touch the Sky'), released on International Women's Day, 8 March 2018, **reached more than a million viewers** through PFI and MARD's social media platforms. Over 70 per cent of those who saw the anthem video actively engaged through likes, shares and comments.

More than 46 million users on social media **reached through #BasAbBahutHoGaya**.

Over **6.5 million viewers engaged** with the Bas Ab Bahut Ho Gaya (Enough is Enough) campaign. Over 6.5 million viewers engaged with the Bas Ab Bahut Ho Gaya (Enough is Enough) campaign.

Film celebrities such as Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan, Shabana Azmi, Priyanka Chopra, and Aamir Khan **endorse the campaign** on ending violence against women and girls.





Impressions of the celebrity concert held in Mumbai in November 2017 as part of Bas Ab Bahut Ho Gaya | Photo: PFI