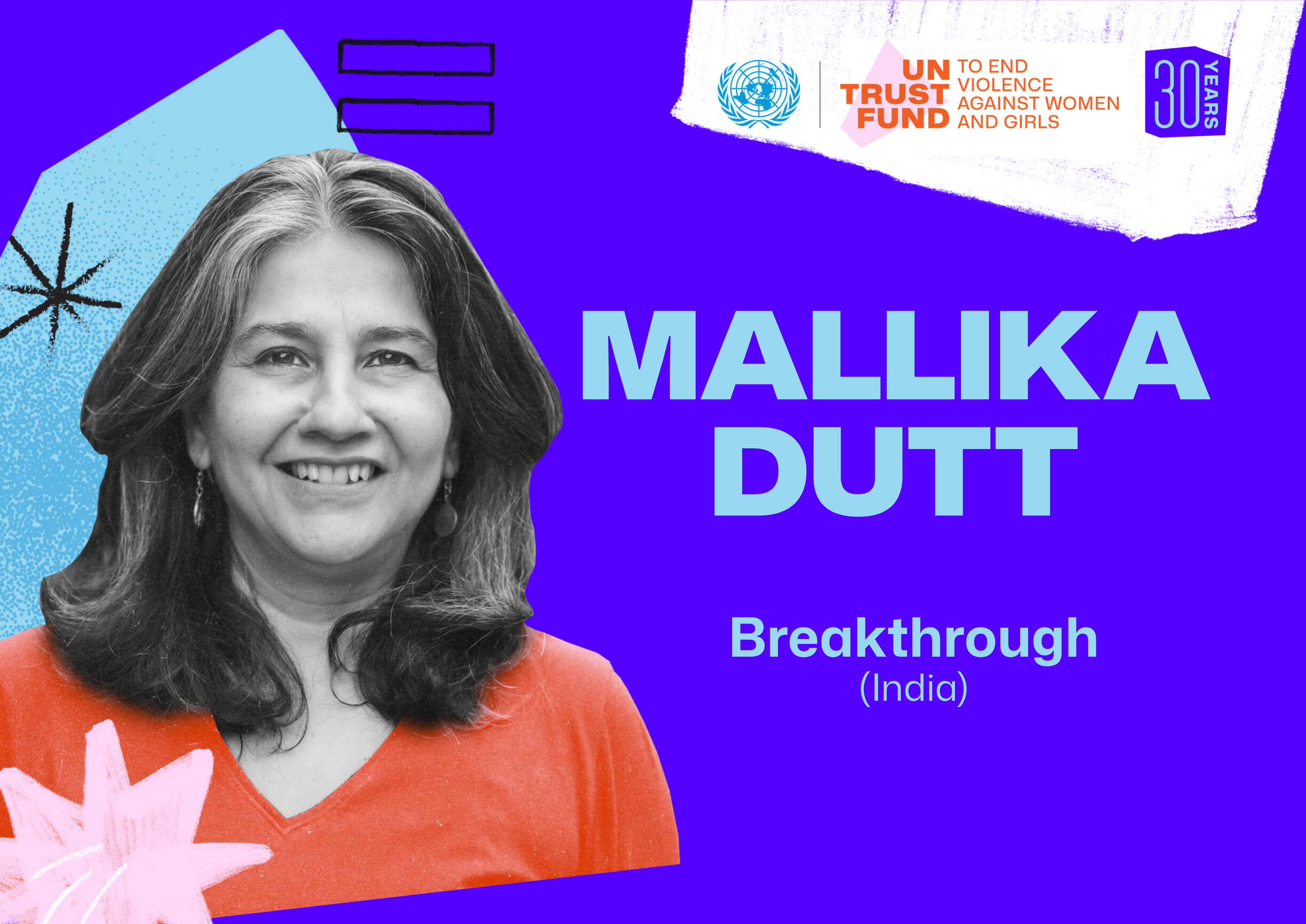


UN TO END
TRUST VIOLENCE
FUND AGAINST WOMEN
AND GIRLS

30 YEARS

MALLIKA DUTT

Breakthrough
(India)



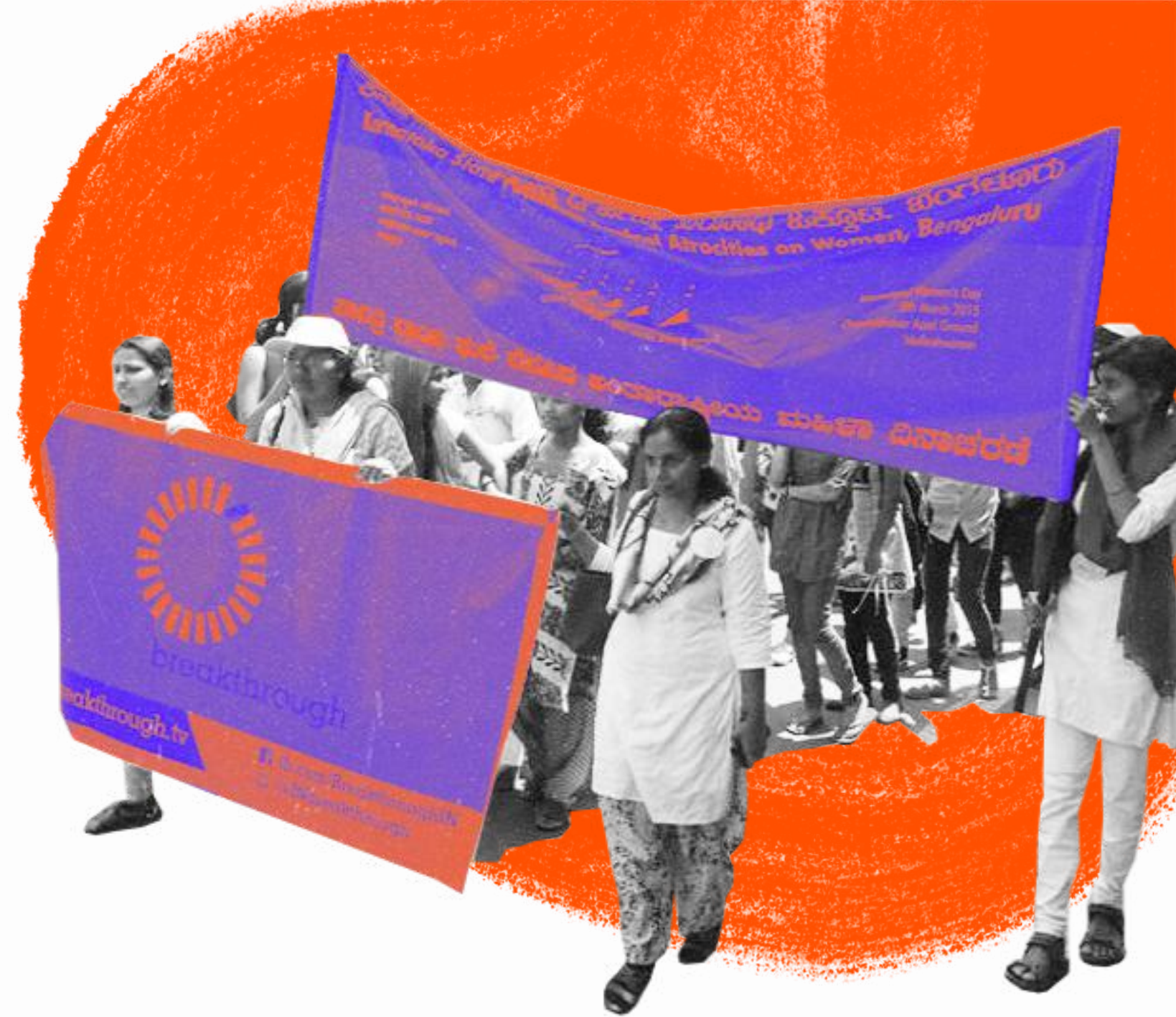
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My parents had no idea what I was saying.

In the years around Cairo and Beijing, I was part of the movement that wrote women's rights into human rights. We changed the paradigm, and we built a language to name what had long gone unnamed. But somewhere along the way, that language became so technical that the people it was meant to serve could not access it. We were also attending to violations after they happened, and not to the culture that produced the violence in the first place.

So I went looking for a way to change the culture itself. It began with a music album about a woman who leaves a violent home and becomes a truck driver. That became the organization Breakthrough.

Our early campaigns focused on women and HIV. The women we worked with told us: "Before any of us can ask a husband to use a condom, we have to survive what is happening to us at home." They were right: we had framed men as perpetrators and women as victims, without showing how men could also become part of the solution. The campaign 'Ring the Bell' changed that by asking men not only to recognize violence, but to become part of changing the culture that enables it.



The UN Trust Fund backed us at that point. What mattered was not only the flexibility, though that was critical, but the willingness to support a new methodology before there was proof that it would work. The evidence was telling us that existing approaches were not working, but doing something different meant taking a risk. The UN Trust Fund was willing to take that risk with us. Over three years, from 2013 to 2016, 'Ring the Bell' went from India to the world.



I will keep saying this:
we have not engaged men as
partners in transformation.
Patriarchy harms them too.
If we are not engaging men,
someone else will, and the
manosphere is doing now.



At a moment when so much around us is in
rupture, one critical question to ask
ourselves is: what would it take for us to
move from being advocates to architects?
An architect is a creative builder. It means
moving from a resistance framework to an
emergence framework, and asking not only
what we are against but what we are
making.

Mallika Dutt is a human rights lawyer, feminist
leader and social entrepreneur who has spent
decades challenging violence and discrimination
against women and girls by shifting
the norms and cultures that
sustain them. She founded
Breakthrough in 1999, using
media, popular culture and
community organizing to bring
human rights into everyday life.

