

# Bol Screening Toolkit

Watch. Speak. **Act.**



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**Tools to  
Watch, Speak  
and Act.**

# **Bol Screening Toolkit**

## **Watch. Speak. Act.**

**To create a screening event**  
and spark dialogue and action for family  
planning and gender equality in Pakistan.

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#### **Disclaimer**

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# **Why Screen Bol**

# **1 FILM, 2 CAUSES**

# **207774520 PEOPLE**

**Watch. Speak. Act. When Bol (*Speak Up*) was released in Pakistan in the summer of 2011, this is the promise the film asked every viewer to make, to themselves and to each other.**

**Bol** is a call to action over two causes that lie at the heart of Pakistan's future: family planning and gender equality. For Pakistan, a country of 207,774,520 people, family planning promises to mitigate the impact of population dynamics on the country's natural resources and state stability. It will also reduce poverty in the country by contributing to economic growth at the family, community and national levels. Similarly, better gender equality will ensure more women in Pakistan have fair opportunities for education, employment and full participation in society.



# THE PEOPLE



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**According to the 2017 census,**  
the population of Pakistan has  
grown to 207,774,520 people.

////////////////////////////////////

# 50,000

## People watched **Bol** across cinemas in Pakistan

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More than anyone else in the country, the lack of family planning and gender inequality most profoundly affect women and children in Pakistan. Women are deprived of the necessary time needed to recover between pregnancies and face higher chances of high-risk pregnancies. Crucially, many women and newborns die as a result of these high-risk pregnancies.

Produced as part of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded Pakistan Initiative for Mothers and Newborns (PAIMAN), jointly implemented by Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Programs (CCP) and JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc., **Bol** was a response to these challenges. Directed by one of Pakistan's leading film and television directors, Shoaib Mansoor, **Bol** explored the need for family planning and the state of gender equality through the story of a family in old Lahore. Uniquely, the film was an entertainment-education film, the first of its kind in Pakistan.

**Bol** also set other precedents: it established new box office records by becoming the highest earning film in the first week of its release in Pakistan. Nearly 50,000 people across Pakistan watched **Bol** in cinemas while millions of others enjoyed it during its many telecasts on Pakistan's most popular television channel, Geo. The film was also released in India, USA, UK, Singapore, Canada and UAE, in addition to a number of African countries. It received critical recognition both at national and international levels, winning best picture awards at the Asia Pacific Film Awards, the London Asian Film Festival and the Lux Style Awards.



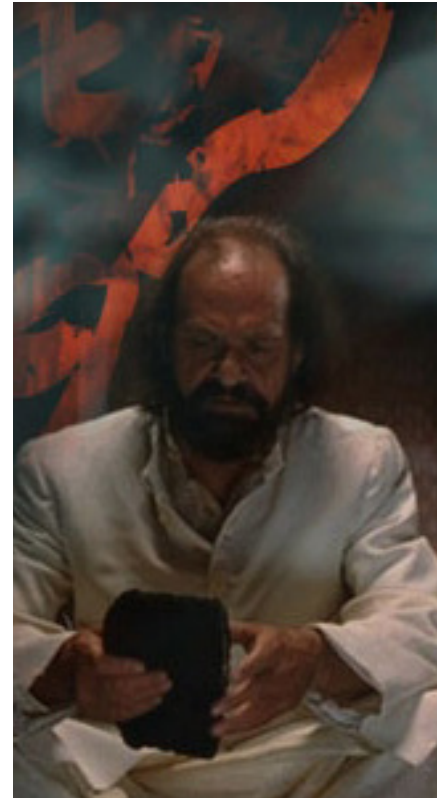
While there have been encouraging advances in family planning as well as gender equality in Pakistan, there is much that remains to be done. The lives and futures of 207774520 people in the country are at stake. More and more people need to watch, speak, and act before family planning and gender equality can become part of Pakistan's social fabric. The **Bol Screening Toolkit** offers one way we may remake this promise. This toolkit is meant for anyone and everyone who wants to watch, speak and act for family planning and gender equality in Pakistan. It is particularly useful for our new generation of students, filmmakers and journalists. We in earnest hope this toolkit inspires people – young and old – to act, and to help each other finally fulfil a promise we all made in the summer of 2011.

**The Bol Screening Toolkit can be used by anyone interested in screening the film. Given our aim that this toolkit is implemented widely and at a large scale, the primary users for this toolkit are universities, where teachers, learners and parents can come together to organise screenings, spark dialogue, and campaign for family planning and gender equality. Another primary user for this toolkit are non-governmental organisations – both local and international – campaigning for mother and child health.**

Inside Bol

## **Film Summary**

**Bol revolves around Zainab Khan, who has been found guilty by Pakistan's Courts and is to be hanged. Her last wish is to tell her story. Her father Hakim married Suraiya, in the hope of having a son. He and Suraiya instead end up having with seven daughters. Hakim's eighth child is a son, Saifi, but to Hakim's disappointment, Saifi identifies as transgender. After a failed marriage, one of the daughters Zainab returns home, and notices and speaks up against the cruel treatment of her family by their father Hakim. When a neighbour's son Mustafa proposes marriage to one of Hakim's daughter, Ayesha, Hakim refuses, since he plans to marry her to a much older Sunni man. The conflict between Zainab and Hakim escalates over Saifi and Ayesha, and both take actions that change the lives of their family forever.**



## **Bol is an Entertainment-Education film**

Key social and behaviour change messages were carefully placed into the film's characters and storylines. Thematically, these messages deal with issues critical to the future of Pakistan: family planning, the role of religious beliefs in family planning, gender inequality and son-preference, and the impact of a fast growing population.

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## **01 // Family Planning**

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## **02 // Islam and Family Planning**

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The family in **Bol** is a large family of ten people, including seven daughters and one son. The parents Hakim and Suraiya do not plan their family size. By focusing on the relationships within the family, **Bol** shows how the family socially and economically suffers because of its large size. Without adequate spacing between births needed for healthy pregnancies, both the mother Suraiya and her unborn child are trapped in the mortal dangers of high-risk pregnancies. Even though Pakistan pledged to increase its contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) to 55 per cent by 2020 during the **2012 London Summit on Family Planning**, its progress has been slow. Today, CPR for modern methods stands at only 24.6 per cent in the country and Pakistan's fertility rate, at 3.8 children per woman, is also the highest in the region, with India at 2.5 and Bangladesh at 2.2. This slow progress has also contributed to Pakistan's maternal and infant mortality rates, which are amongst the highest in the world: nearly 260 mothers die during every 100,000 births, while 69 in every 1,000 infants die within the first year of their birth.

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Hakim appears to be a devout Muslim, an appearance that fully and publicly unravels as the film's story unfolds. Even though Islam actually supports family planning, both for the wellbeing of the mother and the child, and for the socio-economic ease that it brings to a family, Hakim holds the popular belief that Islam does not allow the practice of family planning. He therefore has a large family of eight children with his wife Suraiya. This film offers the audience the opportunity to explore the role culture plays in how people practice Islam, and how this in turn affects not only family planning but also the position of girls and women in families.

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## **03 // Gender Inequality and Son-Preference**

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## **04 // Population and Pakistan's Future**

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# “My question is: Why is murder only a crime? Why is giving birth not a crime?”

**Zainab, lamenting the consequences of not planning family size**

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Hakim candidly prefers having a son. This prevented him from practicing family planning with his wife Suraiya. His desire for a son led him to have as many children as possible until Suraiya eventually has a son, their eighth child. The preference for a male child has led to low contraceptive prevalence in Pakistan, particularly in rural areas. The key perception driving son-preference in Pakistan is that a male child can carry the family name and is also a future breadwinner who can take care of parents and the family in old age. A female child, on the other hand, is perceived as someone who cannot work, and therefore an economic burden. Girls are more likely to be treated not equally to boys within households and are not offered equal education to boys while they grew up. Consequently, as low as 22 per cent girls eventually grow up to participate in Pakistan's labour force.

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Family Planning has slowly increased in Pakistan, at only around 0.5 per cent annually over the past 50 years. This has meant that population growth in Pakistan has been drastic. When *Bol* was released in 2011, the population stood at 177.1 million people. Only six years later, the population stands verified by the country's sixth population census at 207.7 million people. Compared to the population count from the 1998 census, this is a 57 per cent increase and compared to the population count from the 1981 census, this is an increase of 146.6 per cent. These rapid population dynamics have a draining impact of Pakistan's natural resources and state stability. It is also leading to poverty at the family, community and national levels. Without family planning and a more controlled growth in population, Pakistan's future would be characterised by families such as the one depicted in *Bol*: unravelling under the impact of their size.

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# How to Sc

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# 4 HOURS,

## Session 1: Opening Remarks

// 10 minutes

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The event host welcomes the audience and the panellists, introduces **Bol** and explains the purpose of the screening event.

# reen Bol:

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# 5 SESSIONS

A screening event of Bol will take a minimum of four hours, and will consist of five sessions.

## Session 2: Screening Bol

// 2 hours and 45 minutes

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Bol is screened, at a venue that has access to a projector, a screen, and a sound system. Seating for at least 50 people should be possible.

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## **Session 3: Panel Discussion**

// 20 minutes

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Panellists (who can be but not necessarily associated with the **Bol** or with any campaign for family planning and gender equality) field questions from the host and offer insight and possible actions for the benefit of the audience. The crucial role the panel discussion plays is that it frames the imminent open discussion involving the audience with organised information and actionable points.



**Session 4:  
Open Discussion**

// 35 minutes

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Audience members share their experience of watching **Bol**, and reflect on film scenes, characters, and themes they found most powerful or relevant. Based on priorities and information shared during the panel discussion, the audience members show solidarity to the causes of family planning and gender equality, and commit actions.

**Session 5:  
Closing Remarks**

// 10 minutes

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The event host thanks the audience and the panellists for attending the screening, summarises any action points made during the panel and open discussions, and asks the audience to fill out and hand in their feedback forms.

# Day 1



# Day 2



# Day 3



## Step 1

Get a DVD copy or digital download of Bol.

## Step 2

Select a date and find a location.

## Step 3

Select a host or moderator for the discussions.

## Step 4

Select panel members.

We suggest that you take a minimum of 10 days to plan, host and follow-up on a screening of Bol. During these 10 days, you will need to take 20 steps.

# How to Screen 10 DAYS, 20 ST

# Day 4

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## Step 5

Create and send out invitations to your potential audience, and spread the word about your event.

# Day 5

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## Step 6

Print the event hand-outs. [Download from Bol microsite.](#)

# Day 6

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## Step 7

Create buzz around your event by sending an email reminder to your audience and continue to post updates on social media.

## Step 8

Distribute discussion points with panellists.

# Bol: EPS

# Day 7

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## Step 9

Draft and practice your opening and closing remarks.

## Step 10

Have a pre-event discussion with your panellists.

# Day 8

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## Step 11

Set up the event and test all tech, including the projector, screen and sound system.

# Day 9

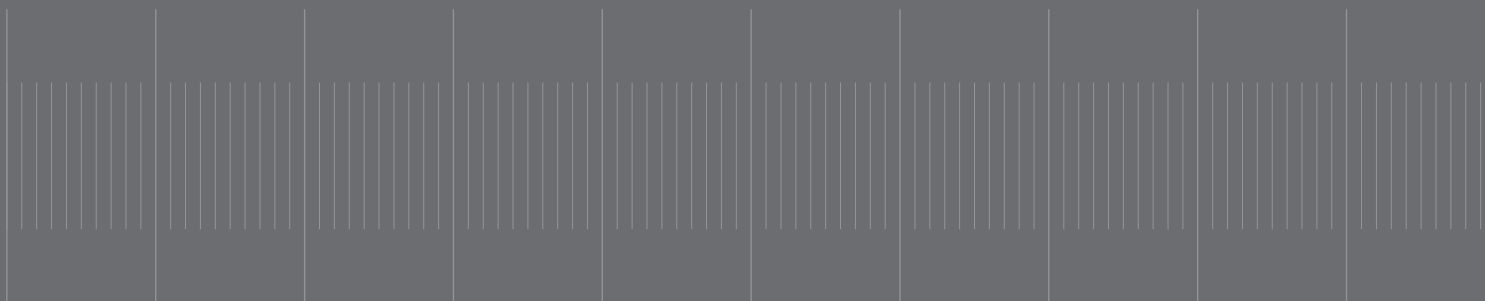
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## Step 12

From the whole day, post updates from the event on social media, including photos.

## Step 13

Check-in audience members and distribute hand-outs.



# Day 9

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## Step 14

Open the event, while introducing the panellists and welcoming the audience.

## Step 15

Host the panel discussion.

## Step 16

Screen **Bol**.

# Day 9

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## Step 17

Open discussion between panellists and audience, including Q&As.

## Step 18

Close the event, with some final remarks and a thank you to the panellists and the audience.

## Step 19

Collect the screening feedback forms.

Download from **Bol** microsite.

# Day 10

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## Step 20

Send a follow-up to audience members a day after the event.

# Speak: Discussing Bol

**Four of the five sessions will be opportunities to speak. The following are the talking and discussion points for guiding what the host, the panellists, and the audience can speak about.**

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## **Viewership Guidelines**

**01 //** The film contains strong language and some graphic descriptions of abuse and violence and the viewers should be advised.

**02 //** Before screening the film, offer a few words of caution to the audience: it is not recommended for children under the age of 16 without parental supervision and approval.

**03 //** You might want to consider taking a break in between the screening and the plenary and open discussion by allowing family members or children who might not be interested in the dialogue or discussion a chance to leave.



## Discussion Guidelines

**01 //** Expect that those attending screening of the film will exhibit a wide range of responses to the film that can be very emotional and possibly overwhelming for them.

**02 //** Expect and plan for the audience to have and voice their opinions and feelings about the events and characters depicted in the film.

**03 //** Establish group rules or guidelines for the open discussion. It is important that you establish guidelines or rules for the group to follow prior to the screening. Consider using some of the following:

- Be respectful of others at all times.
  - Listen to others, and respect their opinions and beliefs.
  - Political and religious issues are always a part of any discussion. However, they should only be mentioned in the context of how they relate to the topic and programme. Political and/or religious views should never be imposed on members of a group.
  - Please let the person talking finish what they are saying and only one person at a time should be talking.
  - Threats to others will not be tolerated and you will be asked to leave.
  - Consider setting a time limit for questions or comments so that all audience members have an opportunity to talk.
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## Opening Remarks

Say a few words to set the scene for the event, and to also spell out the days plan.

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- Thank the audience attending the screening event.
  - Thank and introduce the panellists attending the screening event.
  - Briefly tell them about **Bol** and its director Sohaib Mansoor, while highlighting it as an entertainment-education film that focuses on the causes of family planning and gender. **See Why Screen Bol.**
  - Briefly describe the sessions planned as part of the screening event. **See How to Screen Bol.**
  - Ask the audience and the panellists to enjoy the film.
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**Remember:** Emphasise to the audience and the panellists that after the film screening, there will be a discussion about **Bol** and the specific actions everyone attending can take to advance family planning and gender equality in Pakistan.

## Panel Discussion

Ask the panellist some or all of the **Icebreakers** questions.

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- Thank the audience and panellists for watching the film.
  - What are your thoughts after watching the film?
  - Which of the main characters, storylines or events in the film were the most powerful to you? *Why?*
  - Did you find any character or moment in film surprise you? *How so?*
  - Which messages about family planning and gender equality resonated with you most? *Why?*
  - How can the messages in this film be used to encourage family planning and gender equality in Pakistan?
  - Do you have any final thoughts, comments, or reactions?
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## Panel Discussion

Ask the panellists associated with **Bol** some of the following questions.

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- What drew you to become part of **Bol**?
  - What was your role in the development of **Bol**? Do you think the film achieved what it set out to do in the beginning?
  - **Bol** deals with socially controversial issues in Pakistan. Did you or your colleagues face any resistance while making the film?
  - Why do you think director Sohaib Mansoor chose to focus on the relationships within the family so prominently in the film?
  - How has the experience of working in **Bol** changed your approach to filmmaking, particularly around what you think the role of film can be in Pakistan?
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## Panel Discussion

Ask subject specialist panellists with some of the following questions.

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- Did you watch **Bol** when it was released in 2011? If so, how does this viewing of **Bol** compare to when you watched the film the first time?
  - Do you think **Bol** accurately represents the issues around family planning and gender in Pakistan? Is there anything you think **Bol** missed in its representation?
  - How is family planning affected by our understandings of Islam and gender? Can you talk about this with respect to the position of girls and women in families in Pakistan?
  - What role does culture play in how the various people portrayed in the film follow and interpret Islam? How does culture affect the way we practice religion?
  - Can you talk about the preference for having sons in Pakistan? Are girls in Pakistan considered equal to boys? Are girls in Pakistan offered equal education to boys while they you grew up? Are women offered equal employment to men in Pakistan?
  - Thank the panellists for the responses.
  - Thank the audience for listening to the panellists.
  - Summarise the panel's discussion to the audience.
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**Tip:** Give all panellists the opportunity to respond to at least one question.

## Open Discussion

Ask the audience some of the following questions.

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- What scenes or moments in the film had the biggest impact on you?
  - Which character stood out the most to you and why?
  - What are some new things you learned about family planning and gender roles?
  - Do you think beliefs and practices in Islam prohibit the use of family planning?
  - Do you think beliefs and practices in Islam deem women not equal to men?
  - What are some of the issues and struggles encountered by women in your community? How do those issues relate to what you saw in this film?
  - The father Hakim plays a central role in the film's story. Do you think Zainab would have found herself facing the death penalty if her father had treated his family differently?
  - How are transgender persons like Saifi perceived in our country? Has watching the film changed your perspective?
  - Did the film inspire you to do something about encouraging family planning and gender equality in your community?
  - What actions can you take in your personal lives and in your community around the issues raised in **Bol**, including family planning and gender equality?
  - Summarise the audience discussion.
  - Thank the audience and the panellists for their discussion.
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## Closing Remarks

Say a few words to close the event and set steps forward.

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- Inform the panellists and audience that the event has come to a conclusion.
  - Let them know what they can do next to take action to encourage family planning and gender equality.
  - Thank the audience and panellists for attending the event.
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# Share, Create, Influence

## 1 >

### Share

Download the **BOL Screening Toolkit** and use it to:

- Watch Bol with friends and family and discuss how you can make a difference together; or
- Organize more screenings of Bol, in your community, local university, or organisation.

Post your experiences or comments on social media to promote family planning and gender equality. Be part of any relevant discussions on social media.

Share interesting articles on family planning and gender equality to friends and family, co-workers, and community members.

# Act: Living Bol

**After attending the screening event, people can take action in a number of ways. Guide the audience members to take three of the following steps.**

These are set out in the Event Handout downloaded from the Bol microsite.

## 2 >>

### **Create**

Write letters to editors or Op-Eds on family planning or gender equality. Use your direct experiences and observations while raising issues or highlighting stories of inspiration.

Help others write or broadcast news on family planning and gender equality, by contacting the local media regarding stories in your community or calling into talk radio shows when the topic of discussion relates to family planning or gender equality.

## 3 >>>

### **Influence**

Make phone calls, write letters or send emails to your local government official about any pending or potential legislations or projects that will impact family planning or gender equality in your union council, district or province.

Establish a voluntary community or forum focusing on family planning or gender equality to form a collective voice to influence local governing bodies and to partner on local activities with local and international organisations and campaigns for family planning and gender equality.

# Feedback: Screening Bol

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**Once the screening event is completed, ask the panellists and audience for their feedback.**

Download from Bol microsite.

**1. Which of the following best describes you? Choose one only.**

- Educator
- Film Practitioner
- Social Worker
- Government
- Official
- Student
- Health
- Practitioner
- Journalist
- Parent/Guardian

**2. Please indicate how satisfied you are OVERALL with today's screening. Choose one only.**

- Highly Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Not Satisfied At All



**3-7. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.**

**Circle one number only. Or, if the statement is not applicable, choose "N/A."**

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

As a result of this presentation,	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
3. I have an increased understanding of the challenges faced by women in patriarchal households, particularly within the context of families where family planning is not practiced.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I have additional information about how the practice of son preference acts as a barrier to family planning and is a source of shame for women in families.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I am more likely to recognize the role that Islam can play to support family planning and gender equality in my local community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I have an increased understanding of how growing population adversely affects the social and economics conditions of families in Pakistan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I will be able to apply what I have learned to take actions that will positively affect outcomes for girls and women in Pakistan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**If so, what type of action?**

**8. I would be happy to receive occasional emails regarding Bol, including any upcoming screening.**

Yes

No

**9. If you answered yes, please provide the following information.**

Name

Affiliation (school, organization, etc.)

Email Address

# Bol Screening Toolkit

## Watch. Speak. **Act.**



**Bol microsite:**  
**[www.ccp-pakistan.org.pk/bol](http://www.ccp-pakistan.org.pk/bol)**

#### Contact information

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