



Developments in Literacy
Transforming Lives Through Education



Annual Report 2024



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Who We Are

At Developments in Literacy (DIL), we believe every child deserves the opportunity to learn and thrive. Founded in 1997 by members of the Pakistani diaspora, DIL delivers high-quality education to underserved children in Pakistan—especially girls—through a holistic model that combines strong academics, teacher development, and innovative technology.

Today, we reach over 75,000 students through a network of community and government schools, digital learning platforms, and life skills programs that prepare children for success in school and beyond. Backed by a global community of supporters, we're closing the education gap—one child, one classroom, one opportunity at a time.

This report reflects a year of meaningful progress toward our mission—driven by the belief that we can transform lives with education.





Our Vision

We envision a Pakistan where every child has access to high-quality education that empowers them to thrive in tomorrow's world.

Our Mission

Developments in Literacy (DIL) delivers transformative education to underserved children in Pakistan—especially girls—by operating high-quality schools, empowering local educators, and innovating technology solutions to ensure that every child succeeds.



2024 in Review

A Year of Transformation

In 2024, Developments in Literacy (DIL) experienced a record-breaking year in fundraising—driven by the unwavering generosity of our donor community. This remarkable support translated into transformative impact: we expanded our digital learning tools, strengthened teacher training, and reached more students than ever with a high-quality education that builds foundational skills and critical thinking.

At government schools where our TEAL (Technology Enabled Academic Learning) program was implemented, enrollment surged by 44%, and attendance rose by 34%—a testament to the power of engaging instruction and renewed student motivation. These gains underscore a deeper truth: when learning is joyful and relevant, students show up, participate, and thrive.

We witnessed extraordinary stories of transformation throughout the year—from classrooms in remote villages to the halls of Harvard University. One such story is that of Afreen Mushtaq, a DIL graduate whose academic journey began in our schools and led to a Fulbright Scholarship

for a Master's degree in Education Policy at Harvard. Her path exemplifies what becomes possible when students are empowered to dream beyond their circumstances.

Today, DIL reaches more than 75,000 students nationwide. Of these, 81% benefit from digital learning tools, and 76% have earned A or A+ grades in matriculation exams. Our commitment to blending academic rigor, life skills, and cutting-edge tools, including AI-supported instruction, remains central to our model.

This journey began in 1997, when Fiza Shah founded DIL with a vision to provide quality education to Pakistan's most underserved children. Under her leadership, the organization has grown from a grassroots initiative to a nationwide movement—establishing hundreds of schools and transforming tens of thousands of lives, especially those of girls.

At the heart of it all are the children we serve, and a simple, unshakable belief: every child can learn—if given the opportunity.

Our
Impact



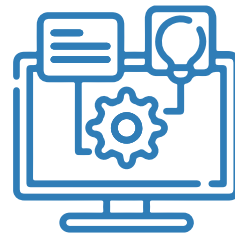
Impacted
75,392 students
65% of them girls
across 201 schools throughout Pakistan.



Empowered
72% of graduates to pursue
a college education —opening doors
to brighter futures.



44% rise in enrollment at
DIL supported government schools—
driven by tech-enabled learning.



81% of students use digital
tools to learn —bridging the digital
divide and preparing for the future.



100% of middle grade students
have access to digital learning.



4% dropout rate reflects engaging
instruction, supportive teachers, and strong
community-school connections.



76% of students score A or A+ in
matric exams—reflecting academic excellence
and tailored support.



116,821
books borrowed—fostering a culture
of reading.



1,330
teachers empowered—boosting subject
knowledge, instruction, and leadership.



Fiza Shah (DIL CEO) visiting Sobodero school (Sindh), where every teacher, including the principal, is a DIL graduate.

CEO's Message

Dear Friends,

As I reflect on 2024, my heart is filled with deep gratitude—for your generosity, for our resilient students and educators, and for the shared belief that every child deserves the chance to learn.

When I visited our adopted government schools in October of last year, I was overwhelmed by the warmth, dedication, and hope I witnessed. Principals and teachers shared how, even with limited resources, our support was transforming classrooms and reigniting a passion for teaching. Their stories stayed with me. They gave me the clarity—and the courage—to help the organization craft an ambitious vision.

Our Vision 2030 is bold: to educate 500,000 children. It is not a distant dream, but a roadmap, powered by our belief in what is possible. Because of you, over 75,000 students are already learning with

dignity, confidence, and opportunity. Because of you, girls who were once denied education are now mastering science and math. Because of you, students in remote areas are speaking English, navigating digital tools, and imagining futures once out of reach.

Every classroom we open, every child we uplift, every teacher we equip brings us closer to our vision. You have helped lay the foundation for a movement—one that believes education is not a privilege, but a right.

With heartfelt thanks and renewed hope,

Fiza Shah

Fiza Shah
Founder & CEO

Vision 2030

Our Roadmap for Scale and Transformation

In October and November 2024, DIL's CEO, Fiza Shah, and COO, Sadia Hashir, conducted extensive field visits across our project locations in Pakistan. These visits provided deep, first-hand insights into student learning, the dedication of our educators, and the evolving needs of the communities we serve. Through meaningful conversations, focus group discussions, and partner engagements, a clear realization emerged: DIL is ready to scale its impact.

From this realization, Vision 2030 was born—an ambitious and transformative roadmap that defines DIL's trajectory for the next six years. It is anchored in two bold goals:

- Reach **500,000** students annually through an expanded school network
- Ensure that **100% of DIL graduates** pursue a four-year university degree, with **10% gaining admission to top-ranked universities** in Pakistan



To align the organization around this vision, DIL's senior management participated in an introductory session, followed by a series of focused pre-meetings. These sessions enabled teams to review their Logical Framework Analyses (LFAs), conduct SWOT assessments, and reflect on achievements, challenges, and opportunities within their departments.

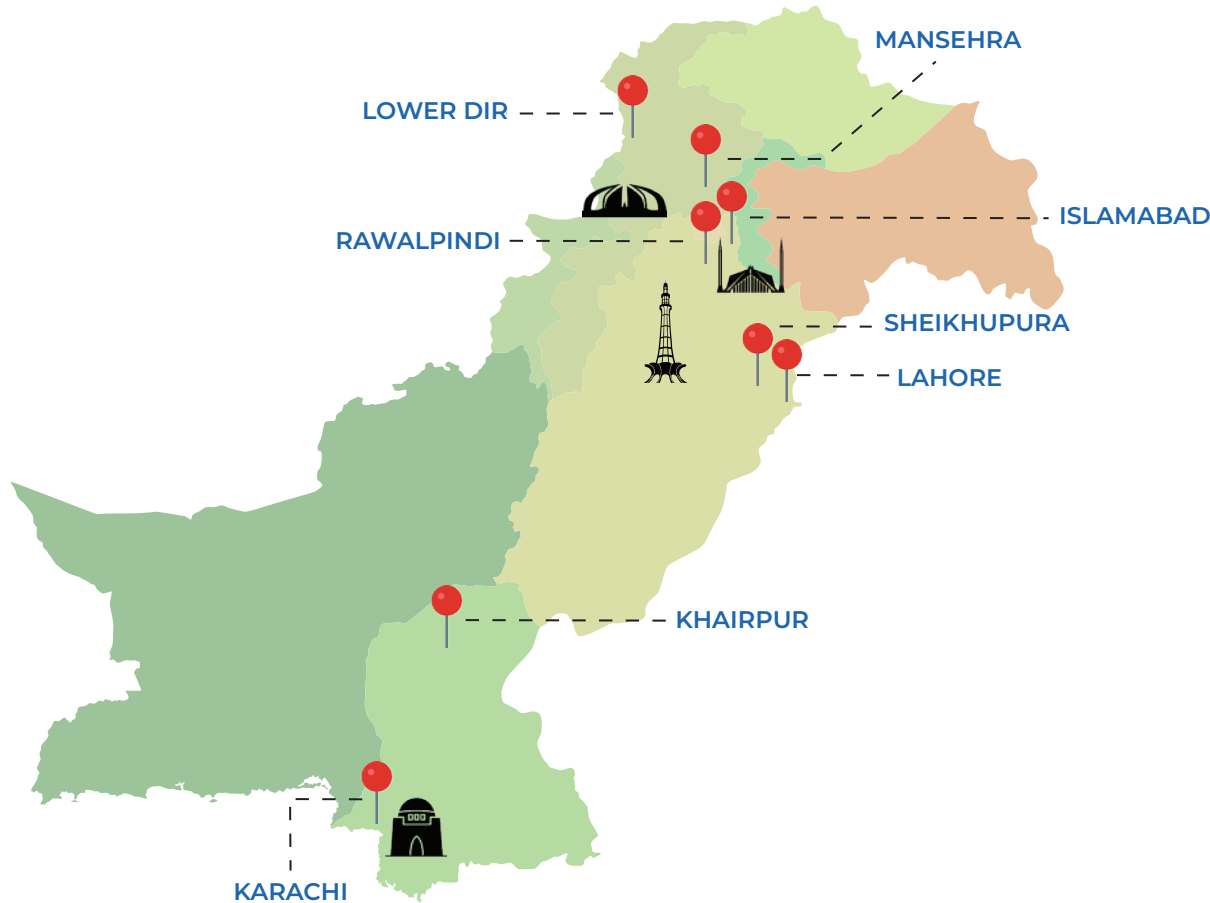
This groundwork led to a two-day strategy workshop in November 2024, providing space for open dialogue, shared reflection, and cross-functional collaboration. Together, we prioritized goals and shaped a unified pathway forward—grounded in our mission to deliver high-quality education and fueled by a strong sense of ownership and accountability.

The workshop concluded with clear action plans, timelines, and departmental commitments to operationalize Vision 2030. The result was more than a strategic framework—it was a renewed organizational energy and a shared commitment to ensuring that every child, especially every girl, has the opportunity to thrive through education.

Our School Locations

A Nationwide Commitment to Education

DIL operates 201 schools across Sindh, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), and the Federal Capital Territory. We serve underserved communities by placing schools where access to quality education is limited—bringing learning opportunities directly to the children who need them the most.



Regions	Schools	Enrollment	Boys	Girls
Federal Capital Territory	64	33,264	13,917	19,347
KPK	9	1,817	605	1,212
Punjab	30	16,380	2,138	14,242
Sindh	98	23,931	9,926	14,005
Total	201	75,392	26,586	48,806

From Orangi to Harvard

Growing up in Orangi Town, one of Karachi's most underserved communities, Afreen Mushtaq spent 12 formative years at DIL, where her potential was recognized and nurtured. With relentless determination, she earned a full scholarship to IBA Karachi—Pakistan's top business school—and in 2024, reached another milestone: admission to [Harvard University](#) as a Fulbright Scholar, where she pursued a Master's in Education Policy and Analysis.

A vocal advocate for girls' education, Afreen was named one of [Pakistan's 25 Most Influential Young Women](#). She also moved audiences with her [TEDx talk](#), "Fly I Must." Her journey embodies the life-changing power of education.



From Adversity to Success

When life tested Shifa Naz with the loss of her father and financial struggles, she found refuge in education. Supported by her mother's unwavering strength and the transformative environment of her DIL school, Shifa turned hardship into motivation. Her relentless dedication bore fruit when she earned admission to Dow University of Health Sciences—one of Pakistan's most prestigious medical institutions—where she now pursues her MBBS degree.

Shifa's story is a testament to what's possible when students are given the opportunity to thrive.



Student Spotlights

Balancing Books and Burdens

In the remote village of Chool Pattan, young Umer, a grade 5 DIL student, bears responsibilities far beyond the weight of his schoolbag. Each day, alongside his father, he diligently works at a farm, his small hands planting seeds of future sustenance.

At home, he tends to the family's hens, gathering eggs to help provide for his family. But Umer's day stretches further into the bustling local market where he stands proudly selling the fruits of their labour—vegetables and eggs nurtured by his own efforts.

His father's daily wages barely sustain their family of eight. As the eldest son, Umer's contribution is vital to their survival. Umer's deep commitment to his family's welfare and his entrepreneurial spirit are testament to his exceptional character.

Despite the myriad tasks that fill his days, he excels academically, his grades a reflection of his unwavering perseverance and dedication. His success in school underscores a powerful truth: hard work and steadfast resolve are the cornerstones of achievement.

Umer's story speaks to the heart of DIL's mission: nurturing young minds so they can rise above adversity, pursue their education with purpose, and one day, lead the transformation of their communities.



Stories of Resilience and Possibility

A Global Voice from Orangi

Javeria Naeem, a proud DIL alumna, represented Pakistan at the World Youth Festival 2024 in Moscow, Russia. Her journey from a DIL school to an international stage, is a powerful testament to the transformative power of education. Javeria's success story serves as an inspiration to millions of girls across the country, showing that with education, nothing is beyond reach.



Teacher Development

Empowering Educators for Lasting Impact

DIL believes that teacher development is the foundation of student success. In 2024, our Training Department strengthened instructional quality across DIL and partner schools through targeted, innovative, and technology-integrated capacity-building programs.

Course Development

To ensure teachers are equipped with both strong subject knowledge and effective pedagogy, DIL’s lead trainers developed and refined a suite of instructional modules.

- 23 new training modules developed
- 9 existing modules revised
- 11 modules field-tested to ensure relevance and alignment with evolving educational needs

English Language Proficiency Course (ELPC)

- 191 teachers completed the 12-week blended ELPC which included online learning, in-person workshops, and performance-based assessments

Leadership Development

- 106 School Officers and Principals oriented in subject teaching methodologies
- 93 Principals trained in School Improvement Planning to lead more effective campuses

Cluster School Visits (CSVs)

- 123 cluster school visits conducted for continued teacher support
- 396 teachers engaged in lesson observations and peer learning

Induction Course

- 164 newly hired teachers completed DIL’s self-paced, tech-based Induction Course to establish a strong foundation in DIL’s pedagogical approach

Foundation Courses

662 teachers trained through 52 core modules:

- 100% of teachers earned full certification
- 42% average improvement in subject knowledge
- 93% of participants scored above 60% on final assessments

Training Beyond DIL

- 114 teachers and principals from non-DIL schools trained

Elevating Trainer Expertise on National and Global Platforms

DIL’s commitment to continuous professional development extends beyond internal training. In 2024, our trainers actively participated in prominent educational forums, both nationally and internationally—sharing insights, learning best practices, and contributing to global discourse on teaching and learning.



TEAL in Action

Transforming Classrooms with Technology

The Technology Enabled Academic Learning (TEAL) initiative is redefining education for DIL students in underserved areas of Pakistan. Active in 81 schools—including 45 government schools—TEAL delivers engaging, curriculum-aligned instruction in Math, Science, and English through localized video lessons, interactive activities, engaging lesson plans and assessments.



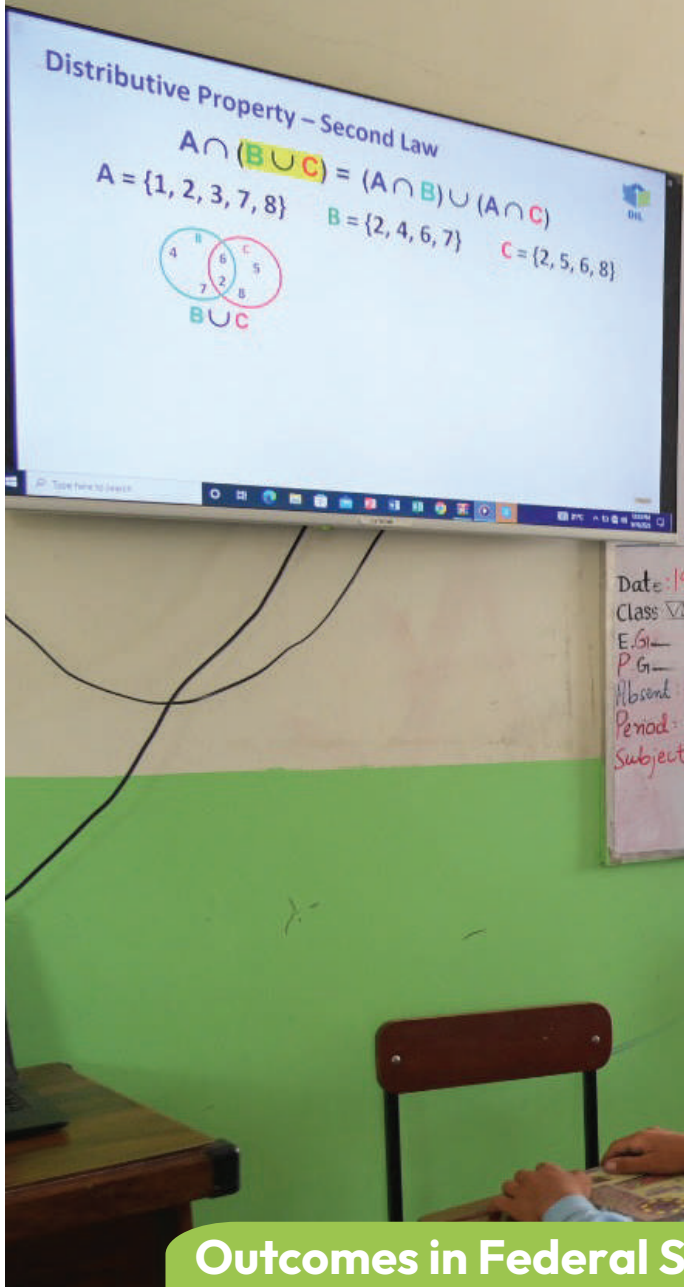
“My grades jumped from 20% to 90%.”
Mahnoor, Grade 8, Kala Shah Kaku

“Before, we lost focus. Now we have a chance to participate.”
Razia, Grade 8, Orangi

“The videos pique our interest and we understand in a better way.”
Ifra, Grade 8, Kala Shah Kaku

“After TEAL was launched, students became more motivated—and even families from outside our area enrolled their children here. TEAL has improved learning and built our school’s reputation.”

Saima Jabeen, Principal, DIL Chool Pattan



Reach & Impact

9,157 students
impacted (8,578 girls and 579 boys)

91 classrooms
observed with individualized teacher coaching

408 teachers
trained across Punjab, Sindh, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

60 audio visual rooms
were set up to support TEAL-based instruction

Outcomes in Federal Schools

44%
increase in student enrollment

34%
increase in student attendance

Stronger
student engagement

Better
classroom management



Reading Program

Books, Tablets, and the Joy of Reading

In 2024, DIL deepened its commitment to promoting a love of reading and improving literacy outcomes across its campuses and partner government schools through both traditional libraries and innovative digital platforms.

16,734 books
distributed to **162 schools**

116,821 books
borrowed by students across
six project regions

Library spaces were made accessible to families, alumni, and neighboring school students, with **3,640** books borrowed by community members and **3,652** by teachers over the year.

Read to Grow Read to Know

DIL's tablet-based reading initiative empowers students in grades 2–5 with access to 300+ leveled e-books.

34,093 students

benefited from the program in 2024 across
136 schools—including 66 government and partner schools.

122 librarians

and supporting language teachers were trained to facilitate reading sessions and promote effective library use.

Benefits

- Increased reading fluency, comprehension, and confidence
- Enhanced engagement in independent reading
- Strengthened librarian capacity through targeted training
- Expanded access to leveled reading materials through both print and digital formats



Gateway and Life Skills

Building Confidence, Voice, and Leadership

In 2024, Gateway and Life Skills Program empowered DIL students and families across Pakistan with essential tools for personal growth, effective communication, and active citizenship.



Key Skills Taught

- Communication
- Critical thinking
- Emotional intelligence
- Teamwork
- Adaptability
- Problem-solving
- Resilience

Student Impact	Parent Engagement	Program Strengthening
• 163 students completed Community Action Projects • Projects addressed: early marriage, peer pressure, drug addiction, and gender equity • Students led awareness campaigns using storytelling, role-plays, and speeches	• 89 parents participated in 9 sessions (Life Skills + Motivational Workshops) • Topics included: stress management, effective communication, and emotional well-being • Activities promoted reflection and built more supportive home environments	• Cluster meetings with school heads and staff • Addressed implementation barriers such as attendance and language gaps

Reach

7 regions
Orangi, Khairpur, Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Lahore, Lower Dir, Mansehra

450+ students
engaged in skill-building and personal development

Voices from the Field

“Before this program, I used to react with anger. Now, I pause and talk to my daughter calmly. She listens more, and we understand each other better.”

Mother, Parent Workshop Participant, Khairpur

“We didn’t just learn for ourselves—we taught our whole community about the risks of early marriage.”

Student, Community Action Project Leader, Orangi



Graduates and Alumni Affairs

Supporting Lifelong Success

The Graduates and Alumni Affairs Program supports DIL students beyond the classroom helping them transition to higher education, build networks, and grow as leaders. In 2024, the program expanded across multiple regions, offering academic, emotional, and career guidance to DIL scholars and alumni.



Career Guidance & Higher Education Access

- **1,450 students** received career guidance to help identify goals and strengths
- **137 scholarships** awarded for university education
- **45 scholarships** awarded at matric, intermediate, and undergraduate levels
- **338 scholars** are currently enrolled in universities
- **72% of DIL graduates** successfully transition from 10th grade to college

Networking & Skill Building

- **123 university scholars** participated in two-day networking events
- **37 scholars** completed free certified courses via Google Coursera
- **91 students** joined the Youth Social Leadership Program, promoting community action
- **43 U-GO scholars** joined a virtual global mentoring session with peers and mentors worldwide



Alumni-Led Summer Camp

DIL alumni in Orangi led summer sessions for Grade 10 students, fostering leadership and a culture of giving back through engaging activities. The sessions included:

- Gender equality & social awareness
- Environmental sustainability
- AI tools & digital literacy
- Art therapy & creative expression

Alumni Achievements

- Ariba Iqbal attended the Youth Leadership Conference and now advocates for child protection in DIL schools
- Graduates were admitted to IBA Karachi, NED University, DOW University, and IBA Sukkur

DIL’s alumni are not just continuing their education, but they are leading, mentoring, and uplifting others. Their journeys reflect the long-term power of a DIL education and the strength of a growing, engaged alumni community.

U-GO Partnership

Expanding Opportunities for Girls

DIL is proud to partner with U-GO to expand opportunities for young women from low-income backgrounds. Through this collaboration, we have awarded 344 scholarships to highly motivated students who demonstrated strong academic potential and faced significant financial constraints. Together, we are building a pipeline for their advancement and long-term success.

In April 2024, the U-GO team gathered in Bali for a three-day offsite with partners from 14 organizations across 9 countries. The retreat fostered cross-cultural exchange, strategic alignment, and a renewed commitment to our shared mission of empowering young women through education.

As part of this growing partnership, U-GO Program Director, Tom Monroe, visited DIL schools in October 2024 and met with scholars in Karachi. He was extremely inspired by the students' confidence and life stories.



DIL Amina College

A New Chapter in Education

DIL Amina College moved to a new purpose-built campus in January, marking the beginning of a significant transformation. The teaching and learning system was redesigned to align with DIL's commitment to delivering the same well-rounded, high-quality education provided in DIL schools. The focus expanded beyond intermediate exam preparation to include the development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and a genuine love of learning—laying a stronger foundation for university success.



Key Initiatives in 2024

- Library established
- IT access provided to all students
- Structured sports introduced with Jawan Champions
- Summer camp for students and alumni
- Session organized in collaboration with Hunar Foundation
- Life Skills & Career Guidance sessions launched

Looking Ahead

- Alumni will mentor and motivate current students
- Additional classes will include entry test preparation and extracurricular activities
- Parent engagement and community outreach will be strengthened to support the transition to college

NetSol Technologies Visits DIL School

Khuda Ki Basti Campus, Lahore

As part of his continued commitment to community development and educational innovation, Mr. Najeeb Ghauri, Founder, Chairman & Chief Executive Officer of NetSol Technologies, Inc., recently visited the DIL School – Khuda Ki Basti (KKB) Campus in Lahore. He spent time with students and met with the DIL team to witness firsthand the transformative impact of quality education.

NetSol has been instrumental in providing operational support for the KKB schools and supporting the development of DIL’s TEAL learning app, reinforcing its belief in education as a catalyst for long-term change. During the visit, Mr. Ghauri expressed his admiration for the students and staff, stating:

“It is our mission to support education. These children represent the bright future of Pakistan.”

The visit underscored the deep alignment between DIL and NetSol—a shared vision to empower underprivileged communities through technology, access, and opportunity.



DIL & EBM

A Step Towards Sustainability

As part of its commitment to sustainability, English Biscuit Manufacturers (EBM) generously donated a solar panel system to DIL Hamid Bhutto School in Khairpur. This initiative not only reduces the school’s carbon footprint but also ensures uninterrupted access to electricity for both students and staff. We are deeply grateful to EBM for championing our green energy goals and supporting the students of Khairpur.



DIL x inDrive

Playgrounds for Growth

DIL signed a strategic MoU with inDrive to build sports grounds at two of our schools, Malir (Karachi) and Rawalpindi. This initiative promotes holistic development by providing students access to structured sports and physical activities. We thank inDrive for believing in the importance of play as a key component of learning and personal growth.

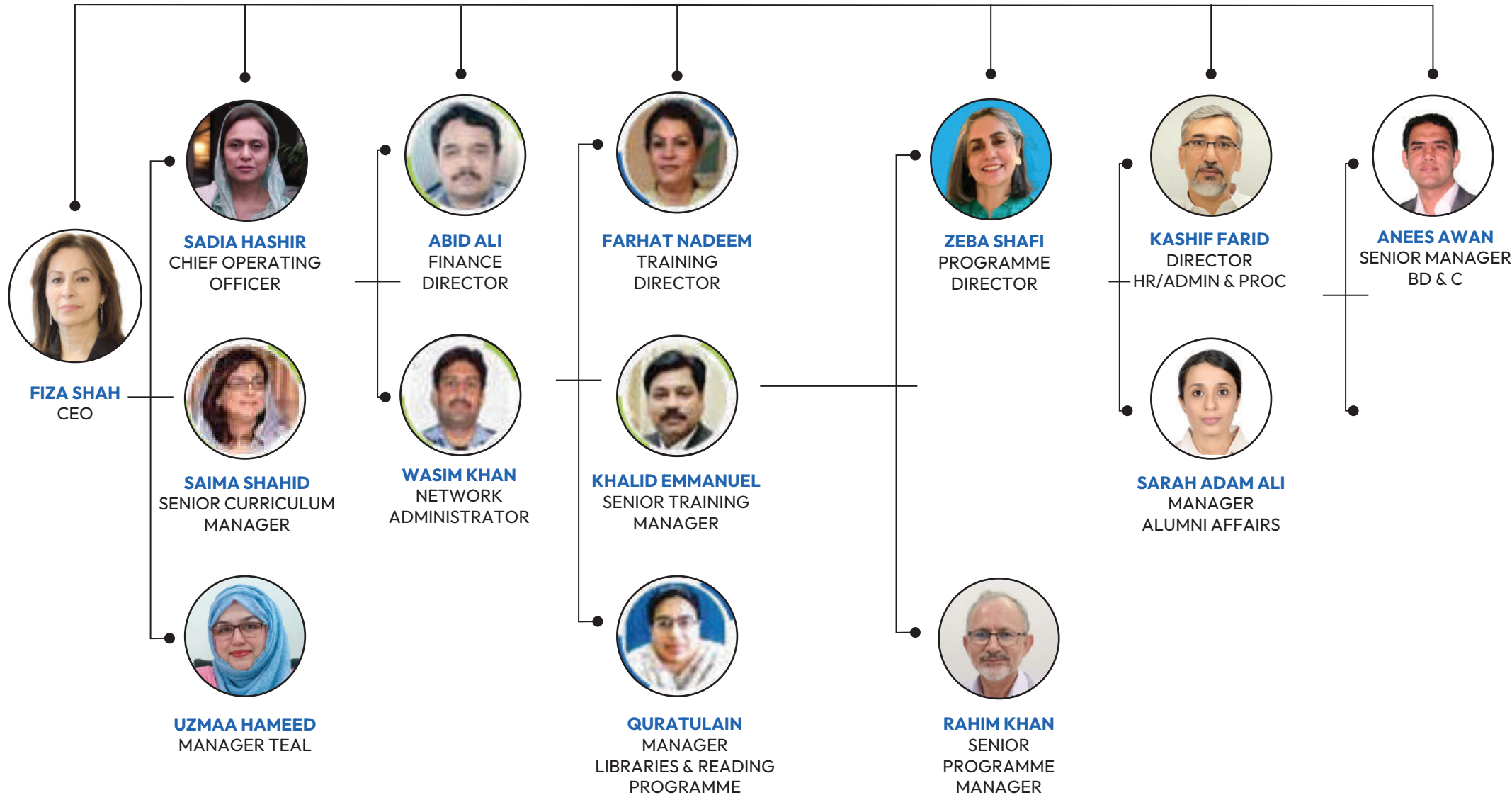
Bank Alfalah

Adopting Schools for Impact

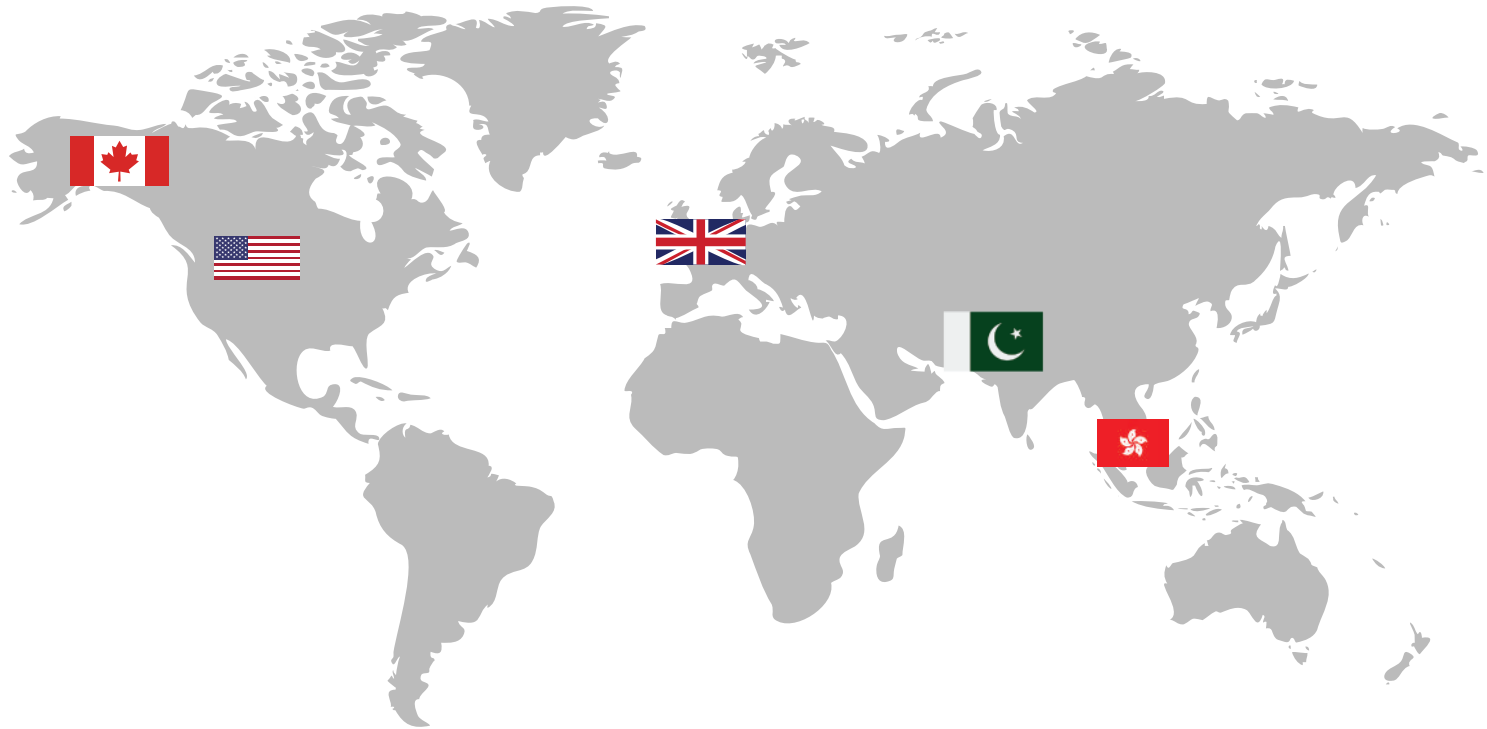
In 2024, Bank Alfalah partnered with DIL to adopt two schools, one in Shohal Maidan, Mansehra (KPK) and another in Korangi, Karachi. This partnership is a significant step forward in enhancing educational access and quality for underserved communities. We deeply appreciate Bank Alfalah’s support in helping us nurture the next generation of change makers.



Senior Management Team



DIL Affiliates



DIL Pakistan Chapters
Karachi
Lahore
Islamabad

DIL US Chapters
Houston
Las Vegas
Los Angeles
New York
San Francisco
San Diego

DIL Canada Chapters
Toronto
Ottawa

DIL Trust UK
DIL Hong Kong

DIL Karachi Chapter

Fundraising Dinner & “DIL Sey Khelo” Sports Night

The DIL Karachi Chapter hosted a heartfelt fundraising and appreciation dinner, honored by the presence of distinguished guests from the corporate sector, the French Ambassador to Pakistan, and the British Deputy High Commissioner to Pakistan. The evening was marked by generous pledges and inspiring conversations, all in support of DIL’s mission to provide quality education to underserved communities.

In addition to the dinner, the chapter organized “DIL Sey Khelo”, an energetic and engaging sports night that brought together players, donors, and volunteers for a fun-filled evening celebrating community, teamwork, and impact.



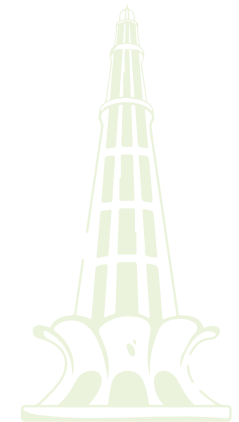
DIL Lahore Chapter

Marvelous Bloom & Sacred Scribes – Strokes of White

The DIL Lahore Chapter hosted two spectacular events:

Marvelous Bloom: A stunning fundraising dinner and art auction that transformed Lahore’s cultural richness into a night of meaningful giving and celebration. Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who made the event unforgettable.

Sacred Scribes – Strokes of White: Held at Ejaz Art Gallery, this exhibition celebrated the elegance of calligraphy and the purity of white, symbolizing the transformative power of education. The event beautifully united art lovers and education advocates in support of DIL’s mission.



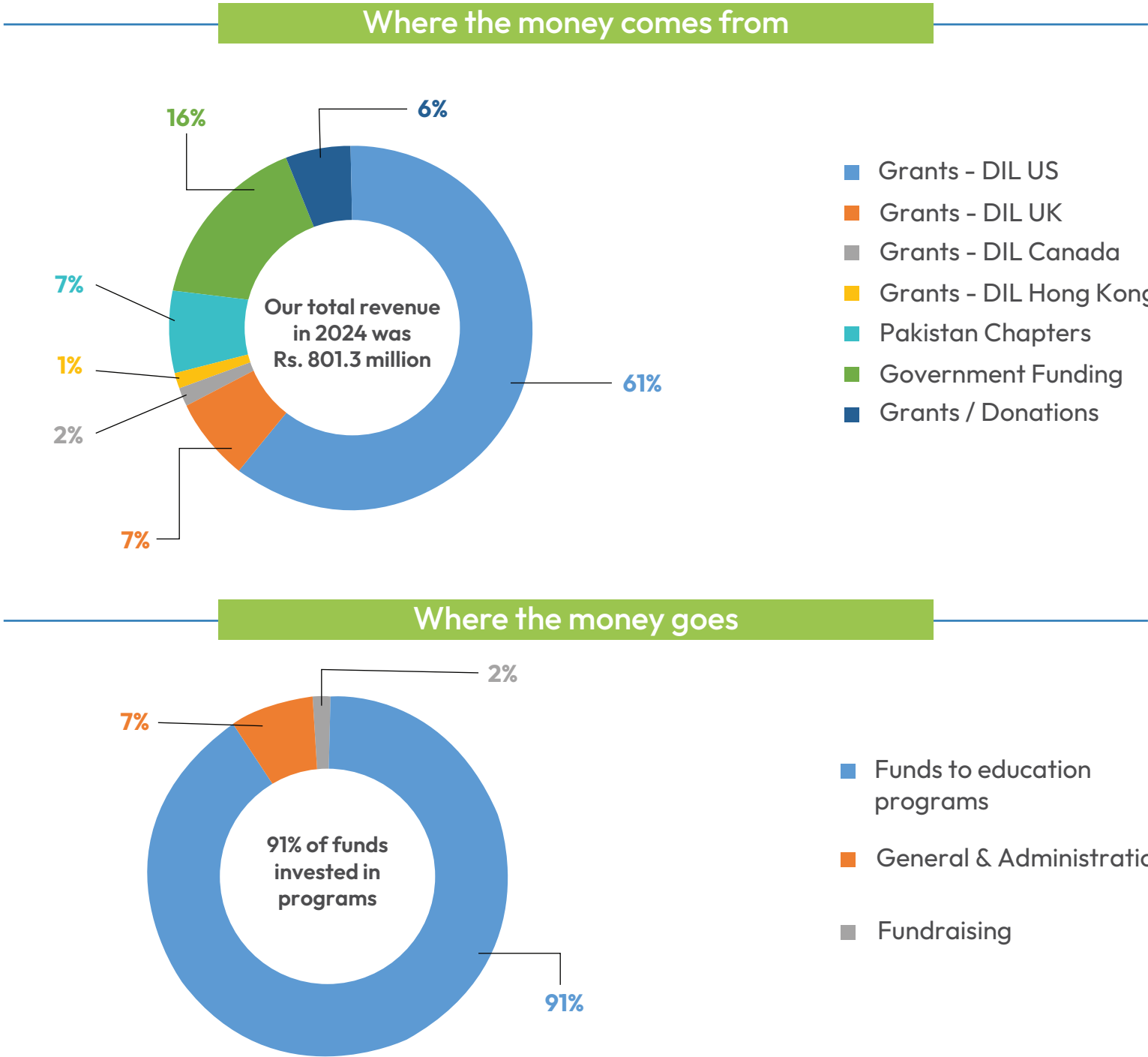


DIL Partners and Donors





Financial Highlights



Thank You from the Board

Dear Friends and Partners,

As Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, it is an honour to reflect on a year of progress, perseverance, and purpose at Developments in Literacy (DIL). 2024 has been a pivotal chapter in our journey—one marked by growth, innovation, and deeper community impact.

The Board remains deeply inspired by the dedication of our teams, teachers, and supporters who continue to uplift thousands of children across Pakistan. With over 75,000 students now enrolled in 201 schools, DIL is creating real, lasting change where it’s needed most.

Thank you for being a part of this mission and for helping us bring brighter futures within reach.

Sincerely,
Shazad Dada

Our Leadership

Shazad G. Dada – Chairperson
Tasnim Shaheryar – Vice Chairperson
Fiza Shah – Founder & CEO
Dr. Anjum Riyazul Haque – Trustee
Nasreen Iqbal – Trustee
Saeeda Fancy – Trustee

Zibber Mohiuddin – Trustee
Amjad Ali Khan – Trustee
Ayesha Tammy Haq – Trustee
Kamran Nishat – Trustee
Shahida Azfar – Trustee





**Transforming Lives
Through Education**



Developments in Literacy

Transforming Lives Through Education

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