

Forum for Language Initiatives



Summer 2014

International Mother Languages Day Observed

FLI observed International Mother Language Day (ILMD) this year in collaboration with the Bakarwal Mobile School System and the Indus Kohistan Social Welfare and Cultural Organization on 21 February at the Community Centre Hall in Islamabad. As many as three hundred people from different language communities attended the event. The chief guest was Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Mr. Sardar Yousef. The researchers, poets, and children spoke on the occasion, and a resolution to declare all languages of the country to be National Languages was passed at the end.



FLI's Project Planning Seminar



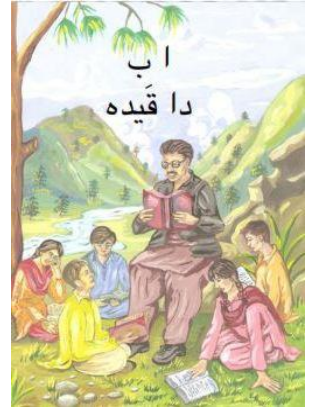
A five-day project planning seminar was held in Islamabad on 10-14 February 2014. Personnel from FLI's partner organizations, researchers from the Balti, Gojri, Palula, Gawri, Hindko, Indus Kohistani, Torwali, and Shina language communities, and FLI's board members participated in this event. The main objectives of the event were to set strategic goals for FLI's upcoming next four years with input from like-minded people and partner organizations.

Swat Teacher Training

FLI facilitated this training for the personnel of the newly-established MLE schools in the Indus Kohistani, Khowar and Hindko languages communities. The training was held in Mingora, Swat, on 2-9 March 2014. Supervisors, coordinators, and two school teachers from each language group participated in the training. The FLI Leadership Team, senior teachers, and the coordinator from the Gawri MLE Project facilitated this training. The main goal of this workshop was to train the teachers and supervisors so that they can teach children in their mother tongues effectively.

Three Language Communities Complete MTB-MLE Curriculum

The Hindko, Khowar, and Indus Kohistani MTB-MLE Projects completed their year-1 curriculum for their MTB-MLE schools and printed the developed materials. FLI trained people from these communities in MLE curriculum and material development. People from the three language communities attended multiple trainings at FLI and therefore gained the skills to produce books in their mother tongues for students. The books include short stories, listening stories, math book, songs, and rhymes. FLI also helped them get the materials printed. The work on the curriculum for year-2 is on-going.



MTB-MLE School Launch in Three Language Communities

The Hindko, Khowar, and Indus Kohistani MTB-MLE projects launched MTB-MLE Schools in their communities in April 2014. Each project opened one pre-school in their community. The schools are the first of their kind in these communities, where children will be taught first in their mother tongue. After two years, the children will be switched to Urdu and English.

Meeting of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Information, Broadcasting & National Heritage

FLI's Chairman and Executive Director participated in this event that was held on 13 March 2014 in the Parliament House of the National Government of Pakistan, located in Islamabad, and gave a presentation about the languages of Northern Pakistan. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the history and importance of Pakistan's mother tongues, their National Language status (or lack thereof, in the case of most languages), and their role in creating inter-provincial harmony. This meeting also reviewed a concept paper to be presented to the National Assembly by the National Language Commission. Over 35 community members, linguists, experts, and academia had been invited from all over Pakistan for their valuable input on the subject. Balochi, Balti, Burushaski, Brahui, Hindko, Khowar, Kashmiri, Pahari, Pashto, Punjabi, Saraiki, Shina, Sindhi, and other languages of Pakistan were amply highlighted from participants representing the many diverse regions of Pakistan.

LEAD Asia Training on Funding Language, Education and Development



LEAD Asia facilitated this training on 24-28 March 2014 in Bangkok for the personnel of organizations working for language development and mother tongue education in Asia. Four members of FLI's Leadership Team, the Coordinator of the Torwali MLE Project Zubair Torwali, and FLI's expatriate Linguistic Consultant participated in this event.

Distribution of the UN Human Rights Declaration

After translating the UN Human Rights Declaration into six different languages of Northern Pakistan, FLI printed and distributed the translation among the Palula, Hindko, Torwali, Gawri, and Shina language communities.



The goal of distributing these translations of the declaration is to make this information accessible to a greater percentage of the people in Northern Pakistan by providing it in their mother tongue, the language they understand the best.

FLI Initiated Language Survey

FLI has planned to conduct a new language survey of the language communities of northern Pakistan by using the Sustainable Use Model (SUM), a tool used to discover language vitality. For this purpose, a three-day test workshop of the tool was held in the Gawri language community in Kalam, Swat, on 12-14 May 2014. The workshop enabled participants from the Gawri language community to evaluate their language vitality and determine key activities to further develop their mother tongue.

Culture Documentation Course in Chitral

The 3rd course of the one year-long Discovery Programme entitled "Discover my Culture" was held in Chitral on 2-14 June. Seven participants from three language communities (Palula, Gojri, and Gawarbatl) attended the course.. The purpose of this course is to develop the skills of people from lesser-known languages so that they can document their own language, culture, and traditions. The trainees presented their six-week field work from the previous course. After this course, the participants returned once again to the task of applying what they learned during the course to their field work. This field work was then presented during the fourth and final course of this programme.



Chitral Teacher Training

The second teacher training for the newly established MLE schools was held from 15-18 Jun 2014 in Chitral. Nine participants from three junior MLE projects (Hindko, Khowar, and Indus Kohistani) including teachers, supervisors, and coordinators participated in this event.

MIER Published Special Edition of *Khowar Nama*

The Mother-Tongue Institute for Education and Research (MIER), a partner organization of FLI for the promotion of the Khowar language, published a special issue of *Khowar Nama*, a Khowar Cultural Newsletter. The special issue was entitled *Khaki Number* and offered tribute to the late Gul Nawaz Khaki, a literary figure of the Khowar language community who published a number of Khowar books.

IBT Child Rights and Protection Workshop

Idara Baraye Taleem-o-Taraqi (IBT) or the Institute for Education & Development and FLI jointly held a 2-day workshop in Bahrain -- the cultural and business hub of the Torwali community -- in Swat. The main facilitator for the workshop was Ms. Naheed Akhter Irfan, Vernacular Developer and Trainer for the Torwali MLE Project. A total of 16 female teachers participated in the workshop, the majority of whom were teachers at the various private, public, and MLE Torwali schools.



Colang 2014: Institute on Collaborative Language Research



The University of Texas at Arlington in the USA facilitated this language documentation course for more than 300 participants from around the world. Lexicographer of the Torwali language and FLI's Board member, Inam Ullah, and FLI's Executive Director, Fakhruddin Akhunzada, attended the two-week training session of this course held 16-27 June 2014. Both of them received a CoLang Scholarship from the organizers. Fakhruddin was also provided the opportunity to speak at the final module talk.

Palula MLE Project Teachers Refresher Training

This training was a series of on-the-job teacher trainings organized by the Palula MLE Project for the MLE school teachers. All the project staff participated in this event.

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