



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



## List of FLI's Target Languages Spoken in Northern Pakistan

No	Languages	No	Languages
1	Balti	2	Bateri
3	Brokskat	4	<u>Burushaski</u>
5	Chilisso	6	Dameli
7	Domaaki	8	Gawarbatl
9	Gawri	10	Gujari/ Gojri
11	Gowro	12	Hindko
13	Indus Kohistani	14	Kalasha
15	Kalkoti	16	Komviri
17	Kashmiri	18	Kateviri
19	Kundal Shahi	20	Khowar
21	Mankiyali	22	Madaklashti(Dari)
23	Pahari-Pothwari	24	Ormuri
25	Pashto	26	Palula
27	Torwali	28	Saraiki
29	Wakhi	30	Shina
31	Yadgha	32	Ushojo

## Executive Director's Message

**Assalamo Alaikum and Hello,**



I am pleased to draft the message for last year's annual report as we at FLI have always accomplished significant milestones during the years. We worked with the education department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) to strengthen teaching in one of the regional languages included in the government schools' system. We aim to expand this work in the coming years. We have continued to empower the language communities by enabling them in various fields of language development. We have intensified our efforts in language development activities in Gilgit Baltistan (GB) empowering more people to work for their cultures and languages. We actively participated in commemorating International Women's Day. We achieved significant success in the field of the Strategic Planning we did for the organization by including brilliant minds around us and well-defined pathways for all of us to look into the future.

This was possible due to the trust our donors, stakeholders and partners in the region reposed in us. I appreciate it. I also applaud my team members for their hard work to make the last year a success. I hope, together we will continue this journey in the days to come.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Fakhrudin Akhunzada'.

Fakhrudin Akhunzada

## **FLI set its Five Years Plan (2024-28)**

### **FLI's Goal:**

Empowered local communities with diverse and vibrant cultural and linguistic heritages.

### **FLI's Mission:**

To empower ethno-linguistic communities of Pakistan to strengthen their linguistic and cultural heritages'.

### **FLI's Vision:**

"To see all ethnolinguistic communities in Pakistan flourishing culturally and economically"

### **FLI's Strategic Objectives:**

- Pride and Propagation of Language and Cultural Identity
- Accessible Mother Tongue-Based Education
- Increased Mother Tongue Resources for Children
- Economically Vibrant Minority Ethnolinguistic Communities
- Recognition and Promotion of Mother Tongue Language Development

### **FLI's Core Values:**

- Centrality of Language and Culture to Identity
- Empowerment, Partnership and Collaboration
- Respect, Inclusiveness and Plurality
- Empathy and Compassion
- Integrity, Transparency and Accountability
- Knowledge Sharing

## Standardizing Writing System

Curriculum Reviewers Workshop for Kohistani Shina language held in Abbottabad. The five-day long workshop was participated by 20 people, mostly govt schoolteachers who are supposed to contribute to curriculum development in future. The Kohistani Shina is one of the languages included in the education system and it is very likely that the KP government would initiate the process of its inclusion as subjects like Pashto, Saraiki, Hindko, and Khowar. Therefore, FLI has started producing resources for this purpose.

The objective of the activity is to enable the participants to work with relevant government bodies of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province that are responsible for developing reading material for the newly inducted languages of the province. These reviewers would contribute to standardizing the writing of the language which has been affecting most of the languages of the region.



## Exploring The Teaching Ability of 85 Schoolteachers in Upper Chitral



Forum for Language Initiatives, in collaboration with the Directorate of Professional Development (DPD) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, organized a three-day training for Primary School teachers of the Upper Chitral district in Booni. A total of 85 teachers, half of whom were women participated in the activity. The workshop aimed to enhance the teaching skills of govt schools' teachers in newly inducted languages with a special focus on the Khowar language.

The Khowar language has become part of primary education in the Chitral Valley as a subject and teachers find it challenging to encounter the unique sounds, characters, and orthography of the Khowar language. This training has explained many questions the participants had in their minds before they attended training sessions.

FLI adopted a cascade training module and trained Master Trainers from the local government schools' teachers. Four men and four women attended FLI's Master Trainers training process who were the master trainers for all trainees. Earlier this year, FLI and PDP collaborated in Booni, Upper Chitral, conducting Language Need Assessment (LNA) to gather baseline data. This initiative resulted in the development of a comprehensive training manual, beneficial for all languages.

The Master Trainers who facilitated this training played a key role in this process from the very start and became a crucial support for not only FLI but also for DPD. Private schools in the area can also be facilitated by these trained master trainers in their local languages. The KP government has issued instruction to private schools in the province to ensure the implementation of KP Cabinet's notification regarding regional language teaching and FLI's trainers can be handy in this regard. These all efforts will contribute to developing resources for Khowar language reading, writing, and literature development in the future.



## Kalkoti, a language spoken by all community children

Almost all children in Kalkoti language community in Dir Kohistan of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa learn and speak their heritage language, a rare case in northern Pakistan. No age group in the community appears to be seen leaving their language for another. This was known in a vitality survey FLI conducted in the last week of August 2023. Seven people from the Kalkoti speech community participated in the event as mother tongue facilitators who learned how to assess their native language's vitality. The mother tongue facilitators then got off to the community and involved more people for larger assessment. A guide, Planning for the Future of Language was used during the workshop helping them plan how to strengthen the language in future in areas of literacy. According to the results, the Kalkoti language was found to be sound in orality as mentioned that all the age groups, especially the young people were acquiring their language. What concerned the team is that almost all age groups were multilingual from the very childhood.

The Kalkoti language, belonging to the Shina subgroup of the Dardic languages, is spoken in the Kalkot village of Upper Dir district. According to the community people, around 15,000 people speak Kalkoti as their native language.





## Understanding our Indigenous Music

FLI organized a three-day workshop on ethnomusicology in December last year in Islamabad. The five team members of FLI and members of five indigenous language communities of northern Pakistan: Gawri, Palula, Gojri, Yadgha and Torwali participated in the workshop.

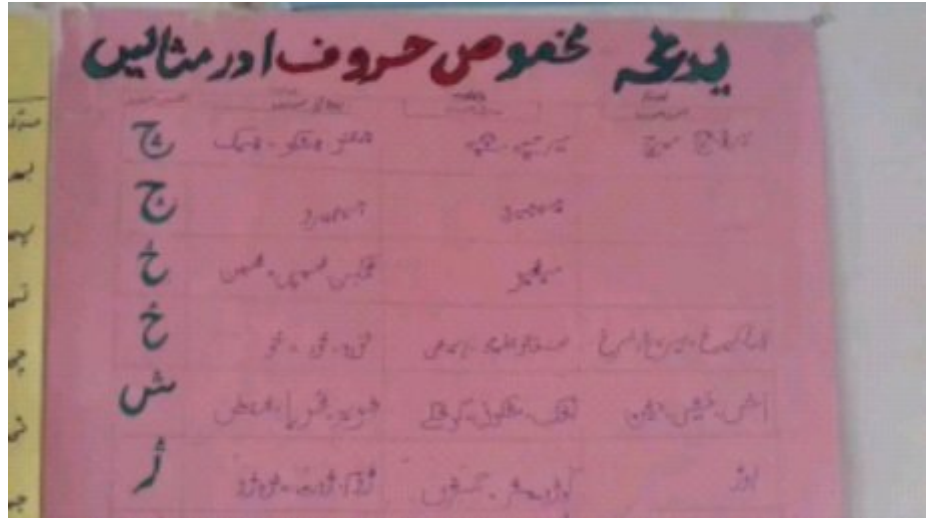
Those participants who represented their communities were involved in artistic activities while the FLI team members were interested in learning how to expertly document the music. The purpose of the activity was to help the participants understand the ethnomusicology, its parameters, and what are prerequisites to preserve when we document our indigenous music.



## Promoting Yadgha Writing

FLI supported Yadgha Development Network (YDN), one of its partner organizations from northern Pakistan to organize a writers' workshop aiming to promote the writing of the language among Yadgha community. The event took place in Roi village of Lotkuh valley in Lower Chitral district and 15 young Yadgha speakers including students, poets and singers participated and learned how to write their native language.

The participants were oriented to the unique sounds and alphabets of the language and installed and used PC and Android Keyboards FLI has developed for them. Yadgha, belonging to the Iranian group of languages, spoken in Chitral, and is facing a looming language shift due to not being transferred to the young generation, was provided a writing system with PC and Android keyboard to strengthen it in 2016. Since then, FLI has been supporting various activities to enable the Yadgha speakers to avert the catastrophe of extinction of the language.



## Shina is all set to enter school

FLI organized a seminar on mother tongue-based education in Gilgit city. More than 60 people belonging to all walks of life including politicians, bureaucrats, writers, poets, students, journalists, and language researchers participated in the event. The speakers emphasized to the government the need to include Shina language in the curriculum as the language was all set to become part of the education system. They said that the language had overcome the orthography issues, and more literature was being produced. A Shina book, FLI had recently published was also launched during the event. The Chief Guest of the event, Mr. Eman Shah who is the advisor of GB Chief Minister said that the process of education in Shina language had started back in 2019 which was halted due to some legal issues. He vowed to play his role to resume it.

FLI has been working with Shina community researchers to strengthen its literature. Four Shina books have been published so far and another book is in the process of printing



## Essay Writing Competition in Indus Kohistani Language

FLI collaborated with the Initiative for People in Need (IPN), one of its partner organizations from the northern Pakistan to organize an essay writing competition in Indus Kohistani language community in Patan area of Kohistan in May 2023. The activity was aimed at involving the youth in the language development process and making the young generation aware of the importance of using their native language for literature development. This was the first activity of its kind when the Indus Kohistani youth participated in a competition, held for writing their native language. In total, 26 students of Grade 10 from five schools, both private and public participated in the contest to write essays in their native language. The competition was based on spelling correctly, fluency and understanding of writing rules. Later, awards were distributed among high performers of the contest.

The Indus Kohistani language researchers have recently resolved some of the orthography issues. Indus Kohistani is an endangered Dardic language of the Indo-Aryan family, spoken by about 400,000 persons according to the census of 2017. It is mainly spoken in the Bankad, Ranolia, Dubair, Jijal, Pattan, Kayal areas of district Kohistan lower and Seo and Kandia areas of district Kohistan Upper, Khyber Pukhtunkhwa.



## Women Get together on their International Day



This year the theme of International Women's Day was "She Can Do It". In Rawalpindi, the event provided a platform for female students to showcase their skills and talents through various activities like skits, speeches, songs, presentations, and poetry highlighting the critical role of women in society. It included a panel discussion also, featuring prominent female entrepreneurs and experts sharing their experiences and insights into women's empowerment. The event also featured food stalls featuring local Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral dishes, and women who run online shops selling dresses, gemstones, and handicrafts also participated and set up their stalls at the event.



While in Booni, mothers of students of the Space Era school participated in the event and listened to the speeches delivered by their children in favor of women rights. They also highlighted the social responsibilities of the women. FLI has been collaborating with The SHAD Foundation and Space Era school for celebrating the International Women's Day as we have observed these organizations have been contributing to empowering women and promoting youth development focusing on those women mostly coming from FLI's target area.

## Three Migrant Communities Reconnected with their Culture

FLI helped Torwali and Shina language community members based in Rawalpindi and Islamabad and Dameli community members living in Karachi to get-together and celebrate their culture. Starting with Torwali, the event was attended by Torwali youth, Students, Torwali notables from Pindi/Islamabad, Torwali businessmen and Torwali poets and singers. The primary aim of the session was to motivate and mobilize the Torwali community regarding revitalization of Torwali language and reconnecting them with their culture while living in urban area of the country. The event ended with Torwali music where different genres of Torwali music were played both traditional and modern. The audience were overjoyed by the live music which was first of its kind in Rawalpindi/Islamabad. More than 70 people representing all age groups attended the event.

The Shina migrant community members living in Rawalpindi and Islamabad came together and celebrated their culture in February 2023. Around a thousand people, including families participated in the event. They spoke for revival of their language by using it at home while living out of their native place, they delivered speeches in their own language. Youth from seven Shina-speaking districts in Gilgit-Baltistan received praise from the audience for their traditional songs and dances. The traditional dance chain started from Diamer district and ended by reaching Panyal Valley. The audience applauded all the performers heartily. The different segments of different speakers elaborated the importance of maintaining language and culture while residing out of their native place.



The Dameli language group, living in Karachi got together for a cultural festival aiming to reconnect them with their language and culture. More than 200 people attended the event. Earlier, a tournament of traditional games of Dameli culture was held featuring native games like Khosal, Chemtaekh, Kelimastrang, Pilat, Shel, and Danda Goli etc. Many Dameli speakers of different age group participated; many of them attended their traditional games for the first time. . A dozen Dameli poets who came from various parts of the city expressed themselves in their language and entertained the crowd. Although, all items of the festival were new to the participants in the metropolitan city but poetry session in Dameli was much loved by the audience. The purpose of the event was to relink Dameli migrants in the city with their language and culture.



## Yadgha Speakers Observe Pathak in Chitral

FLI has been supporting Yadgha language speakers in the Lotkuh valley of Chitral to celebrate their cultural festival, Pathak, a special occasion, celebrated at the end of winter in the area. This year's event had multiple programs in it. Pathak in the region is observed to welcome Spring but here in Lotkuh valley, the festival has many more embellishments.

The residents of the valley have religious attachment relating to the great saint, Pir Nasir Khosrow who, the local believe, had visited the area and preached for Ismaili sect of Islam. This festival used to be traditionally observed to pay homage to Pir's services every year. Women would wear traditional clothing on the occasion and visit each other homes with gifts. Men would visit the symbolic shrine of the Pir and pay tribute to him and pray for prosperity, peace and brotherhood in the community. All the proceedings are carried out in the Yadgha language connecting people with their cultural identity and language. That is the reason FLI supports the festival and encourages young Yadgha people to continue with the festivities and keep finding ways to promote their culture and language.

During the event of this year, high performing students from the community were acknowledged with certificates and some traditional sports were also arranged for the young people. Dozens of young people including girls attended the last event while each item of the event was participated in a large number by the locals.





## International Mother Languages Day Celebrated

FLI supported Khowar language group in Peshawar, Yadgha in Lotkuh, Chitral and Shina in Gilgit City in GB to celebrate the International Mother Language Day on 21st of February 2023. This support was provided under FLI's Community Event Support initiative. This initiative allows our language enthusiasts to hold a small-scale activity aiming to promote their language and culture. Several young people participated in the event where Yadgha songs and dance were performed, and Yadgha speeches were delivered. In the second program, a Khowar poetry session was organized by Khowar speakers living in Peshawar. The Peshawar chapter of Anjuman Taraqqi Khowar organized the event. They included speeches in their language and a musical program was held. Around 50 people attended the event.

The third program was organized by Saskaen Research and Development Foundation for Shina Community in Gilgit. A Shina fiction was featured in the event. Speakers shed light on the importance of mother tongue use. In total 26 people attended the event including government officials, language activists, students, and teachers among them.



## FLI Partnered in Organizing another Literature Festival in Islamabad

A three day 'Pakistan Mother Language Literature Festival' concluded here in February as it has become one of the important elements of Islamabad's cultural and literary scene for the last eight years. The festival was a great source to exchanges of ideas and creative works between writers, artists, poets, and activists during these three days were further cultivated across the year. FLI partnered with the Indus Cultural Forum, a volunteer organization comprising literary and cultural enthusiasts to arrange the festival in collaboration with Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) at its premises in Islamabad. FLI, like always supported the festival this year too to provide exposure to the people from its target language communities from northern Pakistan. It made ten books; it had published in five indigenous languages in the calendar year of 2022 and launched during the festival. The authors of the books were also part of the event who briefed the audience about their work. FLI staffers and those from its target communities actively participated in the festival.

Earlier in the day, the speakers called for an education policy that centered around the cognitive abilities of children to learn effectively in their mother language at the primary level and gradually move to other languages. Ameer Haider along with panelists called for revisiting current education policies and practices to pave the way for learning in the mother language.



## KIU Students and Researchers Gained Language Documentation Skills



Around 25 people from Karakoram International University attended a three-day language documentation workshop, FLI held in Gilgit city in November 2023. The participants included 19 women who were students and researchers. The aim was to equip local researchers of Gilgit Baltistan (GB) with required tools and technologies to document their native languages.

A total of 17 Bateri speakers including schools' teachers, students and community researchers got together in March 2023, for a three-day follow of the basic orthography workshop they held in September last year. They gained awareness about the writing system and agreed with the basic characters to write the unique sounds of their language. The participants also knew how to use vowels, diphthongs, and diacritics, and rules for writing the borrowed, compound words, infinitive verb in their language.

## Enhancing Bateri Language Writing



## Burushaski Speaking Women Learned Writing their Language



More than a dozen women from the Burushaski language community attended a three- days long writer's workshop in July in Gilgit city of Gilgit Baltistan. The participants came from three districts: Hunza, Nagar and district. The women from were eager to learn the basic alphabets system of Burushaski language while the representatives of Burusho Marka also visited in the session. The purpose of the activity was to provide basic information regarding vowels and consonants of Burushaski language and to train women to read and write their language. The participants gained the basic sentence structure of Burushaski language.

## More about what we did in 2023

### Smoothing Indigenous Languages Writing:

FLI, in collaboration with the Center for Language Engineering (CLE) has successfully completed a font. We hope to fulfill what we, the indigenous language researchers of northern Pakistan, require while writing down our findings in our native languages and Urdu. Nafees Nastaleeq Regular existed even earlier but had little support for our indigenous languages. Now, most of us, especially those whose language carries not many diacritics for elaboration can benefit from the font as this font supports both Urdu and our indigenous languages.

### Advanced Orthography Workshop for Shina

FLI organized a five-days long advanced orthography workshop in Gilgit for Shina language on in May 2023 in Gilgit city. The objectives of the activity were to identify the advanced level issues in Shina writing system and their prospected solutions for moving towards standardization. Developing rules for writing the borrowed and compound word to have unified Shina writing system.

### Shina Kohistani Writing Strengthened:

The elders of Shina Kohistani group got together in Mansehra, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) to agree on a writing system for their language. The three-days writer's workshop which took place in June provided an opportunity to a group of researchers to resolve issues that hindered its writing. The participants also included government schools' teachers who will be contributing to developing their curriculum in this language. The Shina Kohistani, spoken in Kohistan area of KP is among the languages the KP government has included in the education system as a subject. This is very likely that the language will become a part of education soon and the participants will help the government institutions carry out the task with ease.

### Standardizing Indigenous Languages Writing

An advanced orthography workshop was held for five languages groups, Palula, Dameli, Kataveri, Gawarbati and Torwali in July 2023 in Chitral town. Total 17 people, three from each language group participated in this three-day event. The targeted language groups had working orthography for their languages together with published books, but the need to standardise their writing system, they had still some challenges and issues in their writing system. To tackle these challenges, FLI organized the event. The participants, at the end were able to develop writing rules leading to standardizing their orthography.

## Balti Women Empower Themselves Through Language Writing



In October 2023, 15 women from the University of Baltistan participated in a three-day women writers' workshop organized by the FLI in Skardu, Gilgit Baltistan. This groundbreaking event marked the first workshop specifically designed for the women of the Balti language community, introducing them to the fundamental writing system of their native language. Despite the tentative nature of the Balti language's writing system, which has been in practice for many years with published books in its scripts, this workshop served as a pivotal initiative. The FLI, in collaboration with the University of Baltistan, Skardu, aimed to develop a standardized writing system for the Balti language.

## FLI's Current Project Impact

- FLI reached out to **23rd language** of Northern Pakistan, and three more languages; **Kateviri**, **Kalkoti** and **Bateri** were provided with functional writing system.
- **7614** Stakeholders tuned in on social media with FLI.
- More than **3000** direct beneficiaries enhanced their skills in Language documentation and learned about Indigenous Languages.
- **2206** men and **600** women participated in events organized by FLI and its partner CBOs.
- Three more languages **Shina Kohistani**, **Indus Kohistani** and **Gojri** are in the process of becoming part of govt schools.
- FLI supported **11 language communities** including Indus Kohistani, Palula, Gawarbati, Yadgha, Wakhi, Dameli, Burushaski, Gojri, Shina, Kateviri, and Balti in organized **16 events** for language promotion and preservation events through their CBOs.
- FLI published **18** books under its Academic and **22** books under its Vernacular series.
- **2386 migrant** people participated in **10** cultural events for Balti, Burushaski, Dameli, and Shina communities, organized in Islamabad, Rawalpindi Karachi, and Peshawar.
- A total of **2810** active users of **08** local language keyboards, developed by FLI including Gawri, Palula, Khowar, Indus Kohistani, Shina, Kateviri, Burushaski, and Yadgha.
- **University of Chitral** included the **Khowar** language in its course with the technical assistance of FLI. **University of Baltistan**, Skardu (UoBS) formally started working with FLI in establishing a language documentation center. **Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU)** Islamabad is set to include regional languages in its course. **Karakorum International University (KIU)** Gilgit and **International Islamic University**, Islamabad also started collaborating with FLI to train its students in Language Documentation.

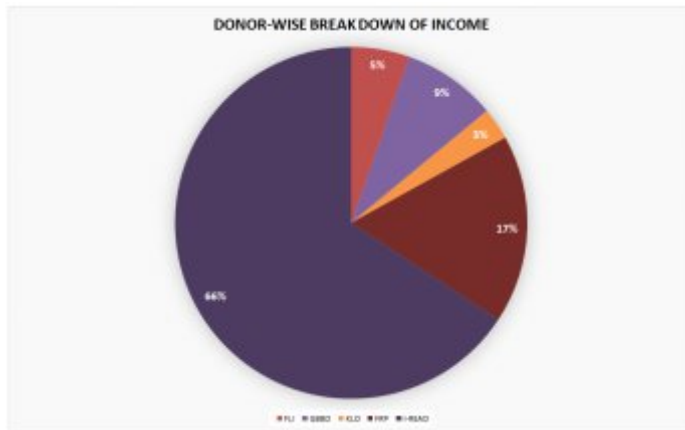


## FINANCE

During the financial year ending as on June 30, 2023 FLI's consolidated incomes were PKR 38,052,283 and consolidated expenditures were PKR 34,481,864.

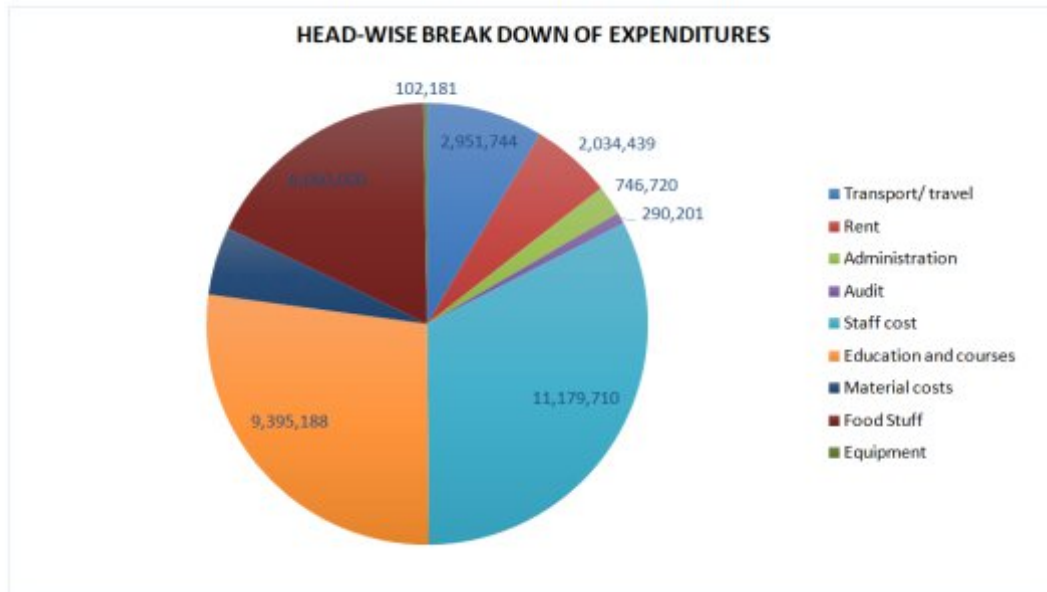
The consolidated accounts of FLI included the full accounts of the projects (PMU funded I-READ Project, Flood Relief Project, GBDD Project, KLD Project and FLI's own income; generated through its local resources.

FLI's accounts have been prepared on the basis of historical cost convention and in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).



## INCOME

Consolidated incomes of FLI were PKR 38,052,283 for the complete year July 2022 – June 2023. FLI's own incomes were PKR 2,033,779 accounting for 5% of overall income. Grants from PMU funded I-READ project were PKR 25,010,804 which is about 66% of the total income. Other projects of FLI like KLD, GBDD and FRP contributed 9%, 3% and 17% respectively.

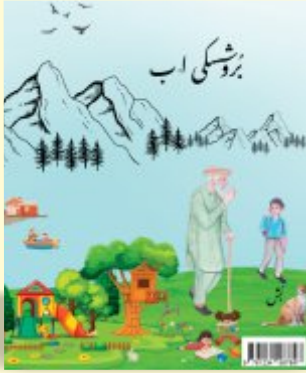


## EXPENDITURE

Consolidated expenditures for FLI were PKR 34,481,864 for the financial year July 2022 – June 2023. FLI's own expenditures were PKR 1,020,525. Expenditures for PMU funded I-READ project were PKR 22,769,116 and the other projects of FLI like, KLD, GBDD and FRP incurred PKR 920,248, PKR 3,178,012 and 6,593,963 respectively.



## FLI's Publications in 2023



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