

2024 Giving Circle Application

Member-Nominated Nonprofit

Developments in Literacy



Leader

Fiza Shah, CEO



Summarize what is the core mission & vision

Developments in Literacy (DIL) has spent the last 27 years expanding access to quality education in Pakistan. Our mission is to educate and empower underprivileged students, especially girls, by operating student-centered model schools; and providing high-quality professional development to teachers and principals across Pakistan. DIL was founded with the vision that no child in Pakistan, no matter how poor or underprivileged, should be denied access to quality education. All children should have equal opportunity to reach their full potential and contribute toward the socio-economic betterment of their communities.

Briefly explain when your nonprofit was founded, why and by whom.

DIL was founded by Pakistani-American women Fiza Shah and Hashmat Saeed in response to poor-quality education and lack of opportunity they saw for children, especially girls, in their native Pakistan. Fiza Shah leads affiliates DIL Pakistan, DIL US, DIL Canada, DIL Trust UK, and DIL Hong Kong. Each operate independently in their respective countries as legally registered non-profit organizations founded to support DIL's network of schools and education initiatives across Pakistan.

Who is your constituency and approximately how many people are served by your nonprofit?

Over the past 27 years of addressing gender disparity through education, DIL's programs have transformed lives and uplifted communities, enrolling a total of 365,224 students and counting. Today DIL operates 191 campuses providing high-quality education to 61,448 underserved students, of which 68% are girls, in some of Pakistan's most marginalized areas: Upper Dir, Mansehra in Kyber Pakhtunkhwa, Orangi and Khairpur in Sindh, and Rawalpindi and ICT in Punjab. We hire and train locally, contributing to the economic empowerment of native Pakistanis and employ 2,855 teachers and principals, 97% of whom are women.

What is the impact of your nonprofit over the past five years?

Over the past three years, we have doubled the number of children we educate by partnering with the Federal Directorate of Education. We elevate the quality of government schooling through capacity building introducing best practices in teaching, DIL programming, curricular support, and school management. Currently, more than half the schools DIL operates are managed jointly with the government. Today DIL alumni work in fields as diverse as medicine, engineering, and public service, lifting their families out of poverty and charting the future of their country. One such DIL graduate is Afreen Mustaq who grew up in Orangi, one of the largest informal settlements in the world. Afreen is now continuing her education as a Fulbright Scholar attending Harvard Graduate School of Education.

What is your goal for the next 1-5 years?

With DIL students beginning to reach heights only dreamed of 10 years ago, the question is not whether DIL prepares them for the rigors of college,

but whether we are able to support more to forge their own paths toward a brighter future - one that they define for themselves - to change the trajectory of their lives and that of their family. Thus fulfilling DIL's founding vision that "all children in Pakistan should have an opportunity to reach their full potential and contribute toward the socioeconomic betterment of their communities."

As we continue to deepen our impact through education and actively work to expand and improve our mentorship and alumni support programming, we are guided by questions such as, how do we replicate the astounding success of select graduates, build aspirations among all DIL students, help them discover their unique gifts, and provide students with the mindset to reach their dreams? In this way, our goal for the next 1 - 5 years is to widen the runway for our students to take flight.

What is one key item our giving circle members should know?

DIL's innovative approach (including our flagship program Technology-Enabled Academic Learning - TEAL) to meeting the needs of rural and peri-urban students in Pakistan has earned partnerships, grants and recognition from USAID, UKAID, British Asian Trust, UNESCO, U-Go among others and high praise from award winning journalist, Nicholas Kristof, and the government of Pakistan.

If you receive funding from the Women's Giving Circle, how would you plan to use the funds?

We would be grateful for any support from the Women's Giving Circle. We would apply these funds toward providing the TEAL program for middle grade students. TEAL has redefined classroom experiences for grade 6, 7 and 8 students by fostering curiosity, confidence, and better academic performance in maths, science, and English. Through video-based lessons, group discussions, and interactive activities, students are empowered to think critically and engage meaningfully in their education.

As one principal recently shared with us: "After TEAL started at our school, we have seen remarkable changes in our students. They are excited about the TEAL classes and often talk about them at home and within the community. The positive impact of the program has spread so much that seven new students have joined our school after hearing about TEAL. Among them, three students travel from the city area, even though they have many schools near their homes. These students' families are willing to pay for transportation just to attend our school, which shows the success of the TEAL program. Their performance has been impressive, and they are setting a great example for others. The TEAL program has not only improved

learning but also increased our school's reputation in the community. We are proud of this success and look forward to welcoming more students who wish to benefit from TEAL."

Learn more about Developments in Literacy (DIL)

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<https://www.facebook.com/supportdil>

https://x.com/i/flow/login?redirect_after_login=%2Fsupportdil

https://www.instagram.com/support_dil/

Additional Information

Print Version of TEAL Impact Statement '24 - Brenda Erlinger.pdf

Pictures



Videos

 VIDEO-2023-11-20-12-05-31 - Brenda Erlinger.mp4