



NETWORK FOR A **FREE SOCIETY**





Network for a Free Society

Progress Report – Summer 2014

No one could work with better partners round the world than we do. They are driven by their understanding of how greater individual freedom and more limited government could reduce poverty in their countries. We are also privileged to be supported by donors who appreciate the creative power of freedom and want to invest in programs that will foster it in areas where it is most needed. **Thank you all so much.**

Where ever freedom has been given a chance it has delivered and our partners want many more people to understand the principles and foundations of a free society so that as the ideas take hold in their countries enterprise and prosperity can flourish.

Undoubtedly this year others will be as excited and impressed as we are at the innovative programs our partners have suggested and that we are supporting in addition to the tried and tested programmes of previous years. They will be in Afghanistan, Nepal, Ethiopia, Morocco, Ivory Coast, Pakistan, Bosnia, Turkey, Malaysia, Tajikistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Nigeria and other countries,

It is difficult to believe that in most of these countries texts that explore and explain these concepts are simply not available either in English or the local language, so how would people understand them?

Making the ideas accessible to thousands cost effectively.

Our mission is to make them accessible far more widely, so we produced a mini-library of over 100 texts on CD to provide access to them for thousands of students in countries where the internet is either too slow or too expensive even when copyright permits it. To date over 105,000 of the English version have been distributed in 60 countries and in July this year we started shipping the 3rd edition with the first boxes going to Students for Liberty in Malawi. Also there are CDs in Chinese, Russian, Kyrgyz, Portuguese and Turkish with ones in French and Arabic due soon.

We only send CDs to people we know will hand each one to a student who wants to learn, and reactions from our friends to news of the 3rd Edition have been very enthusiastic because nearly all of them have run out of copies of the previous editions and they are waiting for more. Adedayo Thomas has already distributed about 10,000 in probably 8 sub Saharan African countries and has just asked for 10,000 more. They each cost us 25 cents to make including their covers plus about 12 cents per CD to ship depending on numbers and distance, so under 40 cents to get 125 texts about freedom to a student almost anywhere in the world and you can't get much more cost effective than that.

"Thank goodness the new CD is out." From Adedayo Thomas of AfricanLiberty.org

"It is wonderful to have these CDs again as they are a vital resource to advancing economic

freedom and liberty world wide” from Kidus of [TEAM](#) in Ethiopia.

“An awesome resource” - from Mike, of the East African Policy Centre, Kenya.

“I am very excited about the 3rd edition of the CD The book we made out of the translation from the previous CD has been Immensely helpful for us in producing content on free market ideas, to run a daily radio show in Nepali in the past two years. The radio has been a very helpful medium for us to reach the grass root population” from Robin Sitoula of the [Prosperity Foundation, Samriddhi](#) in Nepal.

Innovative methods of encouraging interest in the ideas.

We look for ways to get the CD texts read widely so fund student seminars, liberty camps and essay competitions where they are used and distributed, and also translations into several languages. The aim is that many more students have an opportunity to understand the concepts and also to identify those students who show particular interest in them for further ducation.

Recently giving our partners more choice in how to reach increasing numbers of students most effectively with small resources has sparked some great new innovations. They have come up with numerous ideas that had never occurred to us and can achieve more for less money than you could possible imagine. But why should it surprise us that freedom of choice produces better outcomes!!

‘Tea parties’ Malaysian style.

Wan Saiful of Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs in Malaysia suggested that instead of running an essay contest they would un a competition for their groups as how best to use \$3000 to promote liberty and the winning group came up with the concept of ‘tea parties’ but not the American sort. They simply advertised the date, time and topic of a meeting at a certain restaurant and invited people to turn up. Here they are discussing Hayek’s Road to Serfdom. The ‘tea parties’ have become so popular they had to start using a portable PA system and projector. The only cost is about 40 pence per person for a drink. Who can beat that for simplicity and cost effectiveness.

An intellectual Malaysian ‘tea party’ discussing the Road to Serfdom



Value for money in the Cote d'Ivoire.



The Cote D'Ivoire underwent a civil war barely ten years ago and now ranks 135 out of 152 countries in the Fraser Index of Economic Freedom so there is lots of room for improvement and Gisele Dutheuil is doing her best to change things for the better by promoting individual and economic freedom, with truly minimal resources through the [Audace Institute Afrique](#). Please click on the photo to see the video.

This year we offered them copies of the CD in French plus \$5,000 and were astounded when we heard what they can achieve with that funding. [Click here to play the video](#)

It includes,

- Holding public speaking debates and giving the French CD 'Ideas for a Free Society' to all participants to help them formulate their presentations.
- Arranging an ideas competition for researchers at Ivorian Center for Economic and Social Research CIRES, with whom they collaborate on '[How to reinvent land ownership in Cote d'Ivoire](#)'.
- Organizing a campaign for liberty in conjunction with the newly formed Students for Liberty in their country, who will get copies of the CD for all interested students.

Technology used in Afghanistan to explore free society values.

Afghanistan Economic & Legal Studies Organisation (AELSO) is setting up a unique initiative to engage young Afghans and others inside the country in a discussion on liberal values such as the market economy, rule of law, good governance and freedom of expression not only in the Afghan national languages of Pashto and Dari but also in English. They will have direct communication to experts around the globe and partner organizations in the region or overseas through their computers or smart phones.

A recent report showed 2.4 million Afghans, or 7.7% of the population of 31 million, have online access of which about 74% use social media. These include university students, intellectuals, business communities, politicians, journalists, civil society activists and young government officials.

An earlier AELSO seminar in Takhar province.



Plans for a new generation of entrepreneurs in Kazakhstan.

In Kazakhstan, the Institute for Development and Economic Affairs ([Facebook.com/IDEAinstitute](https://www.facebook.com/IDEAinstitute)) is running an 'Ideas Challenge' to create a new generation of outstanding entrepreneurs. Students and young professionals will form teams of 3 or 4 to work on an idea to liberalize the business environment, i.e. improve property rights, reduce regulation, provide water or electricity more effectively, etc.

Following a vote amongst all the teams the winners will present their ideas to a group of experts in the field for discussion and improvement before they are submitted to the media, deputies in Parliament and business associations.

Songs, drama and poetry will be used to interest students in Nepal.

[The Samriddhi Foundation](#) in Nepal will run a competition in 2014/5 about 5 key figures of the



Liberty movement such as Adam Smith, Ayn Rand, Hayek, etc. It will include graduate and undergraduate level students from over two dozen colleges who will research these great thinkers through the CD, translated books, videos, web-links etc. which will be provided by Samriddhi to help the students understand the key messages. Samriddhi's staff will be available to them (online and offline) as guides, if they want further help.

Then students will be asked to express what they understand as main messages of these five great people. Their expression could be in any form – songs, drama, poem, writing etc. – and there will be a grand cash prize along with many others. In this process, Samriddhi will be looking for students with potential and interest to get further involved in promoting liberty and who they can become more engaged through their other programs. The support from NFS will seed this initiative but they will need further resources so they would love to hear from anyone who might also help with this.

Reading Clubs in Namibia and Armenia.

In 2012 Yerevan was recognized as the Book Capital of Armenia which greatly raised the status of reading in the country. This was reflected in book reading that was open to the public. So the Armenian Liberty Students Organization decided to make use of this trend to translate pro-liberty texts, make them available in Armenian and organize regular seminars for students where the ideas will be explained and promoted. They hope that these seminars will develop another generation of liberty-oriented speakers in Armenia who will create their own community of free-thinking people and spread the gained knowledge to others. The theme of the first meeting on July 25 was *The Institutions of a Free Society* and translated sections of the IEA book by Eamonn Butler '[Foundations of a Free Society](#)' was used and distributed. [Read More](#)

The Namibian Chavauchee, or Black Flag Foundation's sole aim is to spread the message that freedom in Africa for Africans can only be secured and guaranteed by greater economic growth than has taken place thus far. They believe that this growth will come about only through the embrace of a free market philosophy and an open political system and have come to an agreement with the National Students Union, NANSO to set up reading clubs, debating societies and entrepreneurship workshops. The program will focus particularly on schools in low income communities where access to reading materials and mentorship opportunities is rare. NFS is supporting this



program in conjunction with [Atlas Network](#), who are the senior partners in this project.

Over 1000 students are expected to take part in the first round of this program with potentially all high school aged children if it can be rolled out as hoped.

The books they have initially chosen are *Condensed Wealth of Nations* and *Austrian Economics* by Eamonn Butler from the [Adam Smith Institute](#), *Are We Good Enough for Liberty* by Larry Reed from [Foundation for Economic Education Freedom](#), *101* by Madsen Pirie from [ASI](#) and *Public Choice - A Primer* again by Eamonn Butler but from the [Institute of Economic Affairs](#).

Bosnia, Kenya and Tajikistan want to get students thinking about solutions.

Tajikistan is another country that has experienced civil war relatively recently. Most adults still feel nostalgic about their Soviet past and do not understand the relationship between democratic government, a free society and economic development, so there is no demand for change. It ranks 139 out of 165 countries in the Heritage Foundation 2014 Index of Economic Freedom and is gradually slipping further down the list.

[The Tajikistan Free Market Centre](#) mission is to promote the establishment of legal and effective economic management of the country in line with the values of a free society. They will run a debating competition for students who are their main target audience because debate is an effective means of non- formal learning and is considered prestigious there. Between 40 and 50 promising students from 16 to 26 years will be selected for a 3 day training camp covering economics, politics, law and techniques of debate, followed by 16 further days training in the two main cities.



A 'Young Leaders League' debate championship will then be held for these students based on the topics of their training, with teams of two competing for the championship



In Kenya the [East African Policy Centre](#) will be running an 'Ideas Lab' to help students understand what is seen and what is not seen in the policy making process so they can hold policy makers to account. Youth unemployment in Kenya is double the national average and maybe as high as 70% so teams of students will be asked to submit a paper on the policy solutions they would propose to alleviate youth unemployment. These will be moderated by a panel of entrepreneurs and the four best from each university will get help from an expert to make them as

strong as possible after which they will present and defend their suggestions to the final judges. The winners will get cash prizes and the opportunity to promote their suggestions in the media and to technocrats and legislators

Bosnian libertarian association [Multi](#) will run an Ideas Night debate for teams of three students in universities in Sarajevo and Tuzla when it is expected that about 300 will take part in total. The teams can prepare in advance on given topics relating to market based reforms then during the first half of the evening they would each make their presentations. During the second half there would be questions from the audience and a general debate when they defend their ideas followed by a vote. The prize for the winners we hope will be to attend the Students for Liberty European Conference in Berlin in March 2015, so that the most successful in the competition will have a further opportunity to explore and discuss ideas about freedom.



Longer Term Programmes.

Annual African Essay Competition more than doubles entries in 2014.

In 2013 a record 271 essays were graded but this year the number has risen to 527 meeting the deadline with 48 received too late. There are so many that the announcement of the winners had to be postponed by four weeks. What a superb outcome and congratulations to the organisers.

Adedayo promoting the essay competition at a seminar in Uganda.



We have now funded this Sub-Saharan essay competition for 4 years and thanks to the energy of Adedayo Thomas of AfricanLiberty.org who runs it in collaboration with The Nation Newspaper it goes from strength to strength. The topic in 2014 is "Creating the Foundations of a Free African Society". The actual essay question is "Freedom creates prosperity. It unleashes human talent, invention and innovation, creating wealth where none existed before. Discuss."

All who submit an essay get sent either *Why Liberty* by Tom Palmer or *Foundations of a Free Society* by Eamonn Butler. Winners get cash prizes but even more highly valued the top three get to attend the Students and Young Professionals African Liberty Academy (SYPALA) to be held at University of Capetown Graduate Business School, Sept 3rd to 7th.

The competition encourages many young Africans to consider the concept of a free society and certainly over 500 will have spent time considering it in much more depth this year. Many of these then get involved with African think tanks and with Students for Liberty which is spreading fast in Africa and two have recently become important promoters of liberty in their own right. Olumayowa Okediran was involved in the socialist student society at his university when he entered the essay contest in 2010, his essay won him a place at SYPALA in 2010 and now he is a very effective leader for Students for Liberty running Students for Liberty's operations across Sub Saharan Africa.

The concept of a free society was first introduced to Alex Njeru when he saw the essay contest advertised. He won it at his first attempt in 2011 so attended SYPALA in August that year and last year founded the East African Policy Centre with Mike Rotich so that he can now explain and promote freedom and policies based on it amongst students in Kenya.

Liberty Camps in Pakistan



Khanasphur (Auubia, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Province) in Pakistan was the venue for the [Alternate Solutions Institute's](#) 6th Residential Course.

This time its selectors, Dr. Razaullah and Dr. Khalil Ahmad, chose 30 post-graduate students and others of its participants from various colleges and universities of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Province, Islamabad, the capital territory, and Sharakpur, a district of the Punjab Province.

Some young entrepreneurs were included. They discussed positive and negative rights, the philosophy of liberty, the implications and conditions of economic freedom in Pakistan and also enjoyed a day's relaxation in the mountains.

Assessing the effectiveness of such projects is challenging because they can be very long term. However many of the students will have first been identified as particularly interested or promising at previous ASI one day seminars so are already known to ASI. Then each year two students are selected to be group coordinators for the following year to keep participants in touch with each other and with ASI and to coordinate the next year's seminar.



Some ask to be co-ordinators for more years so they get a deeper understanding of the ideas. One subsequently became involved with Students for Liberty in Pakistan and internationally and is now running events for them. Others have become regularly involved with the Alternate Solutions Institute, others prominent in business and many others are leading civil society organisations and are expected to spread the ideas of liberty through them.

The top cover photo is a seminar run by ASI at the Lahore College of Women on Freedom and Responsibility attended by about 135 with standing room only.

Other projects in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In addition to the essay contest Adedayo is busy throughout sub Saharan Africa exploring the concept of freedom with thousands of students at different universities and book fairs, inspiring and enthusing them. He distributes the CD and books to them and helps them set up student liberty clubs. He has visited 5 universities in Uganda and a number in Nigeria and he is now off to Kenya and Zimbabwe where he will also do a book fair in Harare to add to the one he just did in South Africa. [Read more](#)

The bottom cover photo is over 500 students at the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria waiting for his seminar to start in April 2014.

But Adedayo is not the only person we are supporting who is working hard for liberty in this region. Kidus Mehalu recently founded [TEAM](#) and is making good progress in Ethiopia a country which has previously been reluctant to allow discussion of liberty. . [Read more](#)

Their 'Foundations of Human Flourishing' seminar series continues to attract young entrepreneurs and students eager to learn how and why economic freedom alleviates poverty more effectively than foreign aid.

Student meeting in Ethiopia run by Kidus Mehalu of TEAM



And we send CDs for distribution to student and other groups in many African countries with 17,000 3rd edition CDs being shipped to Ethiopia, Malawi, Kenya, Nigeria and Ghana in the first two weeks of July.

An increasingly interested audience in the Arab speaking world.



Our partners in Arabic speaking countries, the [Arab Centre for Scientific Research and Humane Studies](#) are very active in trying to explain the need for changes in systems rather than just changes in governments. Mainly we support their work translating relevant texts into Arabic and these are now increasingly being published in hard copies commercially. An example is *Adam Smith – A Primer* which, along with many other books, has not previously been available to the millions of students who only speak Arabic.

We also support meetings in mainly Muslim countries, run by the Arab Centre where the principles and foundations of free societies are explored and debated and where those who support them are taught how to promote them effectively. These are beginning to reap benefits as alumni start think tanks in their own countries. Recently the centre ran seminars and meetings in Egypt and Yemen led by their energetic Director Dr Nouh El Harmouzi



Nouh el Harmouzi in front of the audience and cameras in Yemen

These included two panel discussions with Yemeni Youths for Change on 'Freedom, Liberal Democracy, Constitutionalism and Property Rights', which were filmed by AL Jazeera in their entirety

Another great promoter of freedom, Milton Friedman, has also been made available to Arabic speakers on the Arab Centre website with the publication of the [Free to Choose](#) series. It was viewed more than 16000 times within the first 6 months of being posted. [See Video](#).



And further interest in the wider Muslim world.

[Istanbul Network for Liberty](#) is an international partner whose mission is to explore the principles and values of a free society in a Muslim world. This year they held a conference in Turkey in March and will hold a two day residential conference in Pakistan in the autumn on issues concerning Islamic jurisprudence. A meeting is planned for Morocco in 2015 if the funding for it can be raised.

More publications in Iran.



Our Iranian programme continues apace with the Farsi version of *Foundations of a Free Society* coming out shortly and the next edition of the magazine *Excellent Organisation* due out any moment. The main article will be an interview with Syed Kamall, MEP called "The State. A Last Resort for People" plus 'More People, Greater Wealth, More Resources, Healthier Environment' by Julian L. Simon and *Globalization Boon or Gloom* by Hans F. Sennholz

In January three speakers we recommended spoke at a conference called 'Towards the Geometry of the Global Economy' in Tehran. They were Mustafa Akyol, from Turkey, author of *Islam Without Extremes*, Moroccan academic Dr Hicham al Moussaoui and Dr Habid Awada who teaches business in Lebanon. The audience of about 500 was made up of businessmen, economic experts, bureaucrats, politicians and academics. All the books translated by NFS were on sale in the conference foyer during the event. As a result two further recommended speakers will shortly be on their way to take part in a banking conference there later in August.

A new introductory book especially for our audience.

Last year we recognized a need for a book that set the principles and foundations of a free society out simply and succinctly for a student audience. The IEA took up the suggestion and Eamonn Butler's book ['Foundations of a Free Society'](#) (previously much mentioned in this report) was published in late 2013. Since then it has been translated into probably 8 languages, reproduced in an African version and is about to be reproduced in a Farsi version and possibly an Indian version. It has also been promoted extensively in Africa as the subject of this year's essay contest, and nearly 600 students have now written essays based on the ideas in it. Now the executives of the Students for Liberty Club at the University of Technology in Akure Nigeria will be discussing one chapter of it each week on their university student radio. Rather a good record for its first eight months!

Executives of the Students for Liberty with their copies of it



Assessing success?

So how did we perform against the tasks we set ourselves a year ago in our 2013 Summer Report? Actually we fulfilled nearly all of them except for the pledge for more translations into Urdu and Kurdish and there were two projects that our partners were not able to undertake. One project was in Ukraine because of the extreme difficulties of running an essay contest there in recent months. The other was knocked out of action by the authorities in another country but has been reorganised and will be taking place shortly in a somewhat different format and we wish them well with it.

But did we achieve anything other than completing a series of tasks and do we think that will lead to an increase in individual freedom and a limit to the size of governments in the future? This is such a long term mission and difficult to assess what causes change as there are usually many factors in operation. However we can say that the work of those we support is increasing the number of people believing in these goals and there are signs it is also beginning to generate new front line intellectuals prepared to dedicate their lives to these ends as indicated in this report. From that we hope will come more academics, journalists, bureaucrats and politicians who understand the case for freedom and will contribute to a change in the climate of opinion in that direction.

Foundation for Economic Education's Blinking Lights Award.

Linda Whetstone, NFS Director, was very honoured to be the first recipient of the [Foundation for Economic Education's Blinking Lights Award](#), which Director Larry Reed came to London to present in May, for work with NFS, the Institute for Economic Affairs, Atlas Network, Mont Pelerin Society, Istanbul Network for Liberty and other organisations.

Goals for 2014/15

- **To assess** the success of the 2014 programmes
- **To distribute** at least 25,000 of the 3rd Edition CDs that have just been created.
- **To encourage** partners to make their own copies of the CD whenever possible, as that is permissible for the 3rd edition whereas it was not for the previous ones.
- **To distribute** at least 5,000 of the French Edition of the CD, due to be released shortly.
- **To encourage** maximum use of Foundations of a Free Society, including 5 more translations or publishing of new editions in other countries or languages.
- **To make** as many of the texts on the 3rd Edition of the CD available through links on our website as possible, given copyright constraints.
- **To support** the continuation of an energetic translation program into Farsi and Arabic, with a view to an increasing number of books being published commercially in all these languages.
- **To support** partners running innovative programs such as essay contests or seminars, based on the texts on the CD, with the aim of educating students and identifying those with a genuine interest in and understanding of the ideas.
- **To support** projects where intellectuals in less developed countries can explore and debate the principles and foundations of a free society in their country or region.
- **To achieve** an income at least equivalent to that in 2014.



We want to thank our marvellous donors most sincerely for the crucial part they played in making all this possible. Also all our partners, board members, those who allow us to use their texts so generously on the CDs and everyone else who supports us so wonderfully in other ways. Further funding for this important work is essential if it is to continue and can be given on our website or by contacting us directly.

So please help us if you can.

<http://www.networkforafreesociety.org> <http://www.facebook.com/freesociety> <mailto:info@freesocieties.org>