



# NETWORK FOR A **FREE SOCIETY**

2016





# Network for a Free Society

Annual report for the last 12 months and looking forward  
August 2016

## How ideas can change the world

In ‘The tyranny of Experts’ William Easterly argues that the true causes of poverty are not technical but the absence of economic and political rights and that only a model of development predicated on individual rights of poor people will offer them the opportunity to escape from poverty.

He cites Hayek’s vision of how “individual rights were both an end in themselves and a means by which free individuals in a free society solved many of their own problems”

This leads him to conclude that advocacy of these rights is the only way that well meaning people can hope to increase freedom in general and opportunities for poor people in particular.

Easterley’s definition of individual rights includes ‘the political freedom from seizure of your person and the economic freedom from seizure of your property.... the political freedom to assemble with whom you want and the economic freedom to trade with whom your wish.... the political freedom to replace bad public-service providers with good ones, and the economic freedom to replace bad private-sector service providers with good ones’

Hayek also believed in advocacy and that public opinion will only be influenced in favor of freedom if the ‘second hand dealers’ in ideas, teachers, preachers, journalists and politicians etc., understand the importance of political and economic freedom.

A strong belief in the principles and foundations of a free society and the power of advocacy is the basis for our mission which is to make the ideas and texts that explain the principles and foundations of a free society available in countries and languages where they are currently not accessible, which is the majority of the countries in the world.

Because of the high cost of supplying books we developed a mini library of classical liberal texts on a CD “Ideas for a Free Society”. Well over 100,000 of the English version have been shipped to partners in over 60 countries for distribution to students. We also fund translations of these texts and there are CDs in Chinese, Russian, Portuguese, Kyrgyz, Turkish, French and Arabic and some of the translated texts have been published commercially in these countries.

*On the cover: Standing room only at the final of the essay contest run by the Centre for Market Enterprise in Malawi; Students enjoying themselves at a picnic during the ASI’s Annual Workshop in Khanaspur in Pakistan. This report is also available online [here](#)*

Even in 2006 CDs were felt to be old technology in the West but that is not the case in developing countries where internet connections even now maybe non-existent or too slow or too expensive. We still get many requests and have very recently supplied CDs to Cameroon, Burundi, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Myanmar. The texts can also be put on memory sticks and about 30 are available on our [website](#), although many cannot be for copyright reasons.

*Students at the Harare Book Fair, 27th-30th July with their new CD's and books*



We also support our local partners in providing student outreaches, conferences, seminars, camps, essay and debate contests and other activities which provide opportunities for people to learn about these ideas. Eventually some of them will become the teachers, journalists, think tankers and politicians who bring them to a much wider audience and change public opinion in favor of freedom.

In this report we look at our partners achievements over the last 12 months to show you how our/your support enables them to carry out this vital work in places where repression and poverty is often the norm.

**Everything that Network for a Free Society has done is only possible because of the generous support of our donors and partners.**

**Thank you all so very much.**

## Promoting Freedom in Pakistan

Pakistan is a country with many problems related to poverty and lack of security so much in need of a better understanding of the role that individual freedom and limited government could play in solving them.

University professor Dr. Khalil Ahmad realised this after reading Carl Popper's Open Society, which a friend gave to him by chance. Previously he had taught communism but afterwards he read the works of Hayek and other classical liberal authors and began to teach these new ideas to his students.

In 2003 he founded the Alternate Solutions Institute to promote the ideas more widely and was later supported by the Atlas Network and International Policy Network, which was the forerunner of NFS. We met him at the Mont Pelerin Society meeting in Sri Lanka in 2004.

Dr. Raza Ullah's doctorate was on public policy, poverty alleviation and its causes in Pakistan and he believed that government alone had the solutions. But he was impressed by Hernando de Soto's Mystery of Capitalism and as a result used the Property Rights Alliance Index in his dissertation. They then introduced him to Khalil Ahmad who invited him to the ASI annual workshop in Khanaspur. This followed with an invitation to join ASI and now he is their President.

This Khanaspur workshop, for which there is great competition to attend has introduced many young Pakistanis to these ideas and is now mostly run by alumni. In addition ASI runs seminars and conferences and forms Students of Entrepreneurship and Economic Reforms (SEER) Clubs in universities with the support of the universities themselves.

Click [here](#) to read much more about their impressive work.

*Dr. Raza Ullah leading a student seminar in 2016*



Ali Salman attended the launch of the Pakistani edition of the Economic Freedom of the World Index in 2005 which was organized by the Alternate Solutions Institute and there he met Dr. Khalil Ahmad. That was his first exposure to ideas of economic freedom. Shortly afterwards he left for Boston where he obtained a masters in Economics but once back in Lahore, he did a number of research assignments for Alternate Solutions Institute, and had long conversations with Khalil, who also opened doors for him to the international liberty movement. As he said "I eventually "converted", and with some leap of faith, some planning and some support, later founded The Policy Research Institute of Market Economy ([PRIME](#)), another free market policy think tank in Islamabad."

Since 2013 PRIME has organized 44 events and produced 20 publications on trade, housing, taxation, inflation, debt and power etc. They have had 60 media mentions and appearances and reached 20,000 people. As a result of PRIME efforts, issues related to ever increasing public debt have been highlighted their bi-annual report on the economy has become the sole independent source of information on implementation of government programs and promises. They also led a campaign urging Pakistani government to sign Information Technology Agreement, which is accepted by Ministries of Commerce and Information Technology and is still under consideration by the federal cabinet.

The outreach of ASI is now changing public opinion and influencing policy discussions in favor of freedom. Pakistan is a great example of how student outreach can influence Hayek's second hand dealers in ideas in favor of freedom and that they can influence policy even in a country with so many challenges.

NFS has supported them from almost their beginnings and is very proud of the results they have produced. They distributed the first version of the CD 'Ideas for a Free Society' in 2006 and then made a special version of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition for Pakistan in 2009 and have used them for student outreach ever since

*A PRIME conference on privatising the Pakistani airlines*





## Promoting freedom in Iran

Bardia Garshasbi left Iran because of the lack of freedom but although he had wanted freedom he said he did not really understand what this entailed until he started translating the texts on the mini library of classical liberal texts on a CD produced by NFS into Farsi. As he read and translated them he could see the solution for Iran and became ever more excited. He enlisted the help of a school friend in Iran, now a publisher, with the result that Iranians have access to some wonderful texts in Farsi.

Included are Public Choice a Primer and Foundations of a Free Society both by Eamonn Butler and published by the Institute of Economic Affairs in London. These and others can be seen on the publisher [Sargol's website](#) and on [government](#) and [other](#) websites in Iran and here in the [UK](#).

As our funding for this project will be reduced for 2017 it will have to be severely curtailed unless others with an interest in seeing greater freedom in Iran are able to help us.



## Promoting Freedom in Malawi

Peter Yakobe was an undergraduate in Malawi when American academic Brian Baugus came to lecture and inspired him with ideas about free societies. Brian introduced him to Japheth Omojuwa of AfricanLiberty.org who had learned about the ideas himself when he was successful in the AfricanLiberty.org essay contest which NFS has supported for many years. Peter then began reading the books of Hayek, Tom Palmer and Adam Smith some on the CD 'Ideas for a Free Society' He took part in a four month training with Students for Liberty during which time he inspired two Zambian students to start an SFL branch in Zambia.

In 2014 he co-founded the [Centre for Free Market Enterprise](#) with Pilirani Banda and is already energetically undertaking student outreach. CFME will shortly be promoting changes to the price fixing and other activities of the government which are so detrimental to the economy and the opportunities available to the people who are mostly very poor.

They run free market roundtable sessions, liberty workshops and workshops on entrepreneurship including in the local prison for those about to be released. Also distributing books and CDs and their major event to date, with NFS support, was an inter varsity debating contest with topics such as “Can Malawi do without donor aid?”

1,652 students attended and it was featured on the media 91 times. 1000 students received the Tom Palmer/Atlas Network book ‘Why Liberty’, all took away the CD ‘Ideas for a Free Society’ and 2000 further CDs were taken up by other students at the universities.

Malawi Broadcasting Corporation was so impressed with the debate that they invited a live replay of the finals at their studios the following day and their audience is potentially 12,000.

*The live replay of the CFME debate on Malawi television*



## **Promoting Freedom in the Arab World**

Kathya Berrada is half Moroccan, half Russian but brought up and educated in Morocco. She learned of Hayek and Easterley’s insights by experience. Having dinner on a cold Moroccan night with her university management professor, who pointed out the restaurant owner’s capacity to run a low cost energy system keeping the place warm and offering a variety of low priced dishes, she could hear the excitement in the professor’s voice describing the capacity of poor people to come up with innovative solutions. She told Kathya she should read the fortune at the base of the Pyramid by management Guru C K Prahalad.



Prahalad's contention is that poverty masks the fact that the very poor are resilient entrepreneurs and value-conscious consumers. It inspired Kathya with the understanding that the dignity of less fortunate people depends on them being able to earn a living as productive individuals rather than relying on charity or government and becoming a number in the government's statistics.

That book challenged her deepest convictions on the role of government and the notion of justice and encouraged her to read more books discussing the role of government, civil liberties and economic freedom.

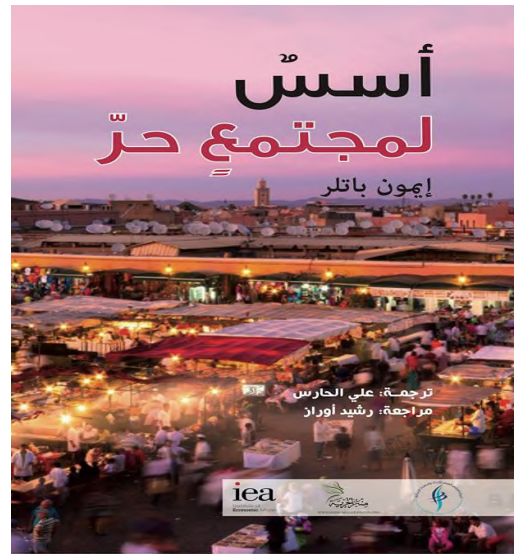
After five years working in the finance industry Kathya met Nouh Harmouzi, CEO of the [Arab Center for Scientific Development and Humane Resources](#) and now works there full time promoting liberal ideas both in Morocco and across the Arab world. To her economic freedom is a sustainable approach to tackle poverty and the Rule of Law is the only way to tackle corruption and arbitrary decision making that jeopardizes economic development in the Arab World.

Yet another example of ideas having consequences and Kathya is now introducing people all over the Arab world to the concepts of individual freedom and limited government.



Nouh el Harmouzi and his team are probably the first to promote concepts of individual freedom and limited government in an effective and systematic way in the Arab world working with students and intellectuals in Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Kuwait, Yeman, Algeria, etc. providing student outreach, seminars, workshops and conferences. They have completed dozens of translations which are both up on their [website](#) and available on a CD and a number of which have been published commercially in Arabic and much of this with NFS support.

*Foundations of a Free Society by Eamonn Butler now available in Arabic.  
Institute of Economic Affairs*



As both Hayek and Easterley suggested it is the only way to change the climate of opinion in favor of freedom and offer the possibility of prosperity for poor people which in turn offers more security to the rest of the world.

## **Promoting Freedom Through Out the Mainly Muslim World**

The Istanbul Network for Freedom was set up during a meeting of the Mont Pelerin Society in 2011. Some 50 classical liberal Muslims were the majority of its founding members. Its mission is to explore and promote the principles and values of a free society in a Muslim world.

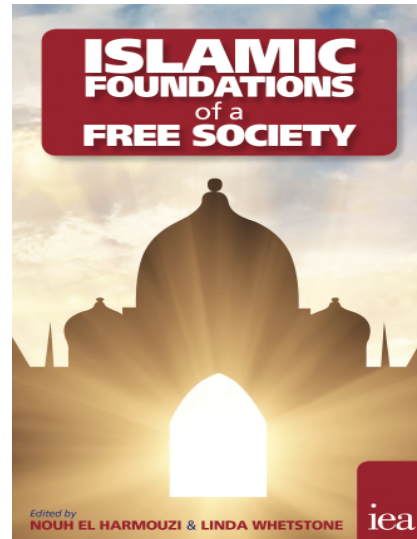
Working only with volunteers there have been considerable consequences of its advocacy as a result of its four international conferences in Fez 2012, Islamabad in 2013, Istanbul 2014 and Marrakech in 2015. In 2016 there will be smaller events in Malaysia and Bosnia and INFoL expands and looks for its first CEO.

Admir Cavalic first came to our attention when he asked if the Istanbul Network might pay for his flight from Bosnia to the meeting in Istanbul in 2013. As a result NFS has supported his group Multi in their very effective promotion of liberty in Bosnia and in October 2016 Multi will run a three day Liberty Festival in Sarajevo. This will include a one day INFoL seminar to promote its mission and launch *Islamic Foundations of a Free Society* in Bosnia.

This book from the Institute of Economic Affairs was only possible because of INFoL connections. Its aim is to alter the perception of Islam in the West and of freedom and markets in mainly Muslim countries.

Connections made at the 2014 conference between Joel Hirst, a nation builder for the United Nations in Mali, and Nouh el Harmouzi, resulted in Arab Center outreach to Mali and the formation of the think tank Think Peace which is now promoting freedom in Mali itself. .

[Watch the clip.](#)



Another member of that first group that went from Morocco to Mali was Zineb ben Alla who subsequently formed another group in Mali, [TICVE](#) (The Transnational Initiative for Countering Violent Extremism). It has been active in Mali and also in the US and Morocco making the case for an end to violent extremism. They have made their case at the UN in NY.

As a result of meeting through INFoL Ozlem Caglar, Director of the Association for Liberal Thinking in Turkey, arranged for Benedikt Koehler's book *Islam and Capitalism* to be translated into Turkish and published by the Liberte Publishers in Ankara and arranged a speaking tour for him in Turkey in June.

NFS has been a significant supporter of INFoL in its early years.

## **Promoting Freedom in Sub Saharan Africa**

We were very excited when the Rising Tide Foundation agreed to support the 2016 Essay Contest for African Undergraduates. This year the title was "Entrepreneurs are the creative force in the economy. Is your government helping or hindering them". As a result of wider promotion a record 634 entries were received from 23 countries including Ghana, Kenya Nigeria, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Malawi, South Africa, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Uganda, Congo, Sudan, Egypt, Mauritius, Zambia, Algeria, Morocco, Burundi, Tunisia, Gambia, Rwanda and Namibia.

There are three rounds of judging with 7 judges each from different African countries and the judges do not know the names of the contestants or where they come from.

Details of the results can be found [here](#):

The five highest placed students win cash prizes and the opportunity to attend a camp that explores and discusses the principles of a free society, also to meet others of like minds to learn of their thoughts and aspirations. This year they attended the Kenya Liberty & Entrepreneurship Camp in Limuru which was run by [the Language of Liberty Institute](#) and the [African Liberty Organisation for Development](#).

The contest has a proud record of identifying future freedom champions who are now themselves promoting freedom through their clubs and think tanks, at conferences and through the media.

Christian-Aime Chofor Che is a senior administrator in Cameroon and founded and chairs the Central African Think Tank for Libertarian Thought and Action. Olumayova Okediran is now head of Students for Liberty in sub-Saharan Africa and responsible for the great growth of SFL in Africa. Japheth Omojuwa now runs AfricanLiberty.org and introduced Peter Yakobe to the African Freedom network and Peter subsequently became active in SFL and now runs Centre for Free Market Economy in Malawi. Alex Njeru co-founded the East Africa Policy Centre and apart from other things encouraged Aimable Manrakiza by giving him copies of the CD “Ideas for Free Society” in French when the Burundi customs would not let them in. Aimable has been very active in setting up SFL groups at universities in Burundi and making the CDs available to them.

Adedayo Thomas has been the driving force behind this contest.

## Promoting Freedom in Other Countries

NFS supports inspiring projects run by our partners in many other countries including Afghanistan, Armenia, Bosnia, Burundi, Tanzania, Cote D’Ivoire, Nepal, Kyrgyzstan, Khazakstan, and Tajikistan which can be seen on our [website](#).

## Achievements, Challenges and Opportunities

### Achievements

Over the last 12 months we supported:

- 14 seminars in 7 countries reaching about 400 intellectuals.
- 25 student outreaches in 9 countries reaching at least 500 students.
- 6 essay or debating contests in 6 countries reaching over 2,500 students + a TV audience in Malawi of potentially millions.
- 7 books and 2 magazines published in Farsi and Arabic as a result of translations funded by NFS.
- 8000 plus CDs supplied for use in at least 14 countries with further copies also being made by others.



## Challenges

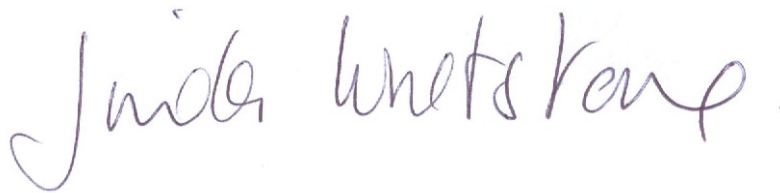
Our biggest challenge has been to fund seminars for those young intellectuals, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa who are already involved in promoting freedom, but who rarely have the opportunity to explore and discuss the principles and foundations of a free society with the guidance of an experienced academic to help strengthen their understanding.

## Opportunities

- To offer seminars to young intellectuals who would otherwise have few opportunities to discuss the concepts of freedom.
- The creation of a Skype for Liberty database which would include details of classical liberal intellectuals prepared to make a 45 minute presentation on Skype to groups of students and others arranged by partner think tanks. Especially in Africa, although also in other places, there is a major shortage of people available and able to speak on topics that are of interest from a classical liberal perspective which is limiting the expansion of the movement.
- Ensure that many more classical liberal texts that are not limited by copyright are available as widely as possible on websites in many languages.

**We want to thank our marvelous donors most sincerely for the crucial role they play in making this possible. Also our partners, board members, those who allow us to use their texts so generously or support us in other ways. If you have ideas or advice we would be so pleased to hear from you.**

**With best wishes to you all in your efforts to promote liberty**

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Linda Wnetekamp". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chairman, Network for a Free Society

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 by donating through our website [here](http://www.networkforafreesociety.org) or directly by contacting [linda@freesocieties.org](mailto:linda@freesocieties.org).

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