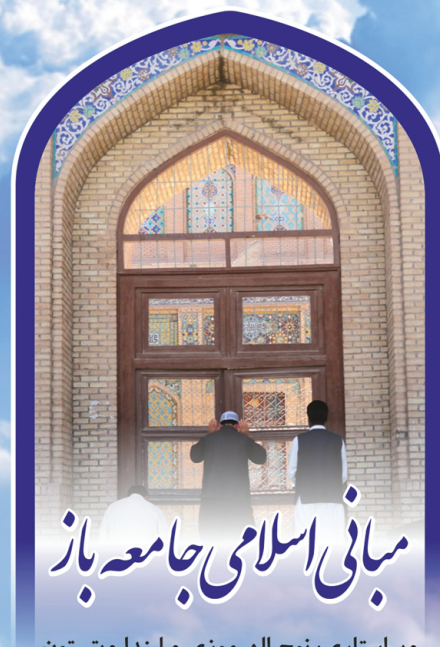


NETWORK FOR A FREE SOCIETY



د افغانستان د اقتصادي او حقوقي مطالعاتو موسسه
موسسه مطالعات اقتصادي و حقوقي افغانستان
Afghanistan Economic & Legal Studies Organization



ویراستاری: نوح الهرموزی و لیندا ویتستون
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August 2017 - July 2018

<https://www.networkforafreesociety.org>

Network for a Free Society

Our Annual Report from August 2017 to July 2018

Hans Rosling tells us in his book Factfulness that over the last 20 years the number of those living in extreme poverty in the world has halved but when asked only 7% of a broad spectrum of people knew the answer with 93% thinking that it either doubled or stayed the same.

And if only 7% know about this wonderful news even fewer are likely to know the reasons why this happened although objective evidence is available in indexes such as the Human Freedom Index measuring personal, civil and economic freedoms or the World Bank index measuring Ease of Doing Business.

They show the relationship between these freedoms and/or the ease of doing business to outcomes such as reduced poverty, longer lives, improved educational standards etc. Despite their importance the implications of these relationships are little known especially amongst the vast majority in low and middle income countries who would benefit most from understanding the circumstances which have enabled others to escape from the poverty and lack of opportunity which engulfs so many of them.

Our mission is to make information about the circumstances under which the greatest increase in human flourishing in the history of the world has taken place accessible in such countries. So those who have most to benefit from the information can apply it to their own situations.

We do this by making the texts that explore and promote these ideas more widely available and primarily with our mini libraries of relevant texts on CDs, which although old technology, maybe the only possible way given the much higher cost of distributing books and the limited or expensive access to the internet.

Well over 150,000 such CDs have been distributed in over 60 countries in English, Portuguese, Turkish, Chinese, Russian, Kyrgyz, Arabic, French and Dari/Pashto/Farsi. They go to our partners who explore and promote the ideas they contain at seminars, conferences, debate contests, quiz contest and other events which we support.

On the cover: Below left: CDs being welcomed in Yambio, South Sudan by John Mustapha after their 8 week journey from the UK. Above right: the cover of the Dari translation of Islamic Foundations of a Free Society edited by Dr Nouh el Harmouzi and Linda Whetstone.

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

Thank you all so very much.

Kenya and Indonesia See the Start of an Exciting New Program

The purpose is to give groups of intellectuals, usually young ones the opportunity of a two day in depth discussion related to some aspect of limited government and individual freedom facilitated by someone with a deep understanding of the concepts involved. The hope is to run two a year in different countries or regions so that the participants can then explore, promote and defend the ideas effectively themselves and become ambassadors for them.

The first was held in Kenya, October 2017, with [Dr Steve Davies](#), providing relevant pre-readings and guiding the discussion. The topic was Liberty, Social Thinking and Constitutional Government.



The 19 participants, all carefully chosen for an understanding and belief in the creative power of freedom, came from Burundi, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Uganda, Ghana, South Africa, Nigeria, Tanzania and Kenya. Three of them were journalists, one an academic, one a teacher and many involved with running Students for Liberty or working with think tanks in their countries. A few were in their final year at university.

They were impressed and excited with the texts and system of the discussion and took part in an informed and serious manner. It was an exhilarating two and a half days and we all went away better informed and energised.

“An unforgettable moment for defenders of ideas of freedom in Africa like me; who comes to the region of the Great Lakes affected by many barriers to prosperity.”

“The amazing time and exchange of ideas is unquantifiable”

“The moderator Dr Steve Davies posed questions that opened up the sessions where great mind boggling debates came about. This was my first colloquium and I cannot wait to attend the next one in Africa. I have been very satisfied with the sessions and learned more than I imagined?”

[The Center for Indonesian Policy Studies](#) (CIPS) held a similar event in Indonesia on “Liberty and Development”. It brought together 20 experts from the social sciences and humanities, including senior lecturers from universities across Indonesia, an economist from the central bank, the head of research and development from the Indonesia stock exchange, a politician and finance advisor in the United Nations Development Program, two co-founders of the libertarian website Suara Kebebasan, and several others which altogether led to a variety of perspectives in discussing the topics.

The debates provided insights into political processes in contemporary Indonesia including that freedom needs to be aligned with cultural, spiritual and personal values because these values are grounded in religion and traditions, where the government has no mandate and ought to stay out. This creates a freedom from coercive constraint and broader access to political and economic resources, which has become a powerful force of global change and meets considerable resistance in Indonesia.

The event was facilitated by [Rainer Heufers](#), CEO of CIPS who said it was the first discussion of this type that he had ever encountered in Indonesia. Although it had been a challenge to persuade some people to attend, their enthusiasm during discussions and the fact that it had given CIPS the opportunity to get to know many more academics who afterwards were keen to cooperate with them, inspired CIPS to consider the conduct of similar events in the future.

Promoting Liberal Values in Afghanistan

NFS is proud to have worked with the [Afghan Economic and Legal Studies Organisation](#) in Afghanistan since its inception in 2004. They run a number of projects which introduce people to liberalism, tolerance and other free society values. This is carried out through their Human Rights Club for about 40 young people every year in Kabul, their Silk Road Radio Station which is accessed in Afghanistan and neighbouring countries, their support of the first Students for Liberty group in the country, translations of relevant texts including Islamic Foundations of a Free Society and last year they produced their own CD with texts in Dari, Pashto and Farsi which enables them to take the texts and ideas much farther afield. Their White Movement (for peace) involves thousands of young people working all over the country.

Later in 2017 they translated and published “[Islamic Foundations of a Free Society](#)” into Dari. It is being widely used as the basis for their discussions on freedom and

tolerance within Islam and they are about to embark on an ambitious outreach programme to four provincial towns.

Graduation day for their Human rights Club Alumni



Their bold 2018 program the Tolerance and Prosperity Caravan will start shortly to promote democracy, liberty, tolerance and opposition to radicalism in 4 of the major provinces in Afghanistan.

The Challenges of South Sudan

Security in South Sudan is challenging, per capita income is \$182 pa and it is the 187th most difficult country in the world in which to do business.

John Mustafa created the Students Organisation for Liberty and Entrepreneurship believing that rule of law, protection of private property, free speech and free markets are the only hope for enterprise to prosper. So he was keen to get some of the CDs to give people the chance to study these concepts themselves.

Given the lack of security the odds seemed to be against the CDs getting to Yambio but we thought we had to try. After numerous difficulties they arrived 8 weeks late. Within 2 weeks John was introducing both the CD and the ideas to the state Minister of Education and shortly after students were being introduced to them as well.

John Mustapha introduced Hon Pia, Minister of Education Gbudue Statet, South Sudan to the CDs. He promised a full support if they were active



John commented “these are wonderful and powerful collections of texts on the CDs. Surely they will make an impact in South Sudan”

Reaching out in Burundi, DR Congo and Rwanda

Burundian student Aimable Manirakizia was inspired by Students for Liberty and the ideas on the French edition of the CD. When he founded SFL Burundi NFS supplied them with copies as they were cheaper than shipping books or access to the internet and the book [Foundations of a Free Society](#) which was on it literally became the foundation of their courses. They had minimal other access to such resources.

A year later they created SFL DR Congo and SFL Rwanda with only volunteers to help and in 2018 they founded the think tank [Centre for Development and Enterprise](#) to cover all three countries and promote the free society and free markets more widely.

Support from NFS since 2016 has been for their Quiz contests. In 2018 their team first visited 20 universities in the three countries introducing 1600 new students to the ideas and forming 140 teams. They then ran an inter university quiz based on chapters from Foundations for a Free Society to find a winner for each university, for each country and then between the country champions. An impressive undertaking with no paid staff!

Quiz masters confer as many are keen to answer at this quiz session in Burundi



Every year more students volunteer and become part of the effective teams trained and managed by the organisation leaders. Each one will not only understand better what freedom is and how it will increase opportunities in their countries but also build skills that may help them make use of those opportunities when they arise.

Debating a Muslim Case for Freedom in Iran

[Islam and Liberty Summer University](#) (ILSU) took place in Iran in July 2018. The three speakers and 16 young Islamic scholars affiliated with universities and research institutes in Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan spent four days as guests of the Mofid University in Qom, Iran taking part in lectures, workshops and seminars.

The faculty included Dr. Bican Sahin from Turkey, Mohamad Machine-Chian from Iran and Ali Salman from Pakistan who produced a reader as the basis of the discussions which centred around the intellectual foundations of economic and other freedoms in Islam.

Islamic Foundations of a Free Society in English was given to the President of the Research Institute of Islamic Studies and Social Sciences, President Ayatullah Nazarib by Ali Salman CEO of Islamic and Liberty Network. He also announced that a Farsi edition would be produced shortly



The ILSU graduates will be expected to become fellows and alumni and participate in future ILN projects involving research and public education and contribute through opinion articles, public lectures and media appearances in their home countries.

Exploring the Benefits of a Free Society with Journalists in Ghana

Recently the African Journalists for Opportunity training, a flag ship project of the [Institute for Liberty and Policy Innovation](#), took place in Accra. ILAPI CEO Peter Bismark thinks it is an important function of journalists to ruffle feathers, ask hard questions, and demand answers and the purpose of the two day intensive training is to equip them with a basic understanding of how the economy works and the role that freedom plays in providing opportunities for enterprise and prosperity, so that they can hold those in authority to account and challenge any who promote more government as the solution to poverty.

Some of the speakers were there in person including Franklin Cudjoe CEO of [Imani](#), a well established Ghanaian free market think tank which successfully holds politicians to account by applying cost benefit analysis to proposed policies. Franklin was one of the first people in Africa to use the CD as a teaching resource and he took time to

explain to the AJO journalists why they should read the texts on it and what they would learn from them.

Franklin Cudjoe being interviewed after his session by the journalists on the course



Others made their presentations on line including Dr Steve Davies, Dr Tom Palmer and Dr Brian Baugus. 20 participants from Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria were accepted from 92 applicants. Others applied from Malawi, Zambia, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Sierra Leon, Liberia, Guinea, and South Africa but they could not afford the cost of travelling to it.

The Great Free Market Event in Tanzania

The Free Market Great Debate is the first ever libertarian contest in Tanzania, designed to input free-market ideas to university students and give them a unique opportunity to debate various issues and views around the theme of “morality of capitalism” based on the book published by Atlas Network.

[Students for Liberty](#) and [Liberty Sparks](#) are hoping to take this bold plan to 32 universities in Tanzania where “[The Morality of Capitalism](#)” edited by Tom Palmer will be the basis for the discussions. The debates are intended to develop critical thinking in the students to both equip them with knowledge for the contest and also to enable them to develop into ambassadors for private enterprise.

Students and teachers choosing books and CDs for further study after the debate at the Institute of Social Work in Manyema.



A New Chapter in the Effort to Promote Freedom in Uganda

Having successfully started Students for Liberty chapters in a number of universities in Uganda Mugabe Socrates is now setting up [Action for Liberty and Economic Development](#), ALED which is to interact with a wider audience. During 2018 they will be running a Rule of Law conference, an Inter High School Debate on Entrepreneurship, an Inter University Essay Contest, a Town Hall Conference and three different University Outreaches to the North and Eastern Region Universities. The total audiences for these events is expected to total nearly 2000 and it is expected that a number of these will then become involved in promoting liberty themselves.

Hopefully they will all be given copies of the CD if Mugabi can persuade Uganda customs to hand them over!

Mohammad was excited when the Liberty Library, on the wall beyond him, opened. He comes to read books and the CDs which are helping him to understand life as an intellectual adventure. He expects to be part of SFL when he joins university later in the year



NFS is also supporting other projects in Armenia, Bosnia, Indonesia, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Pakistan and Venezuela during 2018. Details will be posted on our website when they are completed.

The Ripple Effects of this Work

Two stories about people who have been inspired by this work to go out and inspire others in their turn. Reaching ever more people in this way is essential if our vision is to be achieved.

Ratko Nikalic of the [Centre for Anti-Authoritarian Studies](#) in Serbia was inspired to try and increase the number of classical liberal authors available to university students by translating some texts from the CD and other sources and work to get them included in the 2019 university curriculum.

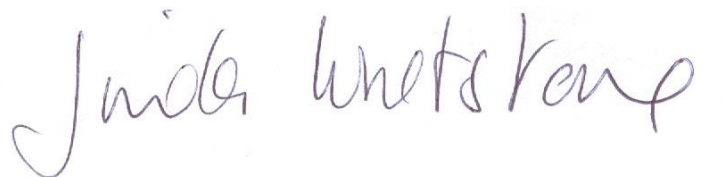
Ghanaian teacher Peter Bismark worried about the poverty and lack of opportunity endured by many Ghanaians so attended an Africa Youth Peace Call Liberty and Entrepreneurship Camp in 2014.

It was his first introduction to libertarianism and he picked up a CD thinking it was a movie. “I was naïve surfing through the materials, I kept clicking to see a movie till I chanced on to read Bastiat (LAW) and decided to download the book and it was a mind blowing one. I couldn’t agree more and realized I have been positioned out from the reality. “An explanation of the unforeseen consequences of government action” took me aback. In fact these texts taught me the truth I was never taught in school even as a trained teacher. I now have a better understanding on the role of government in a free society and how respect for the rule of law, individual sovereignty, limited government and free markets play a key role in societal economic development.

He founded the Institute for Liberty and Policy Innovation so that others would have the opportunity to learn from the ideas too. They run events for journalists and students in Ghana and everyone who attends one receives their own copy of the CD.

We want to thank everyone who has supported us most sincerely and urge you to continue to do so because without you none of this can happen.

Also please let us know if you have any thoughts or suggestions as to how we might improve what we do.

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Linda Wnetekamp".

Chairman, Network for a Free Society

Please help us if you can by donating through our website [here](#) or directly by contacting linda@freesocieties.org

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