



May 2009

1 Introduction

In this issue

- 1 **Introduction**
- 2 **Overview of shipments**
- 3 **Partnership with Asia Foundation**
- 4 **Article from an ILBF volunteer**
- 5 **Appeal for more books**
- 6 **ILBF's Current Donors**
- 7 **ILBF Administration**

Thanks to the ongoing support of volunteers and donors, the work of the ILBF has continued to gain momentum. To keep our supporters up to date with recent developments, this newsletter is the first of two to be released in 2009. It covers recent shipments and an exciting new partnership with the Books for Asia branch of the Asia Foundation, which we hope will benefit both organisations. An article by a recent volunteer discusses the experience of packing books into boxes for shipment by the ILBF. We also highlight upcoming challenges for the charity.

2 Overview of shipments

The ILBF has had a busy start to 2009, shipping over one hundred boxes of books to partner organisations in Africa and Asia.

In March, the ILBF shipped 37 boxes of books to new partner organisations in Bangladesh, including the Bangladesh Bar Council, the Save the Children charity, the Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers' Association and the Law School at the University of Dhaka. This shipment is the first in a partnership between the ILBF and the Asia Foundation which we hope will enable the ILBF to send more books to partner organisations throughout Asia. The books have arrived in the United States en route to Bangladesh where they will be distributed later this year.

The ILBF also shipped 42 boxes of books to three partner organisations in Zambia: the Zambia AIDS Law Research & Advocacy Network, the Legal Resources Foundation and the Catholic Diocese of Ndola—Paralegal Programme. Soon after, 48 boxes of books were packed and sent to five partner organisations in Sudan. These were the United Nations Mission in Sudan (on behalf of the Prisons Service of Southern Sudan), the United Nations Development Programme (on behalf of the Police Service of Southern Sudan and on behalf of the Justice and Confidence Centres in Southern Sudan), the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly and the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Constitutional Development.

Upcoming shipments are planned to countries in Africa and in Asia.

In the first half of 2009 there have been over 100 boxes of books sent to partner organisations in Asia and Africa



3 ILBF forges close links with the Asia Foundation

As part of its continuing growth and development, the ILBF has recently entered into a formal cooperation agreement with the Asia Foundation ("TAF"), a significant and highly regarded non-governmental organisation based in San Francisco, USA (TAF's websites are at www.asiafoundation.org and www.booksforasia.org).

The ILBF Operating Committee took the view that such an understanding would be of benefit in that:

- The ILBF has found it less easy to identify high-quality recipients for our books in the Indian sub-continent and further afield in Asia than in other parts of the common law world such as Africa and the Caribbean.
- TAF has a strong presence in many Asian countries, providing not only texts but also many other forms of charitable input. Such presence includes a large number of workers "on the ground", a significant number of sponsored projects and a well-developed set-up for clearing aid materials through foreign customs.
- TAF has found it difficult to identify reliable sources of American and other common law legal texts to distribute with its own aid.

For these reasons, the ILBF regards the tie-up with TAF as a perfect match. The cooperation agreement sets out the common objectives of the two charities and a framework for future operation; whilst not committing either charity to any binding ongoing relationship or partnership.

In overview, what is intended is that TAF will make requests of the ILBF for legal texts to be sent to specific identified projects of theirs in Asia and that the ILBF will, if it is in a position to do so, respond to such requests either by shipping a consignment of books to San Francisco for on-shipment to Asia by TAF as part of larger shipments or - in due course - directly to a nominated Asian port where they will be received and cleared by agents of TAF.



Melody Zavala, from the Asia Foundation, says: '(The partnership with the ILBF) can get legal texts into the hands of those that need them – from organizations working to secure the rights of women and children, to village community leaders, and to the students sharing a chair and peering over each other's shoulders in university reading rooms.'



Books packed for the shipment to Bangladesh with the Asia Foundation.

Paul Lowenstein QC, Chairman of the ILBF Operating Committee visited the offices of TAF whilst on a trip to San Francisco in April. On his return, he said: "I was deeply impressed with what I saw. The TAF administrative offices (which I visited) are large, modern and highly organised. They also have a warehouse facility on the outskirts of San Francisco. The personnel I met were all highly experienced and plainly driven by their work. In particular, I spent time with Melody Zavala, the director of the Books for Asia branch of TAF. Melody (pictured left with a number of TAF publications) was highly enthusiastic about the tie-up between TAF and the ILBF and said how pleased they were that the plan had produced concrete action almost immediately with an ILBF shipment of a consignment of books which TAF will distribute in Bangladesh."

Given the enthusiasm on both sides, the ILBF expects that its relationship with TAF is likely to become an important part of its work.

4 The volunteering experience

Matthew Yore, from LexisNexis UK, spent a day as a volunteer for the ILBF in March 2009, packing a shipment of books. Here he describes his experience and what motivated him to volunteer for the ILBF.

Books represent windows to an extensive world of knowledge and accordingly a stepping stone toward fulfillment for people of all ages and backgrounds. This is the reason why historically, books have been celebrated as great tools of liberation which educate and drive development. One only has to ponder this briefly to appreciate the degree of loss which occurs when something as simple as a quality book becomes elusive.

With the law moving so fast, for the purposes of many institutions in the UK, vast quantities of quality books soon become obsolete. Recently I was lucky enough to spend a day working with the ILBF on one of their many ongoing initiatives aimed at facilitating the flow of legal texts to professional bodies, advice centres, pro bono groups, law schools and other institutions and individuals in less affluent common law jurisdictions throughout the world. On this particular occasion, my brief participation in the work of the ILBF allowed me the privilege of making a small yet significant contribution to the development of legal expertise in Bangladesh through the shipment of over thirty boxes of various legal volumes. The wider importance of the work performed by the ILBF is made evident through both the continual high demand for these shipments and the consequent amelioration this provides for the recipients.

When one considers the importance of books within the context of legal, social and economic development projects, essentially the ILBF are providing immeasurable benefits to the lives of many – from judges and advocates to children and those aspiring to effect positive change in the world at all levels. The ILBF's relatively short yet exceptionally impressive record of achievement thus far deserves the greatest praise and ongoing support, and I would highly recommend volunteering for the ILBF to anyone with an interest in social justice and the rule of law.



Volunteers after packing a shipment to four partner organisations in Bangladesh.

5 Appeal for more books

In 2009 further shipments are planned to partner organisations in Tanzania, Malawi and Swaziland. The future of these shipments depends on your help. Due to recent and numerous large shipments to partner organisations, the number of books in the ILBF storage facility has been depleted. We urge you to consider whether you can contribute to the ILBF by donating relevant law books. For an updated list of preferred titles, please go to www.ilbf.org.uk.

Due to numerous recent shipments, the number of books in the ILBF storage facility has been depleted.



Book shelves at the ILBF storage facility

6 ILBF's Current Donors

The ILBF is delighted to be supported by the following major donors:

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Blackstone Chambers	LexisNexis
CA Purnell	Linklaters
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Forster Charitable Trust	The International Bar Association
Fountain Court	The Sylvia Adams Charitable Trust
GC Vos	White & Case

7 Administration of the ILBF

The ILBF is run by an Operating Committee comprised of volunteers from the following organisations and firms, whose support and assistance is gratefully acknowledged:

- 1 Brick Court**
- 3 Verulam Buildings**
- Clifford Chance**
- College of Law**
- Finers Stephens Innocent**
- LexisNexis UK**
- Linklaters**
- Sweet and Maxwell**
- The Bar Council**
- The International Bar Association**
- The Law Society**

To contact the ILBF, please email: info@ILBF.org.uk

The International Law Book Facility is administered on a voluntary basis: please be patient when waiting for a response.