

DARAJA LA TUMAINI (BRIDGE OF HOPE)

Report #K17

QUESTIONNAIRE

Daraja La Tumaini was one of the top 25 organizations that Kenyans identified as having maximum impact. Those listing it were older and with lower income than average. They rated it highly as having a good reputation, and being strong in mentoring.

ABSTRACT

Daraja La Tumaini is an organization that is responding to the plight of the urban poor living in Nairobi slums. Its aim is to help Churches and ministries serving in desperate situations to come together to study the word of God and share their meager resources to help one another wriggle out of poverty. The critical elements in the success of the organization are Caring, Fellowship, The Good Purpose, Moderation, Brotherhood, A Mind of Service, The Good Example, and rejection of Egoism and Laziness. Its founder used an almost 200-year-old Haugian curriculum model of poverty reduction that has now gained immense success through its record of establishing Bible Study Groups, Savings Groups and providing Microfinance and Startup Grants. Though much of the administrative work and oversight is still done from Norway, and where also most of the funding comes from, the organization working under its legal corporate partner, Daraja Nia, which is Kenyan partner of Nacrota continues to create ripples. Further, the organization due to its board and governance structure does not have a robust leadership development program for itself but it does for the Churches that form its network. Electronic media is mostly not utilized in the DLT and reading habits of its readers could not be established because of the constituency it serves. It is the BereanSafari that continues to give DLT both international and national stature.



“The Dream is to create a grassroots movement among the poor churches in East Africa where pastors and members are becoming free from poverty to a dignified life in family, church, and in economic activities.”

Daraja La Tumaini, Nairobi

INTRODUCTION

“We are Haugians. Follow us as we Follow Jesus” is the chanted slogan that greets you to a small group of pastors assembled to read the Bible and talk about their challenges in the deep recesses of Kibera Slum in Nairobi. These Pastors lead very poor congregations and are themselves poor. Quite unlike other poor groups of people, these Pastors have hope, the confidence and motivation that they can actually wriggle themselves out of poverty, and their purpose of meeting is about just that.

Poverty alleviation models are found all across the continent. Poverty alleviation is one of the millennium goals which many countries are yet far away from achieving within the framework of the United Nations. Nevertheless, a small insignificant organization in Kenya is doing its best to address poverty using a unique model of unity, sharing of resources and biblical education. The organization works mainly in slums in Kenya and is using a model used by Hans Nielsen Hauge in Norway about 200 years ago. The model is built on the premise that no one can truly pull another person in poverty, but that if people are to come out of poverty, they should do it for themselves and all they need is a facilitator to help them do so. That facilitation in the slums of Nairobi is provided by Daraja La Tumaini, and this is their story.

BACKGROUND

The word “Daraja” is a Kiswahili word meaning “bridge” hence the expression “Daraja La Tumaini” is translated from Kiswahili as “Bridge of Hope.” The organization was started in June of 2006 in response to the need of the urban slum poor. A Norwegian, fondly called Brother Øistein, (Øistein Garcia De Presno) helped birth the organization in Kenya. The organization was founded on the principles and strategies of Hans Nielsen Hauge, who 200 years ago in Norway combined the ministry of preaching with social care for the poor people and business development. As early as 2001, the founders became united against the injustice meted against the poor in society. The injustice was not only directed towards the poor but also to any organization that endeavored to help reduce the suffering of the poor in the community where the rich would always want to be the rich and the poor always the poor. Thus by 2003, there was a huge opposition by the rich against the largest Kenyan Microfinance institution at that time, the Jamii Bora. This organization was working among the poor of Kaputei village. Powerful forces ganged up against the Jamii Bora in the bid to stop them from building a town outside of Nairobi for the urban poor. A lawsuit ensued. Against this injustice, a small band of pastors would meet during the court sessions and on each Saturday in the Ngong Woods to pray against the increasing justice meted out against the poor. Justice finally triumphed as always, and after several years the opportunity to build Kaputei town came. While this was happening, a network of Pastors of small Churches had formed, and such network in 2006 got the name Daraja La Tumaini (DLT).

MISSION/VISION

Vision

To empower small churches to reach their full potential in serving the Lord, transforming their communities to enjoy a dignified life free of poverty and other forms of justice.

Mission

To build a sustainable network of small churches committed to spiritual growth, enhancing personal, social, and economic development, spreading the Gospel through word and deed, helping people to a new start in life.

Identity

Daraja La Tumaini (DLT) has values that are built on:

- The Bible as the inspired word of God. DLT is committed to taking part in the Great Commission and Spiritual Responsibility given to his Church.
- Justice: DLT teaches that God created all Human Beings to live lives in dignity and justice and, therefore, regards poverty as a curse and commit themselves to fighting against corrupt attitudes and actions and supporting the rights of the poor and oppressed.
- Responsibility: According to the Word of God; all human beings are responsible for their own deeds and the management of their own resources; they should, therefore, initiate and actively take the lead in their own development processes.
- Unity and Sustainability: DLT believes in sharing resources in its church growth and development processes. Participants are committed to helping each other so that they present a united front for the sustainability of their businesses, programs, and Church projects.

Expanse of Ministry

DLT mainly operates in the slums of Kenya where there are many Churches with the following profiles:

- Pastors are as poor as their members.
- Pastors like their members live in the same slum settlements.
- Churches are small in terms of members and would normally have a membership of 15 to 80 persons.
- Most of the Church members live on about a dollar a day.

Alex, speaking on behalf of DLT affirmed that they target all poor Churches that are struggling financially so that they join them together in sharing of their resources to create an impact in society. He affirms that they do not dish out money or other forms of material wealth to the Churches, but they seek to empower them through education to be able to generate their own money or material things in the process of empowering themselves. Alex admits that the vision of DLT has not changed since its conception, but the strategies have changed to meet the daily challenges.

Scope of Ministry

Alex admits that DLT is not a Church but one that empowers the poor urban churches. They offer Bible Study sessions every month to groups of Christians and that once a year, they organize the BereanSafari (www.bereansafari.org) in which people from all over the world come to meet in one place so that they study the word of God. Apart from Bible Study, DLT trains people in the poor communities in issues relating to counseling and entrepreneurship among others. The ministry has also established Savings and Credit Co-operative Societies (SACCOs)

through which loans are made available to poor people. Consult www.africa.procasur.org for more on Kenyan SACCOs.

The ministry has developed from the slums of Nairobi to include now “almost all the slums in Limuru, Kangemi, Isinya and Papetei of Maasai land.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS WITH SIMILAR FOCUS/MISSION

Alex acknowledges that there are other organizations that are reaching out to the poor just like DLT. While some are doing so on a Christian platform, many are not. Even those who are doing poverty alleviation on a Christian platform are very denominational and deal with only one Church—their denominational Church. On the contrary, DLT brings many poor Churches together and through the process of sharing of ideas and resources, these churches collectively wriggle out of poverty. The approach helps Churches to unite against injustice and endeavor to do things together. “That is our uniqueness,” he says.

CURRENT LEADER

It was a bit difficult to ascertain who the actual leader of DLT is. This is because DLT is not a legal entity in Kenya, and hence its chairman, Mr. Alex, is not regarded as the leader. Rather he is seen as the Chairman of the Pastoral Leadership Team. The legal entity of DLT which is Daraja Nia is Mr. David Muturi who took over from the founding Norwegian father, Øistein. Øistein declined to be Chairman because he cannot lead the organization from afar, so the membership elected David to lead the organization. Pastor Muturi is a graduate of the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology where he studied theology. Before David’s work at Daraja Nia, he worked with the Kenyan Fellowship of Christian Unions. Alex describes David as a person who “loves God, he loves Jesus, a servant leader; he leads by example, and I mean he is a good leader.”

BOARD STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

The supreme entity that oversees the work of DLT is Noracta, an organization established by Øistein in Norway. Noracta acts through Daraja Nia, which is the legal entity in Kenya and Daraja Nia oversees the work of DLT as a project. This indicates that much of the decision on governance issues are made out of the scope of DLT, which in itself is not a legal entity in Kenya. The Board of DN, which Alex calls the “Big Board,” is composed of a director and a vice chairman.

DLT is a network of poor churches and hence have a very skeletal organization. The pastors of the Churches in the network elect a Chairperson, and Secretary to constitute the Pastoral Leadership Team, which works on behalf of the network of pastors. The members of the Pastoral Leadership Team of DLT are chosen by ballot voting for a period of two years and then another round of elections are done. The “Big Board” has not changed for a long time. It appears that it perpetuates itself.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP

From the interviewee and web resources, DLT appears to be a network of pastors and church leaders located in the poorest segments of the slums of Nairobi. The network is under the supervision of another body, Daraja Nia, which is a registered “non-profit” company in Kenya. Daraja Nia is further a partner organization to a Norwegian based organization called Noracta. According to Alex, the core business of Daraja Nia is to assist the DLT and Noracta’s partners in Kenya.

BOARD AND STAFF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

It is apparent that the workers are perpetually in office. Alex indicated that the board serves for a two-year term but can only remember one person who has left the board from its initial inception. Notwithstanding, the Haugian tradition upon which DLT is found appoints men and women to leadership positions. They exercised equality among men and women, so the place of gender is not important in leadership service in DLT...” the deciding factor was to find the right person for the right position and location”.

FINANCES AND OTHER RESOURCES

DLT does a minimal level of fund raising in Kenya, but the Noracta board raises all the funds and support required by DLT. The funds developed in Kenya come mostly from institutions in the network that run schools and other activities which had come as a direct benefit of DLT’s empowerment.

Alex reported that all the finances and financial matters are handled by the Chairman of DLT—Mr. David Muturi. The financial books and statements are subject to an annual audit and in most cases; the budget of DLT is fully funded.

PARTNERSHIPS/LINKS

DLT is in partnership foremost with the Churches in its network. This network is created through the Bible Study that allows for a maximum of 15 people in each group. Within this small fellowship, DLT also trains in issues relating to counseling and entrepreneurship among others. As already stated, DLT works under the legal entity of Daraja Nia who partners with Noracta in Norway. Another strategic partner of DLT is BereanSafari. BereanSafari focuses on bringing key leaders from East Africa and beyond together for a journey of discovery into the Scriptures.

SWOT: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS

Most organizations shy away from talking about their strengths thinking that if they trumpet their strengths they will be taking away the glory that belongs to God. The greatest strength however for DLT is the unity it fosters among Churches. Through such unity, Churches have come together to help one another and transformation is happening in the communities visibly in the form of schools, vibrant Bible Study, and other development indicators.

Working with a network of partners is also a strategic issue. Alex indicated. Having a funding partner and working under the legal entity of another partner is a show of solidarity and trust. The greatest challenge remains with sustainability and independence. DLT still continue to be heavily funded by external donors because DLT's sphere of influence...the churches...are still poor. These churches continue to struggle to pay rent for the premises they use for worship and often they are prevented from worshipping in these premises for lack of payment of rent. Ministry in the slums of Kenya continues to provide great opportunities for DLT. There are more people to reach than the efforts of any one Church. This reality creates an opportunity for DLT to continue to bring Churches together.

Government policies on working in slum areas like Kibera continue to be a threat says Alex. One has to go through an elaborate and complex bureaucracy to build a permanent structure for the poor people in these areas. Dwindling western support is also a long-term threat that we should start addressing now.

Another weakness is more institutional. From the overall interview, it appeared that a lack of leadership training among those who work for the organization may be disastrous for the organization in the future.

IMPACT/SUCCESS/ASSIGNMENT

From its inception, DLT has aided communities in diverse ways. Foremost, we may count the collaboration of Churches in doing projects of mutual benefit as a positive impact. Churches within the network do not see each other as competitors but as partners. In this case, they share resources and information.

Also, many small businesses have arisen in the slum areas through the intervention of DLT. Further, a Sacco (microfinance lending organization) has been completed in the slum that makes poor people have access to loans they can service. In Masai land, a water project has been completed, and many trees have been planted to help preserve the environment.

TRAINING/LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

DLT relies much on its network and other Christian resources around the country to provide its workers. Its current Chair worked for Focus and was trained at the then Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology. Alex says that as far as he can recollect, most of the people who work for the organization lack leadership training. He confirms that most of the training of the people he works with is received in Church seminars where the content is meager and not enough time is available to internalize the content. Alex believes that the training that the people in the organization need could be found in theological institutions but alas, he lamented, they do not have the funds to send people for such training.

Notwithstanding, Alex affirms that there is a mentorship program going on within the network that is promoted by DLT. Young people who come directly from school, who were not able to secure a job with the government are trained to be good leaders within the community. In the absence of a robust administrative and leadership structure, it will be difficult to find a mentoring

or leadership training program for the organization. Rather, these are done for the partnering Churches.

PRINT/ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Alex indicated that he has a laptop but other members of the Pastoral Leadership Team do not. He wished they each had a computer that will enhance their work. He acknowledges that members of the DN team... (The big board)...each has a computer. What Alex says they each have is a mobile phone and access to a printer to prepare programs for meetings.

FUTURE

The ministry has a strategic plan to reflect the desire to reach the whole of Kenya within the next few years. Further, it is the desire that the ministry have powerful Saccos that can effectively touch diverse communities. At the moment, the ministry has a limited number of Saccos that give loans which are expected to be paid in half, and the rest of the loan money is paid by Nacota. It is the desire that this arrangement, which applies only to leaders of the ministry should be extended to all the members of the ministry.

REPORT PREPARATION AND INFORMATION

This report is prepared by Dinah Nyamai, MPhil; and John Jusu, Ph.D.
Interview was conducted by Dinah Nyamai, interviewee was Rev. Alex, Chairman of the Pastoral Leadership Team of Daraja La Tumaini
Other resources consulted were www.noracta.org.

APPENDIX

Additional Information about Daraja La Tumaini

Position Paper On Strategic Priorities

OUR VISION

To empower small churches to reach their full potential in serving the Lord, transforming their communities in order to enjoy a dignified life free of poverty and other forms of injustice.

OUR MISSION

To build a sustainable network of small churches committed to spiritual growth, enhancing personal, social and economic development, spreading the Gospel through word and deed, helping people to a new start in life.

OUR VALUES

Justice

We believe God created all human beings to live life in dignity and justice. We regard poverty as a result of injustice and commit ourselves to fight against demeaning and corrupt attitudes and actions and support the rights of the poor and oppressed.

Integrity

We embrace integrity of character and relationships in all our undertakings in order to be examples in our community. This means pursuing accountability on issues of money and management of our churches and businesses. Integrity also means accepting failure and correction and handling success in a way to glorify God.

Unity

We believe in sharing resources in our church growth and development processes. In unity, through openness and honesty, we are committed to helping each other succeed - so that our businesses, programmes and church projects will be sustainable in our common fight to break out of poverty. We also promote harmony and social cohesion, and we shun negative ethnicity in our communities.

Responsibility

We believe the teaching of the Word of God that all human beings are responsible for their own deeds and the management of their own resources. Therefore all should initiate and actively take the lead in their own development processes.

Mentoring

We are committed to developing others as we lead. We believe good leadership is about the

legacy left behind. So we shun any form of leadership that demeans people denying them an opportunity to be their very best. Leaders develop leaders.

OUR SHARED COMMITMENTS

- 1. We are devoted to Studying God's Word in order to become better followers of Jesus and to preach his Word more effectively.*
- 2. Recognizing the dual challenges of spiritual growth and economic development of our members, we are committed to eradicating poverty by economically empowering our people and cultivating sound business principles.*
- 3. We will cooperate not compete in order to achieve maximum potential for the benefit of our churches.*
- 4. We will follow the historic example of Hans Nielsen Hauge in transforming our community by working hard, showing generosity, building fellowship, and living cautiously and carefully.*

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Key priorities that we seek to pursue include:

- 1. Maintain a consistent regional bible study and training of the pastors to empower them and equip them to minister better in their churches.*
- 2. Cooperate with agencies like Jamii Bora Trust to encourage members to make savings, acquire affordable loans and develop sustainable business to lift themselves out of poverty.*
- 3. Develop a resource center (Hauge Libraries) in every region to equip members for ministry and personal development.*
- 4. Promote 'Furahia Kahawa' within the churches and community as an alternative to local lethal brews.*

Empowerment for a Better Future The Haugian Societies of Friends and How They Worked

By Sighjorn Ravnaasen

Where were the Haugian Societies of Friends found?

They were found everywhere in the footsteps of Hauge's preaching ministry: in rural areas, in towns, mountain villages, near the sea in the west and north. The Societies of Friends were made up and marked by the Haugian members:

- They worked hard.*
- .-They studied the Bible.*
- They showed generosity.*
- Their lived cautiously and carefully.*
- They lived according to their teaching.*
- They used their time talking to each other about spiritual things, shared experiences with each other, and uplifted each other through reading spiritual and devotional books.*

Fellowships of love with a spirit of unity.

The Societies of Friends functioned as brothers and sisters fellowships in which they helped each other with both worldly and spiritual needs.

In most of the country, the members of the societies of friends became known as "Haugians" or "Readers" as many called them. Even though Hauge was the obvious spiritual leader, he delegated responsibility to others on a local level. In the so-called "Hitra-letter," which Hauge wrote in 1802, he gave local spiritual leadership responsibility to designated persons, both men and women.

The fact that Hauge also appointed women as leaders of the societies was sensational for the time. Equality between men and women came naturally from his understanding of the Bible. On this point, Hauge was "ahead of his time." For him, the question of gender was unimportant. The deciding factor was to find the right person for the right position and location.

Lay people began to take responsibility for both national and foreign mission work. Lay people also gradually began to influence the church's activities, because more and more young people with roots in Christian organizations began to study theology and become pastors in the Norwegian church. Thus, the spiritual legacy of Hans Nielsen Hauge was carried on further in new generations.

Practical and holistic service

He was a practical man who developed his ethical thought models from the Bible, and realized them by practicing them in his daily life. My calling is to love God and my neighbour was Hauge's vision for his work in Norway. This was the incentive behind his preaching work and his many business establishments. He was not just a lay preacher, and not just a business leader.

The spiritual side of the person must be taken care of, but the responsibility for material and social circumstances for our fellow human beings must also be taken seriously. This view was practised and became a trademark of The Haugian Societies of Friends revealing a holistic ministry where spirit and hand go together.

Fighting unemployment

The rate of unemployment was at that time very high, and Hauge saw that many of the poor did not have work that produced income. To help this need within the population was the basis for the establishment of businesses by him and his friends. By using the expression, “so idle hands can obtain work,” Hauge revealed a social thinking and the basis for Haugian business activities. It is anticipated that Hauge and his friends created 9000 workplaces during the first eight years of ministry and the Society of Friends played an important role.

Weaving and knitting

The need for extra income could be urgent in many families, because poverty was widespread. In a letter Hauge wrote in Bergen, he gave a basis for why he would stimulate the starting of, among other things, weaving businesses. He wrote: “Weaving would be very useful. The poor could get something in life from their work instead of begging”.

This quote shows that Hauge regarded weaving as an important activity that could provide income and work, especially for women. He had several weaving rooms in Trondheim and other places. He also inspired and taught many to do knitting of stockings and other useful products. He saw that such income could be of vital help especially for women in helping their families to climb out of poverty.

Hauge’s whole life was occupied by the problem of poverty. After his prison experience, he got an assignment as inspector for the poor in an area of Kristiania; a job he was very committed to. He helped poor people in many ways to make their living. Through this socially beneficial work, Hauge won public recognition, and he got many new friends.

Haugian businesses as spiritual centres

One of the most well known Haugian businesses was Eiker Paper Mill. It serves as a good example on how the Haugians businesses also functioned as a Society of Friends. How was the inner life of this well known mill, who worked there and how were the work relationships?

50 people resided at the mill, 21 women, 17 men, and 12 youths, some of whom were under 17 years old. One of the named workers had “old age infirmity,” and some of the others were handicapped. This was completely unusual, but the thought behind it was that everyone should have the opportunity to have meaningful work and live in community with others.

The majority of those who worked, lived at the paper mill and had their board and provisions met. Those costs were paid for through an adjustment in their wages. Mikkel Hauge’s wife, who was called Mother Inger, had responsibility for the household. She was a uniting force for socialization in the mill, and encouraged correct behaviour in such a way that the employees knew they were part of a community. Several young women came to Mother Inger for work. They learned cooking, hygiene, and sewing. Some of them later used

these skills when they moved home or to other places.

What characterized the Haugian Societies of Friends? Some key words:

1. Care and Fellowship.

In his letters to his friends, Hauge put great emphasis on the aspect of caring. To show care and concern for others is, in many instances, the basis for an individual's growth, development, and contribution to society. People are equipped in different ways. They cannot be dealt with the same way, and can therefore not be given the same responsibilities. Tasks must be adapted to a person's qualifications. To impose tasks that are too large or heavy on someone may very well lead to failure. Hauge was clear about this, and in both his spoken and written work he urged his friends to be caring, serving others through good works, bearing each other's burdens, showing respect to each other, and being wise in conduct.

2. Strong spiritual fellowships

Strong spiritual fellowships grew within the Haugian movement through home meetings through reading the Bible and other devotional literature. There was also prayer and the singing of hymns. These Haugian fellowships gradually became known as the Societies of Friends. These spiritual communities resulted in a strong unity among the members, along with an attitude that they should support and help each other not just spiritually, but also in practical things. Hauge's beliefs were that love of neighbour, brotherhood, and helpfulness were decisive qualifications in order for the community to function well.

3. "The Good Purpose"

What is "the good purpose?" The struggle for the good in life is not easy. Hauge believed that we must stand together in order to obtain "the good purpose." The more who gather together to encourage a worthy cause, the greater the possibility of success. He said, When we go forth in goodness, it takes away the evil forces. He meant that the good must be on the offensive if one is to break down the evil in life and within the community.

4. Moderation

Hauge admonished his friends to be moderate, which means that human beings should be wise and cautious in all that they prevail over. By showing moderation and exercise simple lifestyle one can save much-needed money for investments, or have some remaining for the needs of us and others. Moderation is often attached to generosity and hospitality. For Hauge, moderation is a positive attitude which one should strive for, as opposed to stinginess, which is something to be avoided.

Moderation always has something to give, while a stingy person only saves for his own benefit. Many times Hauge was irritated about well-off people who lived lavish and egotistic lives, while many around them were in need. But he made the same demands regarding moderation towards all people regardless of their position or occupation, rich or poor.

5. Brotherhood

In Hauge's form of brotherhood, there was a strong appeal to the Friends that they should

support each other economically in difficult times, lend each other money when there was a need for it, and help each other in all situations. In this way, they lived as true brothers and sisters. These ethics of brotherhood should not just be limited to the Societies of Friends. “Everyone is my neighbour”, said Hauge, and he went a step further and maintained that it was a Christian duty to help all those who suffer, to try and make their lives better. We see also a general brotherhood ethics in the Hauge movement. To create work for the unemployed was for Hauge a natural consequence of the ethics of brotherhood.

6. A Mind of Service “Our willingness to work and to serve is something that should shine” (Hauge). In this quote, which is taken from one of Hauge’s letters to his friends, he emphasized the power of example, that of being a good role model. In the same connection, Hauge uses the term “to light,” clearly inspired by Jesus’ words from the Sermon on the Mount: Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

It is, according to Hauge, important for one’s trustworthiness as a Christian in the world that there is accordance between the faith one defends and the actions one does. It was his wish that people would see that, among the Haugians, there was agreement between spirit and hand. Therefore he urged his friends to be a “light” in all that they did.

Did the Haugian Societies of Friends experience problems? Yes, just like everyone else does.

1. The snare of Egoism

Worship of self is a great danger, said Hauge. Those who follow in Jesus’ footsteps must show both humble and serving attitudes toward their fellow human beings. Hauge himself did not use the word “egoism.” But he emphasized the danger of being too self absorbed and too occupied with protecting one’s own economic status in society. Hauge said that the more we get, the more we want.

He did not blame those who gather riches for material support, but the danger arises when human passion and desire prevail. Often this will happen at the expense of consideration for others. Such egotistic attitudes can break down a community’s opportunities for positive development. Hauge believed that God created people to serve their neighbours. If that perspective is lost, the whole foundation for Hauge’s vision would crumble away.

About his call, he said; My calling is to love God and my neighbour. Sources say that Hauge’s ideas on fellowship and a mind of service really did take root in the circle of friends, and that these attitudes influenced them for many decades after his death.

2. Laziness

The danger of laziness is also very obvious. Hauge made repeated requests for the individual to take seriously the call of service to take care of the world. He often used the word “diligent” in his letters and writings. Be diligent in good works, he wrote, and further: Let us now strive to be diligent, where diligence is demanded. Laziness was, in Hauge’s eyes, a great and destructive vice, something his friends must stay far away from. He constantly came back to the value of work. He impressed upon his friends the fact that

work is a virtue. In one of his books, Hauge put the spotlight on both himself and his fellow workers (free translation): I and all who take part should commit ourselves to be faithful, work diligently, and live simply rather than being idle and enjoying ourselves. He did not neglect to mention himself first. It is clear; he realized that his friends considered him to be their natural spiritual leader throughout the whole nation-wide Haugian network.

3. The good example.

The Haugian Societies of Friends and Hauge himself had to endure much criticism from priests and other persons of authority. As a counterbalance against harmful accusations and vicious rumors, Hauge admonished his friends that they must be good role models. He believed that wickedness could not be defeated through arguments and verbal confrontations, but through standing for something positive and showing it to others by the way they lived.

Summary

Hans Nielsen Hauge laid the foundation for the establishment of many Societies of Friends in several areas in Norway. These Societies became a powerful source for the faithful, and a stimulus for change within society. In these Societies, the members helped each other with spiritual and practical questions. The growth of free Christian organizations in Norway in the mid 1800`s started with the Haugian Societies of Friends. They were also attached together in an economic network over the whole country, which resulted in them becoming an important factor in society in several ways. These liberated Christian. Friends also took responsibility in society by establishing businesses which gave work to several thousand people in a country with great poverty. The Haugians also gradually gained political influence and took part in laying the foundation for democratic development in Norway in the 19th century.