

Atlas Network's quarterly review of the worldwide freedom movement

# FREEDOM'S CHAMPION

SPRING 2019

**FROM FLOOR TO SKY:**  
A STREET VENDOR IN INDIA FINDS HIS VOICE  
BY TARUN VATS

**THE WORLD BANK'S  
DIMINISHING ROLE**  
BY MATT WARNER

CRAFTING THE MESSAGE AT THE  
2019 LIGHTS, CAMERA, LIBERTY  
WORKSHOP

ASIA LIBERTY FORUM 2019

ALUMNI IN FOCUS:  
CAMEROON'S DENIS FORETIA

KEEPING CROATIAN HOMEOWNERS  
IN THEIR HOMES





**From Floor to Sky: A street vendor in India finds his voice**

By Tarun Vats

Dinesh Kumar Dixit has sold bangles in Sarojini Nagar market for 41 years. For decades, his livelihood was subject to extortion, bribes, and exploitation by corrupt policemen who looked down on street vendors as a nuisance, not as entrepreneurs with dignity. But Dinesh's story takes him from "farsh to arsh" (from "floor to sky"), thanks in large part to the help of an Indian think tank in which Atlas Network invested. Today, they are changing the lives of thousands of people just like Dinesh. Read the full story on page 6.

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**The World Bank's Diminishing Role: How local think tanks are leading the poverty fight**

By Matt Warner

"Emerging markets don't need the World Bank's loan guarantees for private investors," writes Atlas Network President & Senior Fellow Matt Warner. "They need better institutions to support economic progress—and as local think tanks lead the way to institutional change, private investment is sure to follow." Page 16.  
*Photo Editorial credit: Kristi Blokhin / Shutterstock.com*



**Alumni in Focus: Denis Foretia of Cameroon's Nkafu Policy Institute**

"We have seen many examples of how the lack of an independent judiciary has crumbled many businesses and is a major impediment to economic freedom," writes Denis Foretia, this issue's Alumni in Focus. "Last year, Nkafu Policy Institute won the Think Tank Shark Tank competition at the Africa Liberty Forum for our project to educate and train the next generation of free enterprise scholars in Cameroon. We believe that young Cameroonians want a country where free enterprise is not just a slogan, but is a reality." Page 12.

**ABOUT ATLAS NETWORK**

Arlington, Va.-based Atlas Network is a nonprofit organization that strengthens the worldwide freedom movement by connecting more than 475 independent partners in over 90 countries that share the vision of a free, prosperous, and peaceful world where limited governments defend the rule of law, private property, and free markets. Visit us at [AtlasNetwork.org](https://AtlasNetwork.org)



**Think Tank Impact Case Study: Keeping Croatian homeowners in their homes**

Nearly 90 percent of Croatians own their own homes, so when the Croatian government passed a property tax for the first time in 2017, Lipa Taxpayers Association refused to stand by and allow this property tax to hit an already troubled economy. Its efforts led to the tax's full repeal. Read how it did it on page 22.



**Highlights from Asia Liberty Forum 2019**

Over 270 people gathered in Colombo, Sri Lanka, for Asia Liberty Forum 2019, which focused on how a culture of freedom has helped the region flourish. Speakers pointed to the amazing progress and poverty reduction that has resulted from open trade and economic freedom across Asia. Through the work of Atlas Network's partners, liberty continues to grow and provide opportunity for people in the region. See the highlights on page 24.



# FREEDOM'S CHAMPION

## An Atlas Network Publication

Editor-in-Chief Melissa Mann | Graphic Designer Teresa O'Leary | Managing Editor AJ Skiera



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**MISSION:** Atlas Network increases opportunity and prosperity by strengthening a global network of independent civil society organizations that promote individual freedom and remove barriers to human flourishing.

**OVERARCHING STRATEGY:** Atlas Network cultivates a network of partners that share a vision of a free, prosperous, and peaceful world where the rule of law, private property, and free markets are defended by governments whose powers are limited. To accelerate the pace of achievement by our partners in their local communities, Atlas Network implements programs using our unique Coach, Compete, Celebrate! strategic model.

**Coach:** Atlas Network provides world-class training and mentoring to inspire professionalism and improve performance among our independent partners.

**Compete:** Atlas Network offers grant and prize competitions that fuel our partners' efforts to achieve extraordinary outcomes.

**Celebrate!:** Atlas Network fosters camaraderie and stokes ambitions among our partners by celebrating their greatest accomplishments through events, communications, and media outreach.



*Brad Lips, CEO of Atlas Network*

## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

This is the time of year when Atlas Network kicks off our Regional Liberty Forum season. It's always so inspiring to spend time with freedom champions from all around the globe and hear firsthand about the challenges and successes they encounter as they work to remove barriers to a free society.

Asia Liberty Forum 2019 took place in the shadow of rising geopolitical tensions between the twin nuclear powers of India and Pakistan. Our planned keynote speaker had to cancel because his university, with a large contingent of Kashmiri students, was reportedly on knife's edge and the provost asked him to stay on campus.

What was remarkable about our conference was the absence of any tension among our Indian and Pakistani friends—in fact, it was just the opposite. The visible cooperation among colleagues united in liberty drove home the sad awareness that the various strains of collectivism and populism, or perhaps of the left and of the right, tend to pit groups against one another.

By contrast, our classical liberalism always puts the focus on the potential for mutual benefit and the advantages of trade and cooperation.

So our Pakistani friends listened with rapt attention at what our most established partner in the region—the 21 year-old Centre for Civil Society in New Delhi, India—is doing with their ambitious new Indian School for Public Policy. And our Indi-

an partners enthusiastically applauded the progress being made by the pioneers of the Pakistani freedom movement. A decade ago, Atlas Network knew one person who was actively engaged in building opportunity for liberty in Pakistan; at the 2019 Asia Liberty Forum, we spent time with more than a dozen leaders who are connected to three effective organizations from three different regions of the country.

This gradual evolution of a freedom movement in Pakistan is a reminder that think tank work requires playing a long game. But we are seeing fruits produced from what were only seeds a few years ago. Our think tank partner in Kyrgyzstan now celebrates the implementation of the Open Skies reforms they long championed to bring competition to the country's airline industry. An Indonesian partner takes pride in changing the public dialogue from a focus on protecting inefficient industries to offering consumers better prices via free trade and the magic of comparative advantage. And of course, in Sri Lanka, our host organization Advocata Institute is achieving important victories to protect women's economic rights.

Thanks again for all that you do to make these victories possible. I hope you'll consider joining us at a future Regional Liberty Forum to hear how your support is changing the world.





## FROM FLOOR TO SKY: A STREET VENDOR IN INDIA FINDS HIS VOICE

By Tarun Vats



Street vendors are an integral part of life in India. Vegetables, fruits, milk, clothing—everything people need for day-to-day living is available from sellers who trade in the open-air.

Dinesh Kumar Dixit is one of those street vendors—known locally as a “rehri-parti walla”—and he’s spent the last 40 years standing on a Delhi street, selling the sort of glass bangles that are a specialty of Firozabad, his hometown in Uttar Pradesh. According to India’s Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, there are 10 million street vendors like Dinesh in India—450,000 just in Delhi.

When Dinesh moved to Delhi, his knowledge of bangles was the only way he knew how to make a living. Money was scarce, so he slept on footpaths and loaned out his wife’s jewelry for 28,000 rupees (USD 400), so that he’d have enough money to start a small street vending business as a bangle seller.





But for decades Dinesh was at the mercy of the police, local authorities, and municipality of Delhi, who would either evict vendors or harass them by forcing them to pay bribes.

“I have maintained a record of every single fine/ challan (ticket) that I have paid for the last 41 years,” recalls Dinesh. “The police would come take my stuff and fine me. I’d refuse to pay bribes and they’d confiscate my stuff. I felt helpless and had no voice to fight the system but I continued my struggle.”

Dinesh and other millions of street vendors in India—who answer to regional names such as hawk-er, pheriwala, rehri-patri walla, footpath dukandars, sidewalk traders—were all at the mercy of the po-

lice before the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act was passed. Centre for Civil Society, an Atlas Network partner in India, was instrumental in advancing this groundbreaking legislation, which helps street vendors like Dinesh have a voice in the system.

The Street Vendors Act secures the rights of street vendors to have a livelihood and fosters a congenial environment for urban vendors to ply their trade without harassment or eviction from the local authorities. The legislation also provides for the establishment of Town Vending Committees (TVCs) that look into matters affecting street vendors. Representatives are elected to the committee to address issues such as new locations for vending zones and identifying vendors.



With a stall based in Sarojini Nagar Babu Market, Dinesh Kumar Dixit has sold bangles in New Delhi for over 40 years. Here Dinesh selects bangles to be sold at his stall, New Delhi, Mar. 6, 2019 (AtlasNetwork.org Photo / Bernat Parera).



A young woman browses Dinesh’s selection of bangles at Sarojini Nagar Babu Market, New Delhi, Mar. 6, 2019 (AtlasNetwork.org Photo / Bernat Parera).

Today, Dinesh is an elected member of one such Town Vending Committee in New Delhi. He attributes his success to his source of inspiration—his wife—who passed away three years ago.

From living on a footpath to being able to build his own house, Dinesh considers himself a very fortunate man. His family has been his most important source of support and comfort. Today, he shares his home with his son, daughter-in-law, nephews, and three grandkids. Every morning the entire family comes together to pray and enjoy a hearty meal together before Dinesh heads out for work.

Despite becoming a respected member of the community, he hasn’t forgotten his roots. He still opens his shop daily in the same market of Sarojini Nagar in Delhi, where he’s sold bangles for the last 41 years. He goes to the warehouse to pick merchandise, and he and his son run their successful business together. As a TVC member, Dinesh devotes his time to improving the lives of other street vendors. The same local authorities who wouldn’t listen

to him now sit across the table as Dinesh challenges them if they fail to listen to the issues of street vendors. “I feel empowered and now with the support of other vendors, I too have a voice in the system,” he says with pride.

Dinesh often spends time with his old friends in the market—other vendors who have celebrated with him as he’s built his business and raised a family. They often refer to his success as “Farsh se Arsh tak”—from sitting on the floor and selling bangles, to now having a seat at the table with local authorities. He represents the changing face of India’s street vendors, who have been empowered through the local support of think tanks.

At 63, Dinesh is planning to run for office as a member of the legislative assembly (MLA) in India. “If the chaiwala [tea seller] can be the Prime Minister of India, why can’t a chudiwala [bangle seller] be an MLA?” asks Dinesh proudly.

Indeed, why not?



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{THIS QUARTER IN}

# WORLD10

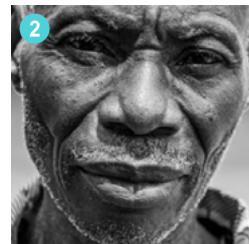
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## 1 Buckeye Institute raises the bar for occupational licensing reform

The Buckeye Institute recently celebrated a major policy win, with Ohio Governor John Kasich signing significant occupational licensing reform into law. Through the reduction of licensing barriers, thousands of Ohioans now face one less obstacle to employment.

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## 2 Land Registration Project becomes template for property rights in Côte d'Ivoire

Property rights are often taken for granted in the western world. But in Côte d'Ivoire, Audace Institut Afrique (AIA) launched an initiative that secured private property in rural areas of the country. The grassroots initiative has inspired the basis of a new national land titling program.

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## 3 New conversations about poverty alleviation in Puerto Rico

Puerto Rican think tank CRECE is using the documentary *Poverty, Inc.* as a tool to initiate dialogue on how to most effectively alleviate the poverty that has gripped the island after Hurricane Maria. "It challenges people to ask how to minimize dependence, and what are the social and economic benefits of entrepreneurship," said Tere Nolla, executive director of CRECE.

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## 4 Prosperity's Critical Mass: Cooperativa La Juanita

In Argentina, Cooperativa La Juanita offers an entrepreneurial option for job seekers, helping them find jobs and keeping them off of government welfare. As part of Atlas Network's Doing Development Differently project, the group has proven that initiative and creativity are legitimate means to escape poverty.

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## 5 The Green New Deal's Simple Mistake

"The latest science on complex adaptive systems, such as national economies, demands that we understand wealth as a product of evolutionary processes, not government fiat. This means that whether you're a real estate mogul or a bartender, you can't make credible promises about how an economy will fare as a result of your attempts to manipulate it," explains Matt Warner, Atlas Network's new president, in a recent commentary for FEE.org, which was picked up by RealClearMarkets.

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## 6 Populism in Europe continues its march

2018 proved to be yet another significant year for populism in Europe, with populist voter support increasing by 1.5 percent from the previous year according to the new Timbro Authoritarian Populism Index. As populism achieves more electoral victories, 2019 could be a crucial year in the battle for Europe's soul.

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## 7 Fighting poverty in Honduras

Drugs, gangs, prisons—Elena Toledo of Honduras' Fundación Eléutera has seen it all, and her work to combat the root causes of poverty is impacting people who "deserve a better quality of life." As Atlas Network's most recent Smith Fellow, she headlined February's Global Policy Perspectives lecture about Fundación Eléutera's work to help entrepreneurs in Honduras.

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## 8 *Timbs v. Indiana* finally deals a blow to civil forfeiture abuse

The Institute for Justice was victorious in a case before the Supreme Court that defended an individual's right against unnecessary or excessive fines and penalties from state and local governments.

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## 9 Gloria Álvarez video: 'Socialism leads to violence'

Most self-described socialists today are too young to remember the fact that socialism in the 20th century accounted for 100 million deaths and that the ideology has inextricably been linked to coercion and violence. Gloria Álvarez's new ReasonTV video examines that theme.

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## 10 Wins for liberty in the Middle East

The Middle East and North Africa continue to have exciting developments in favor of liberty. The Fourth Annual Arab Liberty Forum focused on promoting the democratic transition in the Arab world. In addition, Atlas Network partner Pal-Think was recognized for its work in promoting peace and prosperity in the Gaza Strip.

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FACING CAMEROON’S CHALLENGES

By Denis Foretia, Nkafu Policy Institute



At the Speed Networking session during Liberty Forum 2018, Denis discusses the future of liberty in Cameroon with a new ally.

Cameroon is experiencing the most challenging times yet in its modern history. In a quest to prolong authoritarian rule, the government has severely restricted civil liberties and political freedoms and has opted for increased military options rather than inclusive dialogue in addressing the worsening conflict in the English-speaking regions. At least six of the ten regions are facing increased insecurity; the Anglophone war has devastated the social fabric, leading to more than 50,000 refugees in neighboring Nigeria and close to 600,000 internally displaced. Poor governance and the absence of the rule of law is at the heart of these crises.

The Nkafu Policy Institute has engaged multiple stakeholders in resolving these crises. My colleagues

and I have been on the forefront in advocating for a broad-based, inclusive dialogue to ensure both political and economic freedoms as we highlight the aspirations of the average Cameroonian, using modern communications tools to ensure positive outcomes. This process has been difficult as it involves both a fight for political and economic reforms.

But there are many continuing challenges to economic freedom. The absence of an independent judiciary makes business creation, contract enforcement, and respect of property rights very difficult.

We have seen many examples of how the lack of an independent judiciary has crumbled many business-

es and is a major impediment to economic freedom. You have the case of a middle-aged businesswoman who runs a small grocery store, and one of her clients owes her the equivalent of \$500. She has been unable to have this debt paid for more than six months, and she is utterly helpless, given that the legal system is not able to enforce the judgments in a reasonable timeframe. Examples like this are rampant in the country and have contributed significantly to the fact that many small businesses would rather operate in the informal sector than the formal sector.

Last year, Nkafu Policy Institute won the Think Tank Shark Tank competition at the Africa Liberty Forum for our project to educate and train the next generation of free enterprise scholars in Cameroon. We believe that young Cameroonians want a country where free enterprise is not just a slogan, but is a reality.

We have started creating a pipeline of Liberty Champions ready to advocate for free enterprise policies, initially by training 25 specially selected Cameroonians on the principles and values of free enterprise during an intensive 5-day workshop. The impact of this workshop has been tremendous. All participants have requested additional training, and we hope to offer this training twice a year. Two of the recent trainees, Orock Obi and Bertile Onana Messi, have joined Nkafu as Free Enterprise Fellows. We will also undertake an in-depth audit of economic freedoms in Cameroon and publish the first edition of the Cameroon Business Competitiveness (CBC) Index, an annual ranking of the business attractiveness of all ten regions in Cameroon. The CBC Index will provide an independent and unbiased view of the regional business environment by surveying businesses and citizens on a variety of business issues.

We believe policy change is only possible when advocates actively engage the public with compelling proposals and examples to make what was initially impossible inevitable.



Denis is a recognized thought leader in development and the rule of law in Cameroon.



Denis’ philanthropy and work in the nonprofit sphere of Cameroon empowers the next generation of leaders.



Nkafu Policy Institute, which was founded by Denis and his wife Lenora, seeks to strengthen Cameroon’s institutions that protect the rule of law and promote free enterprise.





SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT  
**FRED YOUNG**

*Fred Young is a long-time supporter of Atlas Network and regular judge in Atlas Network's annual Think Tank Shark Tank competition in New York City.*

One of the most memorable takeaways from any conversation with Atlas Club member Fred Young is his diversity of interest. Curious about the ways that technology is enhancing our understanding of cosmology and the origins of the universe? Fred's your man. Want to find out more about Africa's endangered apes? The ringtone on Fred's cellphone booms an astonishing—and rare—bonobo vocalization, signaling his longtime interest in conservation efforts. And as he opens up about his de-

"I'm drawn to support organizations which share my philosophy of individual liberty, free markets, secure property rights and limited government, especially if they prove to be effective and efficient," notes Fred. He points to Tom Palmer, Atlas Network's executive vice president of international programs and George M. Yeager Chair for Advancing Liberty, whose work to spread the word of liberty throughout the developing world inspired his support of Atlas Network. "In recent times, I've been

"I've been greatly impressed with the reach of Atlas Network via its enormous network of think tank affiliates..."

ades of dedication to the classical liberal tradition, his ability to connect philosophy with pragmatism demonstrates his passion for making the world freer and more prosperous.

greatly impressed with the reach of Atlas Network via its enormous network of think tank affiliates and the quality (and quantity) of international attendees to the annual Liberty Forum and Freedom Dinner."

Fred's involvement with a number of Atlas Network partners, including leadership roles on the boards of trustees of Cato Institute and Reason Foundation, is grounded in his belief that some political and economic systems work better than others in terms of human and societal flourishing. "Exposure to the liberty literature, including *Atlas Shrugged*, which I read as a young man, and the think tank world solidified my worldview of the superiority of systems based on liberty," said Fred.

As the retired CEO and former owner of Young Radiator Company, an automotive component supplier, Fred has the luxury of spending much of his time learning more about the ideas that matter to him. He's a regular participant in the Mont Pelerin Society's global conferences, and he travels frequently to meet with others who share his interests. Recent

excursions have taken him to Chile's Atacama Desert and Germany's Ruhrgebiet to discuss the progress of the Cerro Chajnantor Atacama Telescope, a powerful telescope capable of mapping the sky at submillimeter and millimeter wavelengths.

Fred's thoughtful perspective on the evolution of liberty is a good reminder that eternal vigilance is necessary to preserve our future freedoms. "The greatest challenges going forward are manifested in the persistence of authoritarian governments; the seductiveness of socialism to academics, the young and the poor; and the perversions of certain theocratic ideals," he says. But he is optimistic. "Thought leaders and teachers of liberty such as Atlas Network and its brethren are critical to opposing these negative forces for the benefit of mankind."







## THE WORLD BANK'S DIMINISHING ROLE: HOW LOCAL THINK TANKS ARE LEADING THE POVERTY FIGHT

By Matt Warner

News that the World Bank's president, Jim Yong Kim, is calling it quits to join the private sector has heightened the debate over what to do about foreign aid inefficacy. Kim made clear in an email to staff that, in his view, the "massive development finance gap" in low-income countries is best addressed by private investment. Kim's likely successor, David Malpass, shares this view and has gone on record describing the World Bank's financing approach as outdated due to increases in private capital available to developing countries.

Private investment is fundamental to economic development, to be sure, and yet it will always serve at the mercy of formal and informal institutions on the ground, such as property rights, financial regulation, and business licensing.

Tackling the institutional problem is the kind of upstream strategy the international community—not

just the World Bank—needs to focus on in light of what we've learned about economic development to date. For example, it was just a few months ago that the first independent assessment of the Millennium Villages Project (MVP) was released by the U.K.'s Department for International Development.<sup>1</sup>

The findings call into question the investment of \$300 million over 10 years on a "big push" strategy in Africa aimed at the symptoms of poverty, not the economic environment within which those investments were made. The report concludes "there is no evidence people living in the MVP areas have escaped the poverty trap" and that "what has been achieved could have been attained at a lower cost."<sup>2</sup>

Encouragingly, some thoughtful solutions to the inefficacy problem were offered in 2018. For example, international development expert Dan Honig assembled a first-of-its-kind Project Performance

Database (PPD), capturing data on more than 14,000 aid projects from nine different international development agencies.<sup>3</sup>

In his book *Navigation by Judgment: Why and When Top-Down Management of Foreign Aid Doesn't Work*, Honig used the data to better understand reasons for project failure and concludes that many of the projects would be less likely to fail if they gave more autonomy to local aid workers. Honig wants central authorities to understand that many of the unpredictable decisions that need to be made throughout the course of an aid project require the kind of "soft" information that distant technocrats do not and cannot possess.

Similarly, Pablo Yanguas, in his 2018 book *Why We Lie About Aid: Development and the Messy Politics of Change*, stands on his ten years of work in international development to contend that aid agencies

should grapple more directly with the local politics of institutional change, acknowledging such change is almost always difficult owing to a "a thick substrate of social norms, cultural values, policy ideas, and popular expectations," which can easily frustrate the plans of any outsider.<sup>4</sup>

Both Honig and Yanguas want to see aid reformed, but since both are determined to keep international aid agencies at the center of any new strategy, neither takes their intellectual journey far enough.

Functioning institutions across countries may share some important things in common but their design is idiosyncratic as a function of local culture. For this reason, most agree public policy solutions can't be transplanted from the outside, but too many won't accept that their form and implementation can't be centrally planned from the outside either.



Photo Editorial credit: Kristi Blokhin / Shutterstock.com



Of course, market reforms and the institutions that support them do lead to economic development. Foreign investors know this and look to publications like the World Bank's *Doing Business* report to see if the regulatory environment in a particular country is improving. Such investors need no further prompting when they like what they see. The question then is: what causes those improvements—and is there any role for outsiders to play?

Over the last twenty years a new player has emerged that represents a uniquely positioned solution to the dilemma outsiders face. This solution is as sophisticated in its strategic relevance as it is banal in its description: the local, independent think tank.

The quantity and quality of local, independent think tanks committed to strengthening economic institutions has grown considerably the last two decades. Of the 486 such organizations working today in 95 countries, only 151 of them existed 20 years ago

and covered a mere 40 countries. More importantly, the best think tanks today are achieving tangible, institutional victories throughout the world on a monthly basis, according to grant monitoring performed by Atlas Network.



Audace Institut Afrique's land titling project combines working with village leadership to transition oral land-ownership customs to secured titles in the formal market.

In Côte d'Ivoire, it was a local think tank, Audace Institut Afrique, that figured out how to work with



Agustín Etchebarne, director general of Libertad y Progreso, with students at Juana Manso School, Dock Sud, Buenos Aires, Argentina, Oct. 17, 2018. (AtlasNetwork.org Photo/Rodrigo Abd)

village leadership to transition oral land-ownership customs to secured titles in the formal market. In Argentina, Libertad y Progreso rallied public opinion around their research that explained the injustice of a tariff on laptops and tablets, leading to the tariff's elimination and a drop in prices. In Honduras, low-income would-be entrepreneurs faced steep government licensing fees until a think tank, Fundación Eléutera, made the case for their considerable reduction.



Fundación Eléutera works to ease the regulatory burden would-be small business owners face in Honduras.

Each of those improvements represents a milestone on the institutional path to economic development. The prioritization, sequencing, and design of such pathways cannot be led by outsiders, no matter how technically savvy nor well-intentioned, because the

underlying norms, culture, and customs are substantially influenced by local, tacit knowledge that is both integral to institutional development and at the same time non-transmittable to foreign minds.

From our work with local think tanks, Atlas Network believes the capacity to achieve even more reform is growing. It is our opportunity then, as outsiders, to learn from aid's inefficacy and to increase our support for local, independent think tanks committed to economic freedom.

Emerging markets don't need the World Bank's loan guarantees for private investors. They need better institutions to support economic progress—and as local think tanks lead the way to institutional change, private investment is sure to follow.



Matt Warner is President & Senior Fellow at Atlas Network, a nonprofit grant making organization committed to supporting local, independent think tanks in 95 countries throughout the world. An online directory of those think tanks is available at [AtlasNetwork.org](https://atlasnetwork.org).

<sup>1</sup>Barnett, Chris, et. al. "Endline Summary Report," UK Department for International Development. August 2018. <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/14060>.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. pp. xiii-xviii.

<sup>3</sup>Honig, Dan. *Navigation By Judgment: Why and When Top-Down Management of Foreign Aid Doesn't Work*. Oxford University Press: 2018.

<sup>4</sup>Yanguas, Pablo. *Why We Lie About Aid: Development and the Messy Politics of Change*. Zed Books: 2018. pp. 81.

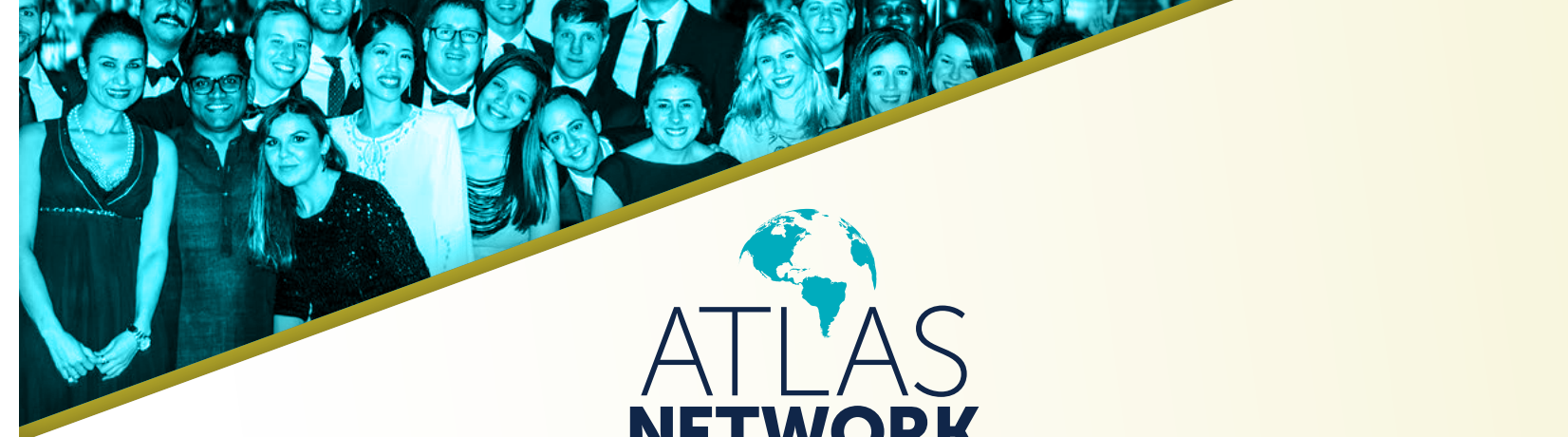


## LIGHTS, CAMERA, LIBERTY 2019

In a world where making a film can be as easy as whipping an iPhone out of your pocket, getting the details right are critical to crafting an enduring message that will make your story memorable. During the Lights, Camera, Liberty film workshop in Los Angeles, Atlas Network brought a dozen filmmakers and marketing experts together with 54 aspiring filmmakers from 16 countries, all eager to learn how their stories of freedom might focus on the details of translating good stories into compelling films. A selected group of participants also receive special funding for the year-long mentorship program, where filmmakers will work directly with grantees to help them create their films.



Participants are also invited to submit their films for award consideration at the annual Lights, Camera, Liberty Film Festival, which is held during Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner. Applications for this year's film festival are due October 1. Lights, Camera, Liberty is possible because of the generous support of the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, the John Templeton Foundation, the Smith Family Foundation, and Chris and Melodie Rufer.



Each year, Atlas Network hosts regional liberty forums in cooperation with local organizing partners to support partner organizations in their desires to learn more from each other and to accelerate the sharing of best practices through training and friendly competition. In November, Atlas Network hosts the annual Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner in New York City, a global gathering of amazing freedom champions from around the world to exchange ideas and share strategies. The gala Freedom Dinner serves as a fitting grand finale to the conference, celebrating heroes of the freedom movement and the principles that friends of Atlas Network are advancing worldwide.



### Asia Liberty Forum

February 28-March 1 | Colombo, Sri Lanka



### Europe Liberty Forum

May 9-10 | Athens, Greece



### Latin America Liberty Forum

June 27-28 | Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic



### Africa Liberty Forum

August 22-23 | Nairobi, Kenya

## Liberty Forum & Freedom Dinner

Nov. 6 – 7 | New York City





THINK TANK IMPACT CASE STUDY

# KEEPING CROATIAN HOMEOWNERS IN THEIR HOMES



Udruga poreznih obveznika „Lipa“ poziva građane da potpišu peticiju protiv uvođenja poreza na nekretnine

Formular s čitko upisanim podacima i vlastoručnim potpisom pošaljite na adresu:  
Udruga Lipa, Hebrangova ulica 21/III kat, 10000 Zagreb

„Izjavljujem da sam protiv uvođenja poreza na nekretnine.“

Ime i prezime	Adresa/grad	Potpis
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
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10. _____	_____	_____

Cjelokupni tekst peticije nalazi se na web stranici [www.mamiporezni.hr/peticija](http://www.mamiporezni.hr/peticija)



Lipa’s small team mobilized the people of Croatia to stand up to their government and reject a property tax.

tax makes us subtenants in our own homes” resonated with a critical mass of the population.

Following the repeal, public opposition to taxes has remained high, with the government still unable to introduce any new taxes. And while Croatians may still be overtaxed, they are grateful that Lipa’s success means they won’t be sending payments to the government just to live in their own homes.

“Lipa has shown how a small civil society organization can have an outsized impact on a public debate and achieve an important tax repeal,” said Brad Lips, CEO of Atlas Network. “Croatians who may not have felt that they had a voice in the past suddenly are empowered to stand up for their rights.”

Nearly 90 percent of Croatians own their own homes, which accounts for one of the highest rates of home ownership in the world. But when a property tax threatened to place new burdens on struggling homeowners, anti-tax advocates at Lipa Taxpayers Association fought back, using grassroots activism, research, and public education to successfully change public policy.

Back in the days of the Socialist Republic of Croatia, buying property was one of the few options available for saving and investing. Today, owning a home is

a powerful tool for investment and long-term stability. But with the 2017 passage of a tax on privately-owned property slated to hurt the rich and poor alike, Lipa refused to stand by and allow this property tax to hit an already troubled economy.

Lipa launched a campaign to raise citizen awareness of the consequences of higher taxes, working with an influential economist, creating media-friendly materials, and starting a petition. Their efforts turned public opinion sharply against the tax in a matter of months, resulting in over 146,000

petition signatures, media coverage in more than 100 news outlets, and a full repeal of the property tax.

“The biggest lesson was that it is possible to get popular support on liberal topics in Croatia, if the campaign was done correctly—carefully choosing the messages and the communication channels for the target audience, timing it right and choosing the right topics,” said Zoran Löw, executive manager of Lipa.

In the end, the campaign won not because of numbers, but because of emotional appeal. The message that “A property

Lipa’s success in defeating the property tax before it was even implemented offers several key takeaways from which other think tanks can learn. The campaign stirred the entire nation, awakening a desire for freedom that had not been voiced publicly in many years, and—for one of the first times in independent Croatia’s history—gave all citizens a voice.

*Read the full case study on Lipa Taxpayers Association’s campaign against the property tax at [www.atlasnetwork.org/case-studies](http://www.atlasnetwork.org/case-studies).*



# ASIA LIBERTY FORUM 2019

More than 270 people gathered in Colombo, Sri Lanka, for Asia Liberty Forum 2019, which focused on how a culture of freedom has helped the region flourish. Speakers pointed to the amazing progress and poverty reduction that has resulted from open trade and economic freedom across Asia. Through the work of Atlas Network’s partners, liberty continues to grow and provide opportunity for people in the region.

(RIGHT) Katarina Perkovic (Australian Taxpayers’ Alliance) speaks during the Speed Networking session at Asian Liberty Forum 2019.



Left to right: Dr. Lyall Swim (Atlas Network), Anthea Haryoko (Center for Indonesian Policy Studies), Matt Warner (Atlas Network). Haryoko won this year’s Asia Think Tank Shark Tank competition for her project pitch of fighting illiberalism in Indonesia.

# 2019 ASIA LIBERTY AWARD WINNER

Bikalpa—an Alternative won Atlas Network’s 2019 Asia Liberty Award for successfully promoting the ideas of freedom throughout Nepal with a series of videos that reveal the destructive results of big government while highlighting the positive impacts of free enterprise. The series covered violation of private property by the government in the name of public works, the lack of accountability for many Nepali lawmakers, and tightening restrictions on private schools. More than 6.7 million viewers tuned in to find out more about the ideas of liberty.

Performers showcase traditional dances during the Liberty Awards Dinner at Asia Liberty Forum 2019.



Basanta Adhikari of Bikalpa—an Alternative accepts the 2019 Asia Liberty Award for Bikalpa’s film series promoting liberty in Nepal.



INSIDE ATLAS NETWORK

Atlas Network is excited to announce that Linda Edwards and Joe Lehman have joined our board of directors.

Edwards is a dual U.S./U.K. national who has lived in Texas, California, London, Dubai, Paris, and Hong Kong. Her background is in economics and law, and she has travelled extensively, learning more about innovations that have led to greater health, knowledge, and freedom, and supporting organizations that advance human rights, prosperity, and peace.



Atlas Network has helped me see the global reach of the freedom movement. Traveling to regional forums and meeting Atlas Network partners, I've seen how women and men in every part of the world are working to create societies that are kinder and more tolerant, that recognize the equal dignity of all, and that allow people to prosper.



Atlas Network helped me understand that some of the things we take for granted in the U.S. must be strenuously defended and nurtured if we are to keep the heritage of freedom alive. One of the Mackinac Center's most valuable partnerships with Atlas Network has been in training think tank professionals to advance liberty. We were so confident in Atlas Network that we transitioned our signature think tank leadership conference to them nearly a decade ago. It was one of my best decisions because Atlas Network strengthened the program and broadened its reach more than I believe we would have done on our own.



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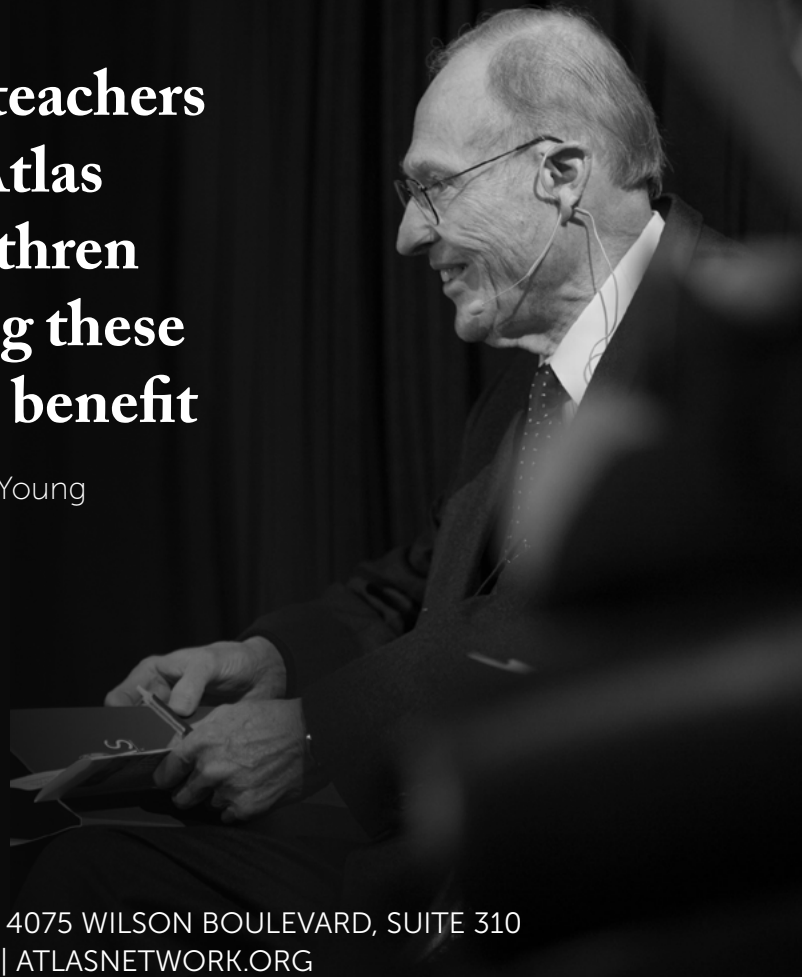
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SUPPORT THE VISION

Your generous gift today will help Atlas Network cultivate a highly effective and expansive global network of independent partners committed to advancing our shared vision of a free, prosperous, and peaceful world where the rule of law, private property, and free markets are defended by governments whose powers are limited. Make your tax-deductible donation at AtlasNetwork.org/donate or email Director of Development Al Canata at Al.Canata@AtlasNetwork.org.



**“Thought leaders and teachers  
of liberty such as Atlas  
Network and its brethren  
are critical to opposing these  
negative forces for the benefit  
of mankind.” — Fred Young**



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