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DOCUMENTARY SERIES TO LAUNCH FIRST GLOBAL DIALOGUE ON POVERTY***ITVS, STEPS International to Premiere 8 docs, 30 Online Shorts in 200
Countries to Address Global Inequality***

(San Francisco, CA) — Independent Television Service (ITVS), the leading funder of U.S. independent public television productions, announces the launch of the *Why Poverty?* series, a global broadcast of eight documentaries and 30 online shorts premiering November 2012 aimed at raising awareness about poverty in America and around the world. Presented by ITVS's [Global Perspectives](#) Project in partnership with [STEPS International](#), a Denmark-based nonprofit, the *Why Poverty?* series is a groundbreaking cross-media event that will reach an unprecedented audience of more than 500 million people around the world.

“Why has 50 years of aid not been able to change the fact that 1 billion people are still living in poverty? Why is it so difficult to ensure a decent life for everyone? These questions made me want to look into the complexities and challenges of inequality through different stories and points of view,” says Mette Hoffmann-Meyer, Executive producer.

At the center of the project are eight one-hour documentaries by award-winning filmmakers from around the world. Co-produced by ITVS and STEPS, these films will premiere through simultaneous broadcast on five continents by more than 70 broadcasters during the month of November. Incredible, inspiring, and thought provoking, the films will generate awareness and highlight possible solutions to ending poverty.

ITVS's Global Perspectives Project will kick-start the global conversation with the two PBS premieres to air on the award-winning [Independent Lens](#) series: [Solar Mamas](#) by Jehane Noujaim and Mona Eldaief on November 5, and [Park Avenue: Money, Power and the American Dream](#) by Alex Gibney on November 12. From November 26 – 29, six films will premiere as a special presentation of [Global Voices](#) — ITVS's international documentary series — on the WORLD Channel and online on PBS.org.

“ITVS created the Global Perspectives Project to help Americans better understand important global issues like poverty. We're proud to support the producers of *Why Poverty?* in reaching and engaging the widest U.S. audience possible through the PBS broadcast, online events, and live screenings in more than 100 US cities with our Community Cinema program,” says Sally Jo Fifer, CEO and president of ITVS.

Funded by a consortium of broadcasters in over 200 countries, including BBC (England) and ARTE (Germany), *Why Poverty?* also features 30 shorts ranging from one to five minutes which will be distributed on the *Why Poverty?* Web site and YouTube. The films will be accompanied by radio, internet, and live events designed to spark global and national debates, encouraging people to engage in an online conversation, asking “Why poverty?”

To learn more about the WHY Poverty Series, visit: <http://www.itvs.org/series/why-poverty>

ABOUT WHY POVERTY?

Why Poverty? is a non-commercial event produced by STEPS International. The BBC and DR / Danish Broadcasting Corporation are the lead broadcast partners and the driving force of the project.

The Global Perspectives Project (GPP) is a two-way television exchange that brings documentaries from other nations to U.S. audiences and delivers insightful U.S. documentaries to audiences abroad through public and cable television, online media, and outreach partners. GPP connects Americans to the world, and the world to Americans.

STEPS International is a nonprofit organization based in Denmark, with additional offices in South Africa. STEPS International creates projects around high-quality documentary films that address the great issues of our time. The films are made available for global viewing and sharing through a unique combination of partnerships with broadcasters, digital media platforms, and community organizations.

About ITVS

The Independent Television Service funds, presents, and promotes award-winning documentaries and dramas on public television, innovative new media projects on the Web, and the Emmy® Award-winning weekly series *Independent Lens* on Monday nights at 10PM on PBS. Mandated by Congress in 1988 and funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, ITVS has brought more than one thousand independently produced programs to American audiences to date. For more information about ITVS, visit itvs.org