

NEWS FROM



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“The Ultimate Resource”

New Documentary Special to Premier on PBS Stations Nationwide

Distributed by American Public Television for November 2007 Release

A special note to Program Directors and the Press:

A collection of video previews and high resolution photos from the program are accessible by clicking on

http://www.freetochoosemedia.org/production/ultimate_resource/press.php.

ERIE, PA, Aug 6, 2007 – Free market incentives have enormously changed economies and lives over much of the world. In just the past 25 years, more than 400 million people have climbed out of the dire poverty of living on less than \$1 per day. It is the largest movement out of poverty in human history.

In spite of stubborn obstacles, the powerful forces of competition and incentive are prompting amazing innovation in emerging economies. People are applying their intelligence, imagination and spirit to improve their well-being and that of their families.





Shot on location around the world in High Definition, this television documentary presents five uniquely personal and powerful stories, proving that ordinary people can do extraordinary things, when given the tools to help themselves.

Ghana: A fishing village on the African coast, where even the poorest are finding a way to educate their children

Joshua and Margaret Corley are so determined to educate their children that they are spending their meager assets to build private schools to compete with free, but overcrowded, public schools. Studies by Dr. James Tooley and others show these schools actually deliver a better education at a lower cost. In this area, 75 percent of the 779 schools are private, funded by local parents. The remarkable trend is also happening across India, China and other parts of Africa.

Featuring: James Tooley – award-winning British scholar studying the development of private education in some of the most distressed areas of Africa and Asia. His studies show the private schools like these are providing a higher quality education for a lower cost than government schools.

Peru: A farming community high in the Andes Mountains, where legal identity and ownership are crucial

Eusebio Mendez and his neighbors have fought for generations to own their land. They are like many others. Two-thirds of the world's population is locked out of the global economy, forced to operate outside the rule of law – no legal identity, no credit, no property rights and thus no way to build prosperity. High in the Peruvian Andes, the program documents the ceremony where they receive land titles for the first time. Lives can now change.





Featuring: Hernando de Soto – founder of the Institute for Liberty and Democracy in Peru. It works with governments to help two-thirds of the world’s people, who are locked out of the global economy, forced to operate outside the rule of law with no legal identity, access to credit, or way to prosper.

Bangladesh: A village of weavers, where credit for the poor is actually good for business

Thirty years ago an economics professor, Mohammed Yunus (2006 Nobel Peace Prize winner), realized he could personally change the lives of 42 families with just \$27 in loans. That was an average of 64 cents per loan. Eventually, his idea became the Grameen Bank with 6.5 million customers. With these micro loans, poor people are able to start small businesses and dramatically improve their lives. Denislam and Minera Hussain are such a family.

Featuring: Mohammed Yunus – winner of the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize for this work and founder of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. The bank uses microfinance to fight global poverty by bringing opportunity to the world’s poorest people and helping them to start their own businesses.

Estonia: A piano factory where political freedom and competition drive innovation

During the Soviet Era, the Estonia Piano Company had no competition. It had to buy most of its materials from within the Soviet Union, and could only sell within the Soviet Union. The pianos were sturdy, but not world-class. After independence, it suddenly faced competition from every piano maker in the world. In less than five years, with more than 400 design changes and the finest products from around the world, the Estonia Piano now ranks near a Steinway in quality for about half the cost. We meet these craftsmen and the company owner, Indrek Laul, who is also an internationally recognized concert pianist.





Featuring: Johan Norberg – Swedish author of In Defense of Global Capitalism. It takes aim at both critics, who would condemn developing countries to poverty until they develop First World workplace and environmental standards, and Western governments, whose free market rhetoric is undercut by tariffs on textiles and agriculture, the areas in which developing world can actually compete.

China: Where incentive drives hard work and profit

Free markets in Communist China have made it the fastest growing major economy in world history. In only 25 years, more than 400 million people have climbed out of abject poverty. Shi Hai is in the middle of this explosive growth. His company is one of China's first Internet gaming companies, and it expects to be listed on the NASDAQ exchange within two years.

Featuring: Zhang Jun, Ph.D, Fudan University in Shanghai and Director of the China Center for Economic Studies. He specializes in transitional economics, China's economic reforms, property rights, and industrial organization. He is also Editor-in-Chief for the Journal of World Economic Forum, which is published bimonthly by Fudan University.

Underlying this program is the economic and philosophic principles presented by Milton Friedman in "Free to Choose" and Julian Simon in The Ultimate Resource, from which, with the enthusiastic permission of the Simon estate, the title is taken.

Producer: Katherine Anderson

Written by: Katherine Anderson and Thomas Skinner

Director and Director of Photography: Jim Taylor

Executive Producers: Thomas Skinner and Bob Chitester





The Ultimate Resource was produced by Free to Choose Media (FTCM), also producers of *The Power of Choice*, the PBS documentary on the life of famed economist Milton Friedman. FTCM is a non-profit media company for the 21st century exploring the classical liberal concepts of voluntary association and the rule of law through expert storytelling and quality production.

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