Struggle Street returns to SBS highlighting issues of disadvantage in rural and regional Australia

Landmark four-part series premieres Wednesday 9 October, 8.30pm on SBS, continues weekly

Trailer for media use:youtu.be/LYc1jVflgb8

The first two seasons of Struggle Street gave a voice to Australians doing it tough and sparked a national conversation on a range of issues facing some of Australia's most disadvantaged communities.

In the four years since SBS first aired Struggle Street, the country remains at crisis point. Now, more than three million Australians (13.2%) live below the poverty line*. Poverty and hardship is a problem that is getting worse, and for more than 30%** of the population living outside Australia’s capital cities, disadvantage is more prevalent***.

Premiering Wednesday 9 October, 8.30pm on SBS, the third season of Struggle Street will explore the economic, social and intergenerational struggles facing Australians in rural and regional communities.

The four-part observational documentary will feature stories of those in the Riverina region of New South Wales - from the regional centre of Wagga Wagga to smaller country towns. The stories explored are representative of the issues affecting people throughout Australia, including the impact of the current drought, unemployment, access to healthcare, homelessness, the effects of drugs and alcohol, the challenges facing those with mental ill-health and physical disabilities and the decline of small-town rural Australia.

Through sharing stories of adversity and resilience, the new season will help to provide all Australians with a deeper understanding of the complex national issues affecting individuals, families and communities living on the land and in the towns of rural and regional Australia.

Marshall Heald, SBS Television and Online Content Director said:

*The third season of Struggle Street will build on the landmark series by shining a light on the people and communities experiencing poverty and social disadvantage outside our cities, and
contribute to a better understanding of the many issues they face. They are stories about contemporary Australia that deserve sharing – and stories that are sadly too often ignored.

“As a public broadcaster, it’s part of our role to make shows that challenge audience perceptions and drive national conversation around difficult issues. The first two seasons of *Struggle Street* did just that and received a largely positive response from those who watched it and from people working in the social sector.”

David Galloway, Director of Programmes at Lune Media:
“The experience of poverty and disadvantage is felt right across the so-called ‘lucky country’ and includes hard-working families who face a daily struggle to make ends meet. In the third season of *Struggle Street*, we focus on Australia’s often-invisible battlers.

“The dairy industry in the Riverina has been particularly hard hit, with the perfect storm of drought and low milk prices contributing to the decline of family-owned farms in the area. The series also feature stories of those who struggle with the lack of health-care services, and others dealing with the effects of crime and drug use in their local area. All those we’ve filmed have important stories to tell about their own lives, and the lives of others in similar circumstances around the country.”

SBS is working with a range of organisations to increase the reach and impact of *Struggle Street* in the community. In partnership with the University of Sydney’s Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use, Social Policy Research Centre and Charles Sturt University, SBS is creating the second iteration of its successful ‘The Truth About...’ video series.

These videos will address common myths around poverty and contributing factors in Australia, interviewing experts, frontline workers and those with lived experiences to bust myths around some of society’s biggest misconceptions.

‘The Truth About...’ series first launched during the second series of *Struggle Street* as online videos, extending to educational impact videos which ran in GP clinics across Australia.

Dr Yuvisthi Naidoo, Research Fellow, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales said: “*Struggle Street* has been instrumental in maintaining a spotlight on disadvantage in Australia. The bundling of the television documentary, ‘The Truth About...’ online video series and the vignettes that combine personal stories with research statistics is unique and remarkable. The associated outreach program has drawn on current research, including the Australian Council of Social Service/UNSW Poverty and Inequality Reports. In doing so, it asks all Australians to grapple with the kind of society they want to live in and the role of government, business and community to enact change.”

*Struggle Street* Season 3 premieres Wednesday 9 October, 8.30pm on SBS. The four-part documentary series continues weekly on Wednesdays at 8.30pm on SBS and available on SBS On Demand after broadcast.

Join the conversation #StruggleStreet
For more information: sbs.com.au/strugglestreet
Preview episodes available at the SBS Media Centre from Monday 16 September:

sbs.com.au/mediacentre

* www.acoss.org.au/poverty/