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PUBLIC MEDIA CAMPAIGN, WOMEN AND GIRLS LEAD, KICKS OFF SECOND YEAR OF PUBLIC TELEVISION PROGRAMMING IN OCTOBER TO SPOTLIGHT ISSUES FACING WOMEN AND GIRLS WORLDWIDE*Campaign Launches with Two-Part Documentary Series Half the Sky October 1 & 2*

(San Francisco, CA) — Independent Television Service ([ITVS](http://itvs.org)) announced today the rollout of its second year of documentary broadcasts in support of the [Women and Girls Lead](http://womenandgirlslead.org) campaign, a multiyear public media initiative to focus, educate, and connect citizens worldwide in support of the issues facing women and girls. The new slate of programs launches October 1 and 2, 2012, with [Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide](http://www.halfthe-sky.com), a special presentation of *Independent Lens*. Inspired by the bestselling book by Pulitzer Prize-winning authors Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, the two-part series was filmed in 10 countries and is driven by the growing awareness that empowering women is the best way to increase prosperity and stability around the globe.

“We’re thrilled to bring *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* to public television audiences,” said Sally Jo Fifer, ITVS President and CEO. “This is a pillar program for our Women and Girls Lead initiative, and it sets the stage for a remarkable season of Women and Girls Lead films.”

Other programs premiering from the Women and Girls Lead catalog this coming year include Mona Eldaief and Jehane Noujaim’s [Solar Mamas](http://www.solar-mamas.com) (November 2012), which chronicles India’s Barefoot College and its mission to provide rural women living in poverty with an education that empowers them to make their communities self-reliant and sustainable, and is part of an international multiplatform series including eight films that are part of a global debate, asking the question, [WHY POVERTY?](http://www.why-poverty.com); Kirby Dick’s [The Invisible War](http://www.theinvisiblewar.com) (May 2013) reveals one of America’s most shameful and best-kept secrets: the epidemic of rape within the U.S. military; and *Wonder Women! The Untold Story of American Superheroines* (March 2013), Kristy Guevara-Flanagan’s film tracing the fascinating evolution and legacy of Wonder Woman — going behind the scenes with Lynda Carter, Lindsay Wagner, comic writers and artists, and feminist figures such as Gloria Steinem, Kathleen Hanna, and others, who offer a counterpoint to the male-dominated superhero genre. Broadcasting in Spring of 2013 is Nicole Newnham and Maren Grainger-Monsen’s *Revolutionary Optimists*, which follows Amlan Ganguly, a lawyer-turned-social entrepreneur, as he sows hope in the poorest neighborhoods of Calcutta by empowering children to become leaders in improving health, health, transforming their communities for the better; and *Kind Hearted Woman*, acclaimed filmmaker David Sutherland’s (*The Farmer’s Wife*, *Country Boys*) portrait of a Native American woman who struggles between saving her family and risking it all to help her Indian community and abused women. For a complete list of the upcoming broadcasts, visit www.womenandgirlslead.org.

— More —

Broadcasts in 2012 and 2013 will be accompanied by nearly 1,000 community screenings and salon events, in partnership with some of the world's leading organizations supporting women and girls leadership development, health, education, and prosperity. The community screenings launched in September with *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* will continue through 2013. These local events will work to engage and involve a network of citizens and organizations in the leadership and development of women and girls.

Many of the Women and Girls Lead programs will also be adapted into short-form film modules — complete with standards-based lesson plans — available for public television stations, educators, and community organizations for use in a variety of educational settings. Additionally, Women and Girls Lead will provide opportunities for direct action and deeper learning through its websites on pbs.org and itvs.org, and through social media including [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/womenandgirlslead) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/womenandgirlslead).

Women and Girls Lead is supported by an advisory board consisting of media, policy, and cultural luminaries including actors Geena Davis and America Ferrera, Queen Noor, fashion designer Eileen Fisher, PBS President Paula Kerger, Patricia S. Harrison, President and CEO of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, who chairs the board, and many others.

ABOUT WOMEN AND GIRLS LEAD

Women and Girls Lead is a multiyear public media campaign to focus, educate, and connect citizens worldwide in support of the issues facing women and girls. Combining independent documentary film, television, new media, and global outreach partnerships, Women and Girls Lead amplifies the voices of women and girls acting as leaders, expands understanding of gender equity, and engages an international network of citizens and organizations to act locally and reach out globally.

By building a pipeline of some 50 public television documentaries and integrating content from partners across radio, commercial television, and beyond, Women and Girls Lead offers another model for public media to serve its mission in the 21st century, connecting key stakeholders to sustain productive dialogue and participation on the most critical issues facing local communities, the nation, and the world. For more information please visit: womenandgirlslead.org

ABOUT WHY POVERTY?

WHY POVERTY? is a groundbreaking cross-media event reaching more than 500 million people around the world via television, radio, internet, and live events in November 2012. Launching during one intense week, people around the world will be asking the question WHY POVERTY? Eight one-hour documentaries dealing with a variety of aspects related to poverty will be made available for simultaneous broadcast during the week of November 25-30, 2012. Currently 70 broadcasters reaching more than 500 million viewers have signed up for broadcasting the eight one-hour documentaries. In addition thirty shorts ranging from one to five minutes will be distributed on the [WHY POVERTY?](http://why-poverty.net) site and on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7G8v8v8v8v8) from September onwards. The website, available in several languages, will contain insight information on all films plus facts, infographics, educational material, and more. For more information visit why-poverty.net.