THE CURRENT STATE OF TOSTAN'S COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM (CEP) AND DIFFUSION COMMUNITIES

FINAL REPORT

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IDinsight
DATA. DECISIONS. DEVELOPMENT.

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Picture 1: Fatoumata Troaré (right), a member of IDinsight's field team, interviews a respondent in Koulikouro region, Mali.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

CEP	Tostan's Community Empowerment Program
CITI	Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative - online human subject's ethics training
CMC	Community Management Committee - a component of the CEP comprised of a group of 17 elected community members who are responsible for implementing their community's vision that emerges from Tostan's courses, in collaboration with the whole community
CNERS	Comité National d'Ethique pour la Recherche en Santé - as this research deals with human subjects, the IDinsight research team required ethics approval from this committee in Senegal and Guinea before conducting interviews and focus groups
FGC	Female Genital Cutting
GC3Y	Generational Change in Three Years project - a campaign implemented through the CEP from October 2013 - December 2016 in 150 communities located in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, and Mauritania
INRSP	Comité d'Éthique de l'Institut National de Recherche en Santé Publique - as this research deals with human subjects, the IDinsight research team required ethics approval from this committee in Mali before conducting interviews and focus groups
MERL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning - Tostan's internal monitoring and evaluation department
NGO	Non-governmental organization
SNAP	CARE's Social Norms Analysis Plot framework - this framework is used to guide the development and analysis of vignettes when measuring social norms

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

STUDY OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

We addressed a knowledge gap for Tostan on the conditions of communities several years after the end of their Community Empowerment Program (CEP). Tostan's CEP is a three year program that aims to support community self-efficacy and collective action to increase the well-being and dignity of all community members. Tostan envisions that communities will (1) re-examine and re-negotiate their existing roles, relationships, and social practices, (2) implement -- through the Community Management Committee (CMC) -- activities to promote community well-being and (3) share knowledge from CEP classes with other communities through organized diffusion. Tostan's objectives for this study were to understand current social norms, social dynamics, and governance structures in communities that had completed the CEP three or more years ago. While previous research efforts have looked at communities during and immediately after the CEP, Tostan lacked a clear picture of their reality years after the program. Given that Tostan aims for sustainable change, the knowledge uncovered by this research has important strategic and programming implications, and can be considered a stepping stone for future research.

We described the current state of communities and compared this to Tostan's expectations for sustained change. IDinsight designed and conducted a descriptive, largely qualitative study of the current state of CEP and diffusion communities across five countries: Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Mali,[1] and Senegal. CEP communities in the study had each completed the program at least 3 years ago. We focused on describing (1) social dynamics, (2) community practice and vision alignment with human rights, and (3) abandonment of female genital cutting (FGC). We then compared this description with Tostan's expectations based on the theory of change. Our overarching objective was to help Tostan assess the extent to which the current reality aligned with these expectations. The study was not designed to measure the causal impact of Tostan (or any other factor) but may help refine causal hypotheses that Tostan and partners could test via future work.

This study was not designed to estimate causal effects. The results are a rich description of the current reality in study communities but they cannot be interpreted as attributing any aspects of that reality to Tostan, the CMC, or any other actor. The study was also limited in its ability to measure changes over time since we only collected data once. We asked respondents to reflect on change and drew some insight from their responses. However, these insights are limited by respondents' memory and our ability to elicit and correctly interpret these recollections. We are - therefore - more cautious in drawing conclusions about change than we are in drawing conclusions about the current reality.

[1] Communities in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, and Mali had participated in Tostan's Generational Change in 3 years (GC3Y) project from 2013-2016, where Tostan implemented the CEP on a large scale. Tostan conducted baseline, midline, and endline data collection and internal study of all communities participating in the CEP (including those in Senegal). Tostan's data-collection approach was more standardized across all communities included in the GC3Y project.

To limit bias, we selected communities randomly and respondents via the right-hand rule. We also took specific measures to mitigate bias during interviews. We included 50 communities in the study: five CEP and five diffusion communities in each of five countries.[2] We selected CEP communities randomly from Tostan's list, stratifying at the sub-regional level to ensure geographic spread. Each CEP community was paired with a diffusion community, for five pairs per country. Altogether, we completed 416 in-depth interviews, 108 focus groups, and 50 community observations. We conducted in-depth interviews with randomly selected[3] married couples who had lived in the village long enough to comment on the full period since the CEP. We conducted focus groups with both randomly selected[4] general residents and -- separately -- with purposely selected community leaders. We also gave great care to limiting pro-program bias. In particular, we made every effort to ensure our field staff were and appeared independent from Tostan. This included not mentioning Tostan in any communications with residents unless/until respondents did so spontaneously. Interviewers were also trained to listen actively, to probe tactfully and to maximize respondent comfort and honesty even about sensitive topics.

To ensure blindness to the ultimate results, we collected Tostan's expectations before the start of the data collection process. Prior to data collection, IDinsight collected Tostan's expectations for each research question -- i.e., what did Tostan staff expect researchers to hear and observe in communities three years post-CEP. Collecting expectations ahead of time ensured that Tostan and IDinsight were blind to the ultimate results when defining expectations for what they would show.

To triangulate findings, our analysis made use of a variety of sources and methods. IDinsight conducted a thematic analysis of interview and focus group data; supplementing and triangulating across data sources.[5] This analysis was both collaborative and iterative. Altogether, three coders worked individually through interview and focus group responses and regularly came together to discuss trends and check each other's assumptions. Analysis concluded by comparing each finding to Tostan's expectations.

[2] For reference, we selected from among 20 communities in Senegal, 40 in Guinea, 40 in Guinea-Bissau, 40 in Mali, and 30 in Mauritania based on study eligibility criteria and lists provided by Tostan.
[3] Right-hand rule
[4] Right-hand rule
[5] Data sources included interview responses, focus-group responses, numeric indicators collected within interviews, structured field observations, and notes from daily debriefs during data collection.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

Social Dynamics - Across the study, village social dynamics are characterized by discussion and broad participation; both men and women report increased respect and harmony in household dynamics in the past six (or eight in Senegal) years. Respect for traditional authority of men and older community members remains, with husbands in the home and village leaders in public seen as final decision makers who consult others before exercising this authority. In similar ways, perceived decreases in violence against women and the belief that women should be able to work outside the home also accompany the expectation that women respect and comply with decisions taken by their husband. Residents appreciate and value this discussion and respect, and see both as contributing to harmony at home and in public. These findings align with Tostan's expectations that social interactions would be characterized by respect for traditional authority, including in cases where they have become more participatory.

"When a husband and wife live together but make decisions on their own without discussing it, it will not work. I think that the source of all disagreement is the lack of discussion and cohesion, it is always necessary to discuss together to find a consensus." **-** Man, Kodiolel village (CEP), Senegal

"When I speak to him and he doesn't understand I will call someone else to speak in order to change his position...the final decision rests with the man." - Woman, Sonkhonya village (CEP), Guinea

Social Dynamics - Community initiation and advocacy for desired changes varies. Some villages' residents are confident and proud of their ability to implement and sustain change without outside support or with support they request and obtain. In others, residents are less optimistic, reporting that important change or action ceases or fails after the end of external support. **CMCs still exist in most CEP communities, conducting community cleanups, sensitization, and dispute resolution. Community members appreciate these contributions. Communities often cite other activities (desired or actual) that are beyond the normal scope of the CMC as the most important to them.** These findings align with Tostan's expectations for the types of activities CMCs would sustain. They also highlight the importance of connecting CMCs to external support that can help them extend their capacity.

"[The changes that were] initiated by the community members themselves [are] the construction of the school and the mosque, the pump, [and] the pounding machine. With the exception of the hospital, which was initiated by the government"
- Woman, Sonkhonya village (CEP), Guinea

"Tostan [brought] money here for people to work with, but the CMC did not then manage this well because we no longer even speak of this microcredit. They also taught [us but] because they stopped people have almost forgotten."
- Man, Sintcham-Adjango village (CEP), Guinea-Bissau

Human rights - Community aspirations are aligned with human rights in that they aim at goals also promoted by rights (i.e., children should go to school or women should be allowed to attend community meetings). Respondents volunteer reasoning for these aspirations focused on their contributions to economic development and wellbeing rather than their connection to rights. Tostan is also seen as a promoter of human rights. These findings align with Tostan's expectations that community members are aware of their rights and associate human rights advocacy with Tostan.

FGC abandonment - There is evidence of social norms against FGC in most CEP villages across all five study countries. Community members believe that most members of the community have abandoned the practice and would actively discourage those who continue to practice FGC. Despite the overall trend, we found some CEP villages in which larger proportions of people report that they are in favor of FGC. Social norms against FGC are also weaker in diffusion villages. The findings align with Tostan's expectations that many community members are aware of the negative consequences of FGC, especially for health, while recognizing that some people continue to practice it or see it as a traditional obligation.

"[If] they go against the [advice] of the community and try to [cut] their daughter, they will be in big trouble, they may even be brought to justice because in our community there are more people who are for the abandonment of FGC [compared to] people who are against it."
- Woman, Ranerou village (CEP), Senegal

FGC abandonment - In CEP communities in Senegal, we found that FGC was the subject of discussion, both by residents and by advocates or organizations conducting sensitization. Sensitization was also the most common pro-abandonment activity cited. Tostan was frequently credited with these sensitization efforts. All of these patterns were much weaker in diffusion villages. These findings align with Tostan's expectation that discussion around FGC is influenced by community members' awareness of the negative consequences of FGC. We also found that village leaders are the most influential in discussions about abandonment in line with Tostan's expectations.

"Yes [...] almost every day there are discussions like this, where they educate people about [abandoning FGC]; the village chief and other people organize these kinds of discussions"
- Man, Kodiolel village (CEP), Senegal

SUMMARY OF ALL RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND KEY FINDINGS

Research question - Social Dynamics	Key Findings
SD1: How have perceptions of relationships and interactions in the community evolved over the past 6 years?	SD1.1. It is widely seen as acceptable for women to work outside of the home
	SD1.2. Discussion seems to be central to how respondents in CEP villages think couples should make decisions or resolve disputes. Respondents who think this is a change from the past often highlight it as among the most important social changes that have occurred.
	SD1.3. Residents of CEP villages perceive that violence towards women has decreased
SD2: What social dynamics influence community and household decision-making processes and outcomes?	SD2.1. Community members cite better education, sanitation, and more respectful relationships among community members as changes perceived in the past six (or eight in Senegal) years
SD3: Have communities exercised collective influence to advocate for community well-being?	SD3.1 Village-level decision-making involves broad discussion
	SD3.2 There is mixed evidence that CEP and diffusion communities in the five study countries are initiating, leading, and sustaining activities that improve the community's wellbeing. Where external actors are initiators of positive changes, some are perceived as not sustained when these actors leave the community.
	SD3.3 Evidence of CMC activity in CEP villages is mixed. Where CMCs are active, they are most often described as working on conducting or mobilizing for village clean-ups, organizing sensitization meetings on various topics, and conflict resolution.
Research Question - Human Rights Alignment	**Key Findings**

HR1: To what extent are community members aware of their human rights and responsibilities?	HR1.1 Respondents can cite at least three human rights from Tostan's list that a young girl should have. HR1.2 Parents, especially fathers, are seen as responsible for enrolling children in school.
HR 2: To what extent does community dialogue reflect human rights?	HR1.1 Respondents can cite at least three human rights from Tostan's list that a young girl should have. HR1.2 Parents, especially fathers, are seen as responsible for enrolling children in school.
HR3: To what extent have communities advocated for the human rights of all community members?	HR3.1 Most respondents in CEP villages - when asked directly - believe that the CMC would intervene to convince parents to enroll their child in school. Most of these responses specify that the CMC would use discussion/persuasion in its intervention. There is otherwise little mention of intervention or advocacy in defense of human rights.
Research Question - FGC Abandonment	**Key Findings**
FGC1: What are individual and community perceptions of FGC and its abandonment?	FGC1.1: There is still hesitance to discuss FGC, at least with outsiders, including in CEP communities but more pronounced in diffusion communities
	FGC1.2: There is evidence of a norm against FGC in CEP villages. There is, however, mixed evidence of a norm against FGC in diffusion villages.
FGC2: Is there ongoing community dialogue around FGC and if yes, what form does this dialogue take?	FGC2.1 In Senegal, FGC is a topic of discussion in communities, especially in CEP villages
FGC3: To what extent do communities exercise collective influence to realize their vision for how FGC should or should not be practiced?	FGC3.1: Community members most commonly cite sensitizations, especially on health consequences, as a key action to promote abandonment of FGC
	FGC3.2: CEP communities can recall participating in a public declaration. Diffusion communities are unsure

RECOMMENDED FURTHER RESEARCH

To help Tostan further leverage evidence to refine program design and operations, our research team recommends a few next steps. First would be a revision of the CEP's theory of change in the context of the study results. This revision would involve re-examining surprising results and exploring the ways the mechanisms involved may differ from how Tostan previously understood them. Such an activity is relatively simple to implement and provides an efficient way to use study results to improve the CEP.

As a second step, our research team would suggest Tostan conduct or commission a process evaluation, in which researchers document the implementation of an on-going CEP iteration, comparing it to the expectations in the ToC. Process evaluations use mixed methods to study critical nodes and pathways to impact from the ToC, producing a systematic, empirical description of what happens during and after program implementation. They then carefully compare this description to ex-ante expectations. Process evaluations can serve a learning function by examining whether program operations and achievements have taken place and whether stakeholders are reacting as

planned. If one or more gaps are identified, Tostan would be able to increase supervision, support and/or revisit the program's design and ToC in these areas. As part of this process evaluation and given i) the central importance of the CMC to the CEP and ii) the fact that our study identified a range of CMC functioning years after program implementation, Tostan could consider deeper fieldwork focused on describing the range of CMCs (i.e. those that are functioning well, those that are not active, and those that are functioning in unexpected ways).

Finally, we understand that Tostan and its supporters continue to be interested in **measuring the causal impact** of the program - something that has not been part of the design of previous studies. Rigorously measuring the causal impact of past programs is not technically feasible. However, **each time Tostan expands to new geographic areas or new sets of villages, it potentially creates an opportunity to design an impact evaluation (evaluation of causal impact) in coordination with that expansion.** If done carefully, such an evaluation could create a valid "control" group with which to compare Tostan partner communities during and after CEP implementation. Such a comparison could - for the first time - generate a causal impact estimate of the CEP on various outcomes related to empowerment, wellbeing, and dignity. Lessons from the current study and from Tostan's internal monitoring efforts would inform the measurement of these outcomes, while a causal design would allow for attributing changes in the outcomes to Tostan's work. This approach, while challenging and comparatively expensive, would provide an extremely powerful metric of Tostan's contributions to its partner communities and help Tostan identify those outcomes on which its effect is greatest.

1. INTRODUCTION: OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM (CEP)

Tostan's goal is to empower communities to develop their vision for a future that leads to dignity for all. In particular, Tostan's flagship Community Empowerment Program (CEP) assigns a trained facilitator[6] to live and provide classes in each community for three years. The CEP has three components. The first is a 30-month curriculum on democracy, human rights, problem solving, hygiene and health, literacy, numeracy and project management skills. About 50 men and women voluntarily participate in a non-formal education program using participatory learning strategies (Gillespie D and Melching, M., 2010). To begin, supervisors visit potential program communities and explain the program and the selection criteria, after which about 25 youth (aged 15-29) and 25 adults (aged 30-100) voluntarily sign up to attend two-hour classes three times a week, for a three-year period.

The second component is the establishment of the Community Management Committee (CMC), a group of 17 community residents responsible for implementing the vision that emerges from the courses, in collaboration with the entire community. The third component is organized diffusion whereby participants share lessons learned with other members of their communities and with other localities. An initial version of the CEP was first conducted in 1991 as a two-year, six module program and has evolved over the years to its current three-year length. The CEP has been implemented in 22 languages in eight African countries in 2,715 communities to date.

Through the program's components, the CEP's theory of change aims to develop communities with greater self-efficacy, engaging in more collective action that increases all members' well-being and dignity. This change process is outlined below:

1.1. PRE-INTERVENTION COMMUNITIES

Tostan's CEP starts with communities of potential who have untapped capacity for self-efficacy and collective action. Communities first invite Tostan to implement the program in their community.[7] Tostan supervisors then visit the community to conduct a site study[8] and, based on Tostan available funding and capacity to implement in that area, specifies the criteria for potential selection. One of the criteria for selection for a village to participate in the CEP is that there be at least 25 youth (aged 15 to 29) and 25 adults (aged 30 to 30-100) who sign up to attend classes within a certain time limit.[9] Following the site study, Tostan's Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) team conducts a baseline study in the selected community.

[6] The facilitator is a local national, fluent in the local language and is of the same ethnic group as the community members.
[7] Often community members learn about Tostan's CEP through regional or departmental radio programs.
[8] The site study helps Tostan identify communities that are ready to engage meaningfully with the program – meaning that they are not opposed to the central pillars of the CEP and local authorities (governmental, traditional and religious) support program implementation.
[9] Other criteria for selection include that the majority of the village population speak the same mother tongue, that the location of the village in relation to other communities in which Tostan is currently working allows for the supervisor to travel reasonably to visit communities, the village's willingness to provide housing and food for the facilitator, and the village's relative influence in the locality (i.e. where a highly respected religious leader may be resident).

1.2 TOSTAN'S EMPOWERMENT MODEL

Tostan's empowerment model – implemented through the CEP curriculum – employs the following methods:

- A human rights-based approach derived from universally agreed upon principles. Tostan's methodology aims to foster self and group reflection on existing practices by helping participants model new behaviors that align with human rights.
- Classroom learning for rural populations (most of whom have never had formal schooling) provided by locally trained and recruited facilitators in their local languages. Knowledge gained from CEP classes is then shared with other community members and social networks through a process Tostan calls organized diffusion.
- A participatory methodology that aims to encourage problem-solving by incorporating culturally relevant techniques.

The CEP classes are delivered in two phases. First is *The Kobi* (94 two- to three-hour sessions over a ten-month period), which focuses on social empowerment, using media such as stories, songs, sketches, and poetry to encourage engagement and participation by all class members, particularly women and youth. The second phase is called *The Aawde* (130 two- to three-hour sessions over a 20-month period), where participants learn how to read, write, as well as basic math, project management skills, and SMS texting. Tostan has developed the educational content presented through the CEP over the past 30 years and works to ensure it is culturally appropriate and facilitates group learning (Gillespie, D. and Melching, M., 2010).

Through Tostan's empowerment model outlined above, Tostan envisions communities that are able to progressively negotiate and create new positive social norms and practices that reflect the community vision of well-being and are aligned with human rights principles. In this vision, community empowerment is evident to community members themselves through the achievement of their collective goals.

1.3. SUSTAINED COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Tostan's theory of change holds that the efforts of an empowered community will make sustainable improvements to individual and community wellbeing.

Section 2.2 of the report discusses how Tostan's expectations based on the theory of change have informed our proposed research questions.

2. STUDY METHODOLOGY

2.1 OBJECTIVES

Tostan regularly collects data on program communities using its internal monitoring, evaluation, research, and learning infrastructure. The CEP and CEP communities have also been the subject of studies conducted by academics and government researchers, again focused on areas where the CEP was ongoing or recently concluded (Cislaghi, B., Gillespie, D., & Mackie, G., 2015; Diop, N et al., 2004). By commissioning this study, Tostan wanted to better understand the current norms, social dynamics, and governance structures in communities where CEP programming has been over for some time.

Specifically, the present study had the following objectives:

- Assess the extent to which the current reality in study communities aligns with expectations of Tostan staff and Tostan's theory of change. This includes both result and process expectations: what is currently happening in communities and the process by which it has happened.
- Represent the multiple perspectives within communities about what, whether, and why change has occurred (or not).
- Appraise the extent to which communities attribute changes to Tostan's efforts.
- Based on the above, help Tostan plan for future research and revisions of its theory of change and programming.

To these ends, IDinsight conducted a descriptive study of the current state of CEP and diffusion communities, which includes comparing the current state of each to each other, and to Tostan's expectations. The study gathered the perceptions of community members on the drivers of change in their communities over the past six or eight years with respect to the core focus of Tostan's program. Through this approach, IDinsight explored the extent to which CEP communities reflect the program's expectations, identifying evidence of both expected and unexpected outcomes. The study also explored respondents' perceptions of Tostan and its contribution to change. In Senegal, IDinsight supplemented the base study with an additional investigation of the norms and behaviors surrounding female genital cutting (FGC) in CEP communities.

IDinsight's study is distinct from previous efforts in a few key ways.

- First, IDinsight is an external researcher and while we collaborated with Tostan on the study design, we actively avoided association or identification with Tostan during data collection.
- Second, this study focused on communities in which CEP implementation ended three or more years ago, allowing it to assess the present state of communities well after the program ended.
- Third, this study focused on gathering **insights from the village as a whole, not just CEP class participants.** *Section 3.2* below explains the steps IDinsight took to ensure a random selection of residents in study villages, to the extent possible.

This study does not measure the causal impact of the CEP. This study focuses on providing a rigorous description of the present situation in CEP and diffusion communities. We are not able to definitely

attribute any feature of that situation to Tostan's efforts (or any other factor). Nevertheless, IDinsight and Tostan both recognize the potential to use our results to inform the design of a causal study in future.

2.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the above goals and following extensive discussion with Tostan in August and September 2019 during the project inception phase,[10] we prioritized three arenas of action in which Tostan works to promote wellbeing and dignity: social dynamics, human rights alignment, and FGC abandonment (these are rows in Table 2 below). For each of these thematic areas, IDinsight and Tostan collaboratively considered the expected state of affairs three years after the end of the CEP program. These expectations drove research-question development, which we completed collaboratively with Tostan in September and October 2019.[11]

In developing research questions, we considered both individual and group perceptions of the state of communities and how it has changed. These perceptions influence processes of deliberation and actions, both in the household and in the wider community. Our research questions seek to understand what perceptions and deliberation processes currently exist in communities, and how and why they drive change, whether change is expected or unexpected. We used this organizing framework to develop the research questions which then guided our study design, data collection, and analysis.

Additionally, we proposed collecting quantitative data on indicators of interest to Tostan to complement our qualitative findings. These indicators were refined during data collection based on IDinsight's assessment of whether they could be accurately measured given time spent in each community, and the number of respondents. Table 2 lists final study research questions and quantitative indicators approved by Tostan at the end of the project inception phase.

[10] IDinsight produced an Inception Report that represents the culmination of the inception phase. This document details the study learning goals, study design, and research questions that were developed in collaboration with Tostan.
[11] Following the Inception workshop on 19 September 2019, Tostan and IDinsight compiled a list of program expectations that later informed research-question development.

Table 1: Study research questions and quantitative indicators

Category	Key dimensions of change and stasis		
	Perceptions	**Deliberation**	**Action**
Social dynamics	**SD1.** How have perceptions of relationships and interactions in the community evolved over the past six years?	**SD2.** What social dynamics influence community and household decision-making processes and outcomes?	**SD3.** Have communities exercised collective influence to advocate for community well-being?
Human rights alignment	**HR1.** To what extent are community members aware of their rights?	**HR2.** To what extent does community dialogue reflect human rights?	**HR3.** To what extent have communities exercised collective influence to advocate for the rights of all community members?
Journey towards FGC abandonment	**FGC1.** What are individual and community perceptions of FGC abandonment?	**FGC2.** Is there an ongoing community dialogue around FGC and if so, what form does it take?	**FGC3.** To what extent do communities exercise collective influence to realize their visions around FGC?
Quantitative indicators[12]	• % of respondents who can recall at least three of their human rights • % of respondents who can cite at least two negative consequences of FGC • % of female respondents who find it acceptable for a woman to work outside of the home • % of male respondents who find it acceptable for a woman to work outside of the home • % of all women and men who agree that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife for wanting to attend a community meeting in the village square	• % of respondents who can recall a community meeting happening at least once in the last six months	

[12] This list of Indicators was refined during data collection based on IDinsight's ability to obtain accurate responses.

2.3 PLANNING: RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW PROCESS

In preparing for data collection, IDinsight permanent staff underwent the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) human subject's ethics training. IDinsight then submitted detailed research protocols and appendices to all relevant review boards.[13] Each body shared comments and suggested amendments based on country-specific ethical requirements, which we incorporated for resubmission. This process took about three months with final approvals on 23 October in Mali, 11 November in Senegal and 20 November in Guinea. In countries where ethical review bodies did not exist, we shared our research protocol with the appropriate authorities to obtain official approval to conduct the study.

2.4 SAMPLING: VILLAGES, HOUSEHOLDS, AND FOCUS GROUPS

2.4.1 Village selection

Across the five countries designated for the study, we wanted to capture CEP communities with a range of experiences with Tostan and other programming. The sampling frame for the study included 169 CEP communities who had participated in the Generational Change in Three Years (GC3Y) project (Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania), or had completed the CEP program at least three years ago (Senegal). Our final sample included 25 CEP communities, spread across the five countries.[14] To get to this sample, in each country IDinsight stratified[15] the sample at the sub-regional level, then randomly selected five CEP villages from those sub-regions to ensure geographical variation in the sample for each country. We chose to select villages randomly rather than purposively to minimize selection bias. Specifically, **we wanted to avoid purposively selecting only villages where the CEP program was implemented well, based on Tostan's monitoring data.** Since Tostan selects CEP communities non-randomly, it follows that our sample of CEP communities cannot be considered representative of the country, but *only* representative of our sampling frame.

Given the importance of organized diffusion in Tostan's theory of change, we also wanted to capture the experience of potential diffusion communities (that is, those that receive knowledge from CEP class participants within their social networks, but who are not part of Tostan's direct programming). One diffusion community was sampled for each CEP community resulting in a total of 50 selected communities in the study.[16] To identify possible diffusion communities for each CEP village, IDinsight

[13] Specifically, we submitted a formal protocol to three review boards: the Comité d'Éthique de l'Institut National de Recherche en Santé Publique (INRSP) in Mali, and the Comité National d'Ethique pour la Recherche en Santé (CNERS) in Guinea and Senegal. In Guinea-Bissau and Mauritania, there were no formal ethical review boards so we instead obtained general study permission from health/research authorities. IDinsight's internal ethical review committee determined that the ethical review required in Guinea and Senegal was sufficiently thorough and that, therefore, no further internal or external review was required for Guinea-Bissau and Mauritania as long as our activities and ethical safeguards there matched those employed in Guinea and Senegal.

[14] In choosing our sample size, and given time constraints, we prioritized spending more time gathering rich insights in each village rather than covering more villages in each country. In most cases, it took teams between 4-5 days to survey a CEP village and diffusion village pair.

[15] Stratified random sampling is a technique in which the sample is partitioned into non-overlapping groups (in this case sub-regions) and a sample is randomly selected to be evenly spread across those groups (in this case, 5 villages selected across the sub-regions). IDinsight used StataIC 15. 1 to select sample villages using stratified random sampling.

[16] IDinsight's choice to conduct a reduced number of interviews in diffusion communities is driven by our understanding that Tostan's programming focuses more on CEP communities and that collecting more data from those communities would help us understand perceived program contributions more than in diffusion communities.

liaised with Tostan's local staff in each country, and supplemented this with information gathered by IDinsight Field Managers during pre-survey community sensitization visits. In cases where more than one diffusion community could be credibly identified, IDinsight randomly selected one for inclusion in the sample. Table 3 lists the CEP and diffusion pairs surveyed, the regions and sub-regions they are located in, and finally the number of in-depth interviews and focus groups conducted in each CEP-diffusion village pair.

Table 2: List of villages surveyed and number of in-depth interviews and focus groups conducted in each

Country	Region	Sub-region	CEP village	Diffusion village	**Interviews completed** (total target = 430 interviews and 130 focus groups)	
					# individual interviews	**# focus groups**
Guinea	Faranah	Faranah	Sonkhonya	Walia	16	5
	Faranah	Faranah	Damaniah	Kemaiah	16	5
	Faranah	Kissidougou	Boreah	Damaniah	16	5
	Faranah	Kissidougou	Yassardou	Boleah	16	5
	Faranah	Dabola	Kigneko	Noumoula	16	5
Guinea-Bissau	Oio	Mansaba	Santambato	Nemnaco (no consent)[17]	12	2
	Gabu	Pirada	Samba-Doro	Sintcham-Massacunda	16	3
	Gabu	Pirada	Colondito	Tchewelbessel **(**dropped)[18]	12	2
	Bafata	Contuboel	Sintcham-Dicori	Sintchan-Mori	16	3
	Bafata	Contuboel	Sintcham-Adjango	Sare Mamudo	16	3
Mali	Koulikoro	Sirakorola	Ngolobougou	Siramanbougou	16	5
	Koulikoro	Sirakorola	Zabantoukouro	Niagma Marakabougou	16	5
	Koulikoro	Sirakorola	Beleninko	Sebekoro	16	5
	Koulikoro	Sirakorola	Beleco	Farabougou	16	5
	Koulikoro	Sirakorola	Koyo	Dieni	16	5
Country	**Region**	**Sub-region**	**CEP village**	**Diffusion village**	**Interviews completed** (total target = 430 interviews and 130 focus groups)	
					# individual interviews	**# individual interviews**

[17] Village chief did not grant consent to participate in the study citing unavailability of residents

[18] Village was dropped from the study because it had one household with an absent husband, and therefore did not meet the study inclusion criteria. This was the only identified diffusion village located in Guinea-Bissau, while the remaining two were located in Senegal, where the study team was not authorized to conduct data collection.

Mauritania	Brakna	N'Diawaldy Boully	Mbagne	Gourel Thioga	16	5
	Brakna	Bababe	Wouro Amadou Hawa	Mourtogal	16	5
	Brakna	Boghe	Boygneul Thilly	**None identified**[19]	10	2
	Brakna	Aleg	Carrefour	Jedda	16	4
	Brakna	Magta Lahjar	Karama 1	Tawmiyya	16	4
Senegal	Ranerou	Ranerou	Kodiolel	Gounas	22	5
	Ranerou	Ranerou	Ndayane Guélodé	Ndayane Diaby	22	5
	Ranerou	Ranerou	Ouré Yoro Sow	Sinthiane Tongué	22	5
	Ranerou	Ranerou	Ranerou	Bilel Faffahbé	22	5
	Ranerou	Ranerou	Thionokh	Boulone Thiekey	22	5

As per our sampling strategy, we planned to conduct a total of 430 in-depth interviews and 130 focus groups in 50 villages across study countries. In CEP villages in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, and Mauritania, we would conduct 12 in-depth interviews and three focus group discussions. In diffusion villages that did not directly participate in the GC3Y project, we would conduct a smaller number of interviews and focus group discussions - four and two respectively. In Senegal, where we conducted an increased number of interviews and focus groups, we aimed to conduct 14 in-depth interviews and 6 focus groups in CEP villages and 8 in-depth interviews and 2 focus groups in diffusion villages.[20] This imbalanced sampling across CEP and diffusion villages reflects Tostan's particular interest in understanding the current state of CEP communities.

In practice, we conducted a total of **416 in-depth interviews and 108 focus groups** across study countries. The number of interviews and focus groups completed for each CEP and diffusion village pair are indicated in Table 3 above. The lower than planned in-depth interviews are driven by visiting fewer villages (two fewer diffusion villages in Guinea-Bissau and one less diffusion village in Mauritania). We conducted lower than planned focus groups as a result of logistical challenges of convening all planned focus groups within the allotted time. This sample size provided a rich dataset from which to learn about the current state of CEP and diffusion communities in the five study countries. The spread across sub-regions and the large number of total interviews made it possible to identify country-level trends.

2.4.2 Village-level refusals

We were able to survey in all CEP villages as there were no refusals to participate in the study. However, a total of five selected diffusion villages declined participation in the study: Nemnaco in

[19] Tostan supervisors confirmed the absence of a diffusion village because of the language barrier (Pulaar village surrounded by Hassaniya-speaking villages)

[20] In Senegal, where we did a deep dive on FGC, piloting demonstrated that the length of the questionnaire required that we split our sample by research area. Instead of conducting 12 interviews where we covered all research themes, we conducted 14 interviews in each village - 8 that covered the social dynamics and human rights themes, and 6 which covered the FGC related questions.

Guinea-Bissau; Hel Abowbak in Mauritania; and Waikna, Kalifabougou, and Wadie in Mali. In all countries except Guinea-Bissau (where Nemnaco was the only identified diffusion village for Santambato), field teams were able to randomly select another diffusion village (to replace the originally selected village) for the associated CEP village. Below, we provide more detail on why each village declined participation in the study.

Guinea-Bissau

The village chief of Nemnaco declined participation in the study on the grounds that residents were not available to be interviewed. However, field staff noted the village chief's reasons were unsupported as some residents in the village indicated their availability and willingness to participate. He further informed the survey team that the village had abandoned FGC (this was unprompted) though he appeared uncomfortable when talking about this subject.

Mauritania

After explaining the study objectives and our need to interview wives and husbands separately, the village chief of Hel Abowbak (who is also the village imam) did not grant his permission for the team to conduct interviews for religious reasons. The chief expressed that it was not acceptable for the team to speak to women, and that he would only grant permission if only men were concerned.

Mali

Waikna village declined participation in the study because of existing land disputes with its CEP village. Kalifabougou and Wadie villages declined participation because they were unwilling to talk about FGC. Kalifabougou village - in particular - further expressed hostility towards the Tostan program because of its work on FGC abandonment.

2.4.3 Participant selection: interviews and focus groups

The goals and timeline of this project informed our sampling strategy. Our overall goal was to obtain an accurate, multi-faceted picture of what is currently happening in communities for focal topic areas. To do this, we wanted to understand views from a range of people who we expected to have heterogeneous experiences, through both in-depth interviews and our 'community' focus groups. Therefore, we did not want to rely on more convenient sampling methods such as interviewing only households suggested by village guides or leaders, or even by interviewing households who lived in a certain geographical area (such as close to the village chief's house or close to the local market or mosque). Because the study focused on capturing perspectives from **the village as a whole and not just CEP class participants,** respondents and focus group participants were not limited to CEP class participants. Further – in an effort to appear as not affiliated with Tostan – interviews and focus groups did not ask about participation in Tostan classes. Because we were only in each village for a short amount of time, we could not rely on extended 'soaking and poking'[21] to purposively seek out households with diverse views and perspectives, as might be more common in ethnographic qualitative work.

[21] Fenno, Richard F. (1986). Observation, Context, and Sequence in the Study of Politics. The American Political Science Review. Vol. 80 No.1; pp. 3-15. DOI: 10.2307/1957081 https://www.jstor.org/stable/1957081.

This led us, in contrast to much qualitative work that relies on more purposive selection, to pursue a randomly selected sample for our household interviews and for our 'community' focus groups. Since we were only in each village for a short amount of time, and since villages did not have available sampling frames (a list of all households, for example),[22] we applied a right-hand rule selection strategy to the extent possible. The right-hand rule or random walk is a strategy whereby households falling to the right of a designated starting point (i.e., a school) are selected with an equal number of households skipped between households until the total number of interviews is complete.[23] Where a traditional random-walk was infeasible (most often due to the size and structure of the village) data collection teams were trained to adapt the method to ensure that household selection was as good as random or as close to random as feasible. Practically speaking, this meant that in larger villages, teams skipped three households between selected households while in smaller villages, they only skipped one household between selected households until the total number of interviews was complete.

Given the goals of our work, we did not consider all households implied by the right-hand rule eligible for the household interview. Specifically, while our primary aim was to understand communities as they currently are, several of our questions explore how communities have evolved since the start of the CEP program -- that is, in the past six years for most countries and in the past eight years in Senegal, where the CEP began in 2011. For household interviews, therefore, we restricted household sampling to couples that were currently married and had been married residents in the village for at least six (or eight) years. In practice, this meant that upon approaching a house indicated by the right-hand rule, interviewers first solicited information on current marital status, number of years of marriage and duration of residency in the village from potential participants before obtaining informed consent and starting interviews. Interviews did not proceed unless both husband and wife were willing and available to talk.[24] Figure 1 is a map showing the spread of selected households using the right-hand rule in Sonkhonya village, Guinea.

[22] With more budget and time, IDinsight would have ideally conducted a household census to obtain a complete listing of eligible households in each village.

[23] This strategy is not without disadvantages, namely the limited ability to supervise how field teams implement the routing instructions and the strong incentives surveyors often have to simply select respondents who are willing to participate. To mitigate some of these risks, field teams were required to collect GPS data for each household surveyed using the KoboToolbox Application on their phones to help us verify the spread of households across the village.

[24] In a minority of cases where both husband and wife could not be interviewed on the same day due to conflicting schedules, field teams returned to households to interview the other spouse on another day.

Figure 1: Spread of selected households in Sonkhonya village (CEP), Guinea, using right-hand rule

For our 'community' focus groups, we aimed to have between six and eight people join our discussions. To populate these groups, we started by inviting those who had participated in our household interviews. We did this to explore whether and how responses to questions on similar topics to those covered in interviews change in the context of a group discussion, as well as to push deeper on some topics. We also believed this to be an efficient way to select participants for focus groups. When these same respondents were not also available for the focus group, we invited additional people again based on the same right-hand rule strategy.

We determined the composition of each focus group by asking village leadership whether they would be comfortable with gender-segregated or gender-mixed groups. This strategy was consistently implemented in each community we visited. The majority of community focus groups were gender-mixed, with the exception of Mauritania where village leadership indicated that it would be appropriate to speak to men and women separately. The mixed focus groups allowed us to further observe interactions and behavioral norms between genders in the context of a community discussion. Because we cannot know if and how focus group responses were affected by different gender dynamics in mixed and gender-segregated groups, we cannot draw confident conclusions about any differences between the two. However, we have -- to the extent possible -- considered different gender dynamics in our analysis of para-data observations regarding in-group dynamics. These have been reported with specific context on whether observed in gender-mixed or segregated groups in section *4. Findings.*

In contrast to the household interviews and 'community' focus groups, we wanted to conduct an additional focus group in each village composed of local leaders -- that is, people with locally recognized authority. To rapidly identify the most relevant participants for these groups, we relied on the village chief to identify participants. This was a reasonable approach but does mean that results from leadership discussions should be interpreted as representing those recognized as leaders by the village chief.[25]

2.5 DATA COLLECTION

2.5.1 Overview of data collection

We collected data between November 2019 and January 2020, taking approximately three weeks in Mauritania and Guinea-Bissau, four weeks each in Mali and Senegal, and approximately five weeks in Guinea. This is visualized in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Gantt chart showing data collection timeline from November 2019 to January 2020.

Country/Week beginning	24-Nov	01-Dec	08-Dec	15-Dec	22-Dec	29-Dec	05-Jan	12-Jan	19-Jan
Data collection									
Mali									
Mauritania									
Guinea									
Senegal									
Guinea-Bissau									

In each country, data collection teams of two to four experienced interviewers were led by one to two Field Managers responsible for ensuring fidelity to the survey protocols, overall execution, and sensitization of study communities. Field teams in each country included both males and females. Both interviewers and Field Managers were nationals in the relevant country and were specifically not affiliated with nor had they worked with Tostan in the past. On average teams spent three days in a CEP, and one day in a diffusion village to complete planned research activities.

To answer the research questions, we conducted both in-depth individual interviews (including open-ended and closed-ended questions reflecting indicators of interest to Tostan), focus group discussions, and structured observations in each village. The in-depth interviews allowed us to focus on the unique experiences of husbands and wives in different households, while focus group discussions helped us gather insights from group brainstorming and interaction among community members. For each household interview, we asked the same set of questions separately to the husband and wife in the household. Group interviews with village leadership in the sample communities allowed us to observe the sub-group with recognized authority, examining how their perceptions compare to those of other

[25] An alternative approach could have selected leadership focus group participants by selecting them randomly from a list of leaders compiled from multiple sources; for example, the village chief, religious leaders, and community members more generally.

community members. Additionally, the field teams conducted structured field observations through checklists to help us compile a picture of the current state of communities.

Responses from most semi-structured household interviews and focus group discussions were audio-recorded, and notes from each interview and focus group were compiled and filed for transcription. IDinsight Associates assigned transcribers tasks in batches as notes and recordings were coming in from field teams. As interviews were conducted in local languages, transcribers translated responses into French. All transcriptions were inputted into a prepared Excel template to facilitate eventual analysis.

2.5.2 Data collection team and training

Teams and positionality

In each country, data collection teams consisting of two to four experienced surveyors were led by one to two Field Managers. We did not recruit through Tostan's networks and ensured field staff were not affiliated nor previously affiliated with Tostan. Both interviewers and Field Managers were nationals in the relevant country. We aimed to have gender-balanced teams,[26] both for Field Managers and interviewers, and prioritized candidates that had prior experience surveying on sensitive topics, particularly FGC.

We began with Field Manager recruitment. Field Managers were responsible for overall field execution, including community sensitization and entry, and ensuring fidelity to the survey protocols. They also supported IDinsight Associates with recruitment of suitable enumerator and transcriber candidates. We identified Field Manager candidates through recommendations from IDinsight's professional networks in the region. Where professional networks did not exist or could not recommend suitable candidates, we posted job advertisements through platforms used by local research firms. IDinsight Associates examined the CVs of all applicants to compile a shortlist of candidates to invite for an in-person or phone interview.

Field Manager selection was conducted in two phases, a screening interview and then a practical exercise. The purpose of the screening interview was to get candidates to speak further on their prior experiences and to assess their overall suitability for the role. This first interaction also allowed Associates to assess how Field Managers would fare as interviewers, supervisors and thought-partners throughout the study. Candidates who were successful in the interview phase were then assigned a practical exercise as part of their selection. They were asked to pre-select candidates and to conduct interviews with IDinsight Associates present or listening in remotely. Thereafter, IDinsight Associates provided feedback on their interview questions and technique, and weighed in on their final pre-selections.

Our field staff were pre-selected based on their demonstrated experience conducting qualitative data collection, working in rural settings, and their proficiency in the languages spoken by respondents. For Field Managers, we also looked for prior experience supervising a field team and prioritized prior experience working in the study locations. While most team members had experienced collecting data in rural settings, a majority were currently resident in urban areas. As such their personal values and

[26] The gender composition of teams across countries was roughly 56% male and 44% female.

understanding of the world likely differed from the study population. As a result, IDinsight made efforts -- during training -- to reduce potential biases that may be brought about by surveyor positionality.

Training

IDinsight Associates conducted Field Manager training for 2-3 days. Thereafter, both Field Manager(s) and Associates conducted enumerator training and piloting for a week prior to starting data collection. We pre-selected and invited more candidates to enumerator training than would be selected in the study, in order to make final selections at the end of training.

Field Manager training provided an overview of the study and its objectives, working norms and responsibilities, as well as an overview of research ethics (to ensure these align with IDinsight's ethical standards) and qualitative data collection best practices.

Enumerator training focused on the following topics:

- **Research ethics:** Training covered how to solicit informed consent from respondents. We also focused on how to handle sensitive topics, and to ensure participant privacy and confidentiality during interviews.
- **Best practices for qualitative data collection:** Training emphasized the importance of listening actively, conducting regular team debriefs, and probing tactfully. We also discussed the importance of being aware of their positionalities and making efforts to remain neutral, which includes not expressing judgement or offering advice to respondents.
- **Community entry:** We reinforced best practices in respectfully gaining entry to conduct the study in communities. Field Managers -- who included women in all countries except Guinea-Bissau -- as opposed to the whole team conducted community entry prior to the beginning of data collection. We also emphasized the need to distance ourselves from Tostan during this process.
- **Understanding study goals:** IDinsight Associates and Field Managers led a careful reading and explanation of the interview guides to ensure interviewers understood the purpose of each question.
- **Best practices for moderating a focus group and note-taking:** Field Managers led sessions on how best to motivate group discussion (as opposed to two-way communication) and how to solicit thoughts from all participants. Where applicable, field staff were instructed to ensure that male staff moderated focus groups with men, and female staff moderated focus groups with women.[27] We also developed a note-taking template that would be used to capture the flow of the discussion.

[27] In practice, this guidance was only applicable in Mauritania where focus groups were gender-segregated in line with local norms as explained in *2.4.3 Participant selection: interviews and focus groups.*

- **Ensuring privacy and comfort:** We trained field staff to seek privacy for individual interviews and to make respondents feel comfortable being frank, even about sensitive topics. This included discussing and simulating potential approaches to putting respondents at ease.

Training also involved practical exercises and simulations before field teams piloted in a non-selected Tostan village. At the end of piloting, Field Managers along with IDinsight Associates, made final interviewer and transcriber selections based on performance during training and piloting. On average, six trainees (four interviewers and two transcribers) were finally selected for each country team.

2.5.4 Data collection tools and approaches

Topics of interest

We conducted a total of 416 in-depth interviews (that is, we spoke to 208 married couples) and 108 focus groups across countries. In-depth interviews lasted between 20 minutes to 1 hour, while community and leadership focus groups lasted between 40 minutes and 2 ½ hours.

In-depth interview and focus group questions mapped to the study research questions (See Table 2 above) covering the three thematic areas in which Tostan works to promote well-being: social dynamics, human rights alignment and FGC abandonment. In-depth interviews explored whether and how couples make decisions of joint concern and how they would resolve disputes in this decision-making. Interviews then asked respondents to reflect on important changes that have happened in the past six (or eight in Senegal) years and the extent to which community members or external actors drove this change. Interviews further explored whether community members are aware of human rights and whether specific actions have been taken to protect these rights in communities. In-depth interviews concluded by asking respondents to describe community perceptions of FGC practice and its abandonment. In Senegal -- where we conducted a deep-dive on FGC – respondents were further asked to describe any ongoing discussions on FGC (if any) and to describe any actions the community was taking to advocate for FGC abandonment (if communities expressed a common desire to abandon FGC).

Participants in each focus group discussed and debated changes (or lack thereof) in community social dynamics over the past six or eight years and reflected on perceived drivers of and barriers to change. Focus group questions also asked participants to talk about community aspirations for the next five to ten years and lastly asked them to reflect on community perceptions of FGC practice and its abandonment. For gender-segregated focus groups, the moderator and participants were -- to the extent possible -- gender-matched, meaning that women moderated women's focus groups and men moderated men's focus groups. Using an open discussion format, allowed us to gain a qualitative understanding of Tostan's contribution to these trends. The focus group discussion questions for the community and leaders were the same, with the exception of encouraging further discussion on the role and actions of CMCs in leadership focus groups.

Complete versions of the in-depth interview and focus group guides are available here and here.

Semi-structured approach

We took a semi-structured approach to our interview guides, as is appropriate for one-shot interviews (Bernard, H.R., 2011) On the continuum from fully structured (scripted) to unstructured interviews

(topics planned but questions not pre-written), our semi-structured approach was more structured and scripted. While we wanted to allow our interviews some flexibility in being able to probe to pursue topics of interest, we also responded to the challenges of having multiple interviewers and interview teams, as well as only a limited training period and only one chance to speak with each respondent. These challenges pulled us toward a more-scripted interview.

To generate rich qualitative data, we made most of our questions open-ended, with a set of largely scripted follow-up probes. This allowed respondents to express themselves freely on different topics and express ideas in their own words. This enabled us, in analysis, to understand which topics respondents raise spontaneously and which come out only after probing, allowing us to infer salience and/or importance (though not necessarily to distinguish between the two). The following example from our in-depth interviews demonstrates how questions were structured to start off very broad and eventually became more specific:

> *Think about your village over the past six years, that is from when [X] happened up until now.*
>
> - What are some important changes that have happened in the villages in the past six years?
> - Which of these were good changes? Why?
>
> *[Probe if respondent cannot come up with changes, interviewer can offer open-ended examples] i.e., communication between members in the household, new opportunities for women, etc.*
>
> *[If respondent further unable to provide examples, interviewer can offer more specific examples] i.e., women's active participation in community affairs, women and youth voicing their opinions publicly*
>
> - In thinking about these changes, whether good or to be improved, can you think of changes that were initiated by community members themselves?
> - Were any changes initiated by outsiders or an NGO?

Structuring questions in this manner allowed respondents to first discuss any changes that were top-of-mind to them, whether they liked them or not, and then gradually led them to discuss community action (if any) to achieve those changes. Where respondents were unable to come up with examples of changes to the first question, interviewers were instructed to first offer open-ended, then more specific examples to the respondent.

To ensure that rich discussions could both occur and be recorded without loss of detail, interviews were conducted by a two-member team, with one interviewer leading the questions and probing process while the other took detailed notes. For each household interview, we asked the same set of questions separately to the husband and wife in the household. This approach helped increase the chance that we would capture each person's perceptions of household dynamics unaffected by the other's responses or presence.

Quantitative indicators

Indicator questions, that is close-ended questions designed to yield indicators of interest to Tostan, were embedded within the in-depth interviews and focus groups. Normally, they were phrased or asked so as to attempt to restrict responses to numbers, "yes or no," or multiple choice. However, interviewers were instructed to treat these questions as part of the semi-structured conversation on the topic at hand, which sometimes meant taking a respondent's answer as-is, rather than forcing them to select from a list. This helped us better contextualize quantitative findings within a broader qualitative narrative and improve conversational flow -- preventing quantitative enumeration from detracting from the richer qualitative interview, which was the study's priority. This prioritization, in addition to our sampling strategy that does not guarantee precision or representativeness at the village-level,[28] means that these quantitative results should be interpreted carefully. Moreover, they are self-reported and -- therefore -- subject to imperfect recall and social desirability bias, again requiring caution in interpretation, especially regarding sensitive topics like gender-based violence and FGC.

Field observation checklists

Field Managers conducted a village walk in each community and completed a checklist to record the presence of key infrastructure associated with community well-being such as schools, health facilities, water sources and electricity. These checklists were then digitized by a freelancer and reviewed by IDinsight staff for completeness and accuracy. This provides us with an additional set of quantitative indicators reflecting obvious, tangible signs of community development. We interpret these in the context of the other data inputs - they provide quick verification of projects or accomplishments cited in interviews and allow us to compare villages on one dimension of well-being, to be analyzed alongside less-tangible dimensions.

2.6 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

2.6.1 Community entry

Prior to data collection, IDinsight Field Managers contacted and visited key leaders -- namely village chiefs -- in each selected community to gain pre-approval for surveying. They described the study, its objectives, and the activities data collection would involve: interviews and focus groups with targeted participants. While the IDinsight team sought advice on which leaders to contact and how to approach them from local Tostan staff, we did not mention Tostan at any point during community entry. We did this as part of our efforts to limit pro-program bias or social desirability bias, or other ways in which respondents who associated field staff with Tostan might change their responses to interview questions based on this audience.

[28] To the extent that we randomly selected participants, we could say our sample is *representative of a group of married couples that have been resident and married for the past six years* (and specifically for this group) at the village-level but we cannot guarantee precision because of our small sample size. To improve precision, we would need a different approach that likely starts with knowing the total village population (maybe by conducting a household census or having a household listing) and selects a sample size that will allow an acceptable level of precision.

2.6.2 Data collection schedule, debriefs, and data capture

Having obtained permission for community entry, data-collection teams generally worked for three days in each CEP village and one to two days in each diffusion village. Surveyors conducted in-depth interviews and led focus groups, supervised by the Field Managers. Field Managers occasionally conducted interviews themselves and also completed the field observation checklist in each village. Each night, the team consolidated field notes and debriefed the day's activities, noting observations about the collection process that might inform the research (the "para-data observations" reported in this document) and adjustments to subsequent survey days. These observations informed regular debriefs between IDinsight and the Field Managers, who were in constant touch via Whatsapp groups and had Skype calls as needed (at least once a week).

Field teams captured interviews and focus groups using voice recorders, and field notes where hand-written on note books. Field Managers collected these recordings from enumerators and took photographs of notes and transmitted them, along with the field observation checklists, to IDinsight permanent staff, who then managed the transcription and translation process. Given the often-unreliable electricity and internet connectivity in the communities we visited and the need to share data securely, data was transmitted to the IDinsight staff in batches, usually once every 2-3 days, which may have limited our ability to identify and address issues in near real-time, as intended. Where a suitable connection could not be found, Field Managers travelled to a nearby hub town to charge their devices and to transmit data to IDinsight Associates as regularly as permitted by the field schedule.

2.6.3 Translation and transcription

Since interviews were conducted in local languages, transcribers also translated responses into French as they worked. In most cases, transcribers had attended training and piloting for data collection, and had a good understanding of the study goals, context, and questionnaires. In most cases, they also began transcription alongside data collection and provided feedback to us and to the field teams on the quality of audios and notes, and interview technique. This close relationship/shared training between transcriber and interviewer helped ensure the fidelity of transcriptions and to improve the quality of interviews.[29]

Transcribers worked in an Excel template (see Appendix 1) designed to facilitate analysis. IDinsight Associates reviewed transcripts in this template, sent some back for correction/clarification, and then began the process of preparing them for analysis. This involved using a function in Stata 15 that moved the transcripts into a set of master Excel sheets with each sheet containing all responses to a given interview or focus group question. We talk further about how this data organization facilitated analysis below.

2.6.4 Limitations and mitigation

Because the core IDinsight research team could not conduct interviews themselves, we relied on contracted field staff to probe to get the richest insights during interviews. This meant we had to

[29] To further mitigate bias, transcribers were assigned a set of interviews from the same village to transcribe by an IDinsight Associate rather than field teams. This helped us better monitor differences in transcription quality and signal any inconsistencies at the village-level.

provide clear probing directions to field teams in interview guides and during training. In training, teams conducted simulated interviews in the classroom and then piloted interviews in the field (but outside the study area), all under the supervision of an IDinsight Associate. Nevertheless, we do find cases in transcripts in which we would have probed further if we had conducted interviews ourselves.

We selected field staff to be fluent in the local languages in which they would be interviewing and proficient in French for communication with us. This led to some variation in French proficiency across field personnel. To mitigate this challenge, we used the standardized French-language interview guides across countries (with the exception of Guinea-Bissau where the interview guide was translated to Portuguese and a back-translation reviewed by IDinsight). We then relied on the Associates' general knowledge of the questionnaires and on Field Managers with stronger French skills to allow us to supervise training and piloting that occurred in a mixture of languages.

2.7 DATA ANALYSIS

2.7.1 Thematic (trend) analysis

To analyze our structured interview and focus group data, we conducted a thematic content analysis, mostly drawing from Framework Analysis (Gale et al. 2013). Our analysis team consisted primarily of three IDinsight Associates -- Mallika Sobti, Felicia Belostecinic and Philile Shongwe -- all (non-native) French speakers, two of whom also ran data collection for this study. Associates were supported by project Manager, Zack Devlin-Foltz. Our IDinsight Associate Director -- Dr. Heather Lanthorn -- with expertise in qualitative methods served as the technical team lead for this analysis and reviewed the team's coding process, a subset of actual codes, and all conclusions drawn from deeper analysis facilitated by coding.

Structuring analysis

To begin our first pass through the data, we first read through transcripts, to understand if there were any major internal inconsistencies. Then we set about reviewing, line-by-line, the answers to specific interview questions or sets of interview questions, across all respondents. We chose this approach as our data collection was structured around specific research questions with linked interview questions; this contrasts with a more open-ended life-history narrative, for which we might have analyzed a complete transcript before moving on to the next. Our analysis sheet in Excel was organized such that all responses to each interview question appear automatically into one sheet, allowing the research team to examine all responses to a given question alongside each other (for a given CEP/diffusion village set).

First-cycle coding

First cycle coding began openly and inductively (Saldana, J., 2015), relying on *in vivo* codes in many cases, to describe responses and non-responses (the latter if people gave their reasoning for not wanting to or being able to answer a question). In the first pass, the three main coders looked at the same few transcripts and coded these independently. They then came together to compare and contrast how they had coded the responses and to agree on a more unified set of codes for that particular interview question or question-set. After an initial set of responses had been analyzed and some common ideas started to emerge, the team developed a set of broader thematic codes and

applied them to subsequent responses. Throughout, the coders considered the specific words respondents used as well as the meaning conveyed when assigning codes. For example, in assessing whether someone was talking about 'human rights,' the coder considered both whether this term was used but also whether the respondent was talking about things they believed were important and that people were entitled to, without discrimination.

Then the coders began diving into the data for specific countries, dividing the countries based on contextual familiarity, again working question-by-question. The coding team carefully read through each of their assigned transcripts and applied to them the codes that captured the most salient ideas in the response relevant to the question. Where coders realized that respondents were responding to a different question asked elsewhere in the interview, that information was coded to the relevant questions. The coding team regularly came together to discuss emerging ideas, and codes were added and modified as needed. Different members of the research team regularly came together to discuss emerging codes with the objective of building a set of codes to describe the data. These codes were recorded in a shared codebook so that all coders (and anyone else wanting to repeat the analysis) could apply the same codes. This process was repeated until coders were confident that their findings would not change by looking at additional data for a particular response.

Finalizing coding and finding themes

Once first-cycle coding was complete, the coding team made sure it had a harmonized set of codes, reflected in a codebook, and applied these to all analyzed transcripts and field notes. This approach ensured that emerging themes could be systematically captured and revisited once coding was complete. Then for each research question, the team explored how codes could be grouped and interpreted into themes. In answering each research question, we have reported both commonly responses and interesting outliers, to help us make more precise claims about what is borne out of the data.

In addition, the team considered how overall themes may differ for different groups, including: such as between countries, between CEP and diffusion communities, and between genders (including husbands and wives in the same household).

2.7.2 Quantitative indicator analysis

Self-reported quantitative data gathered during in-depth interviews and focus groups were pulled from the relevant Excel response cells and field notes and prepared for analysis in Stata 15. While the IDinsight team generated summary statistics for each indicator at the village level, these results are reported at country aggregate level (See Appendix 3) and are contextualized within the qualitative findings and subject to the caveats outlined above.

2.7.3 Field observation checklist analysis

Data from checklists was collated and inputted into an Excel sheet for analysis on Stata 15. We generated summary statistics on the presence of infrastructure and other observable features of wellbeing in a village. While these numbers should not be taken literally or generalized to the country level, they help shed light on whether some conclusions emerging from the interviews are supported by observable evidence in the corresponding communities.

2.7.4 Drawing conclusions: triangulation and cross-cutting themes

To draw insights, we engaged in three major types of comparisons: between study countries, between CEP and diffusion communities, and between men and women. These allowed us to better-understand the uniformity of experience across a wide variety of people and contexts.

In addition, we are also able to compare and verify our findings using triangulation when we collected multiple types of data on or from the same source. These sources include: in-depth interviews, focus groups, quantitative indicators, field observation checklist data, and para-data observations (drawn from debrief notes from field staff). For example, we can pair our para-data observations with what respondents told us. We can also compare between what individuals in a particular village said in a one-on-one setting as opposed to in a focus group setting. When these sources point in the same direction, it can increase our certainty in the finding. When these sources point in different directions, it complicates our understanding of what is happening in a particular village.

Finally, while our early analysis (and triangulation as described above) focused on answering each research question as completely as possible, we also found experiences and viewpoints that ran across research questions -- what we call “cross-cutting themes.” Our analysis started with a thematic content analysis of in-depth interviews and focus group data for each research question, which resulted in a broad set of thematic codes to describe the data from each data source. When we saw similar themes across research questions, where possible, we further tested these trends by looking at data sources from other research questions to see if they largely told the same story. Below we demonstrate how we applied this triangulation process to obtain our findings and to eventually draw a conclusion about the importance of **discussion, deference, and harmony** in communities**.**

Analyzing interview and focus group data

Once first-cycle coding of interview and focus group data was complete, the coding team used a codebook with a harmonized (across analysts) set of codes to group codes and interpret them into themes. Figure 3 provides an example of a coded response to a *Social Dynamics* question as it appeared in the codebook. The top row in blue lists the codes assigned for that response, and below it the number of coded responses that included that code for each country (we recorded frequencies separately for CEP and diffusion villages).

Figure 3: Example of a coded response to a Social Dynamics question as it appeared in the codebook

2.4: How would you and your wife/husband resolve a disagreement like this and come to a decision?	Couple discusses among each other to try and reach a solution	Other people may be asked to intervene if solution not reached (including elders)	husband will make final decision	children should be educated	the child will be consulted	others would not be involved in this decision	couple will always call upon trusted members of community to help resolve problems	if wife disagrees after discussion, she will be asked to leave the home
Notes								
PRCC	PRCC	PRCC	PRCC	PRCC	PRCC	PRCC	PRCC	PRCC
Guinea	6	8	3	0	0	1	2	0
	42.86%	57.14%	21.43%	0.00%	0.00%	7.14%	14.29%	0.00%
Guinea-Bissau	37	25	20	11	2	1	2	1
	102.78%	69.44%	55.56%	30.56%	5.56%	2.78%	5.56%	2.78%
Mali	9	3	8	0	0	1	0	0
	90.00%	30.00%	80.00%	0.00%	0.00%	10.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Mauritania	9	11	9	1	0	1	1	0
	40.91%	50.00%	40.91%	4.55%	0.00%	4.55%	4.55%	0.00%
Senegal	9	7	10	0	0	3	0	0
	90.00%	70.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	30.00%	0.00%	0.00%
All	66	54	47	12	2	8	5	1
	75.86%	62.07%	54.02%	13.79%	2.30%	9.20%	5.75%	1.15%
Diffusion	Diffusion	Diffusion	Diffusion	Diffusion	Diffusion	Diffusion	Diffusion	Diffusion
Guinea		2	2				1	
	0.00%	66.67%	66.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%
Guinea-Bissau	2	4	4					
	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Mali	5	3	5	0	0	2	0	0
	100.00%	60.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	40.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Mauritania	7	4	3					
	87.50%	50.00%	37.50%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

We used code frequencies and interesting outliers for several responses to *Social Dynamics* questions across study countries to capture emerging trends related to discussion. The following Key findings emerged from this analysis:[30]

- Discussion is central to household dispute resolution
- Village decision-making involves broad discussion
- Men are seen as final decision-makers

[30] Please note that the coded response pictured above is one of many responses that supported our Key findings related to discussion.

Triangulating with additional data sources

To test these findings further, we triangulated with insights from para-data observations. Specifically, we looked at observations of the following social dynamics during community focus groups:

- Who speaks more in a community discussion (youth, older people, men or women)?
- Who is most influential if the group needs to reach a consensus (youth, older people, men or women)?

These observations added nuance to our findings on the role of discussion in communities by helping us understand what social dynamics may play out during community discussions. Namely we observed that in some communities, women deferred to men during the consensus-building process. Among male deciders, the older male participants were often given the final word on this choice, after which other participants agreed with their choice. In a minority of focus groups, field staff reported that women participated more in the consensus-building process. In a majority of focus groups, field staff reported that the village chiefs spoke the most. From these insights, we concluded that different members do participate in community discussions and that decision-making authority is often deferred to male and older members of the community.

Revisiting the interview and focus group data, iteratively

To further test the emerging theme on deference, we wanted to understand whether and how women deferring authority to men and young people deferring to older members of the community affects their aspirations. We explored this by analyzing responses to questions that explore women's perceived empowerment in the context of deferring to men's authority. Our thematic content analysis of these responses, and use of code frequencies yielded the following Key findings:

- It is widely seen as acceptable for women to work outside of the home
- It is now more acceptable for women to attend community meetings, and community members perceive that violence towards women for wanting to attend community meetings has decreased, especially in CEP communities.

Cross-validation with additional data sources

We subsequently cross-validated these findings with relevant indicator results which supported these trends. Namely, we found that:

- 78% of all respondents either said none or few men would threaten to beat their wives for wanting to attend a community meeting
- 82% of all respondents say it is acceptable for a wife to work and earn money outside of the home

These findings indicate a perception that women can participate in the community's economic and social life, and that deferring to male authority is not viewed as a threat to this freedom.

Study-wide cross-validation

Lastly, we complemented this analysis by examining emerging themes across study research questions to see whether these findings would hold when we looked at the totality of evidence. This cross-validation prompted us to further explore *why* discussion and deference seems to be important and commonly practiced in communities. This approach led us to examine responses -- in both in-depth interviews and focus groups -- where themes of discussion and deference emerged to extract a common nuance across most of these findings, which is the value of social cohesion and harmony in the communities. We draw this conclusion by comparing the supporting evidence for the following findings:

- Discussion is central to household dispute resolution. Some respondents say not discussing could be a source of disharmony.
- Community members rank more respectful relationships as one of the most important recent positive changes
- Community members express value that - in community discussions - individuals should align with the majority opinion
- Women are socially expected to agree with their husbands' opinions in the context of a discussion.

Drawing final conclusions

These findings and their supporting evidence reveal an important nuance around discussion and deference. It appears that both play a critical role in maintaining harmony within communities -- a social dynamic that is highly valued by community members. Triangulation across a variety of data sources and multiple research questions allowed us to identify one of the study's cross-cutting themes: the importance of *discussion, deference, and harmony* in communities**.**

2.7.5 Deep-dive analysis and testing/enriching conclusions

While the triangulation above applied across villages and focused on study-wide findings, we determined that certain findings warranted deeper, more flexible analysis at the village level. Focusing on one village at a time allowed us to more carefully cross-reference data from multiple sources (interview questions, focus groups, observation checklists, etc.), including sources that spoke to a finding in some villages or for some respondents, but not others. We used the deep dives to test findings from the broader thematic analysis to ensure they were not based on this sort of error and to fill in gaps where thematic trends had been unable to respond to important sub-research questions. Where the deep dive contradicted thematic analysis findings, we softened or dropped them. Where the deep dive reinforced thematic analysis findings, we used it to add nuance and depth to them.

We conducted deep dives on community decision-making and collective action, and on FGC. We chose these areas based on both their importance to Tostan and our judgment that our findings for them would benefit most from a village-focused deep dive.

Practically, we developed the deep dives as follows:

Step 1: Identify trends from thematic analysis that should be tested and enriched by the deep dive

Step 2: Develop/refine new sub-research questions that would test and enrich the thematic findings or fill gaps in them

Step 3: Select villages. We used purposive selection to ensure we had villages across all countries and with a variety of expected outcomes and had rich responses to facilitate deeper investigation.[31]

Step 4: Researchers responded to each question from step 2 using all available evidence for one village at a time. We referred to this process as "detective work" as it required the researcher to constantly reassess what she believed to be true about the village and what additional evidence would change or strengthen that assessment.[32]

For example, we applied this deep dive approach to further test our thematic analysis findings related to community collective action as follows:

Step 1: From our thematic analysis, we identified the following trends:

1. Community members commonly cite financial and economic well-being initiatives as the most important recent changes compared to social well-being initiatives
2. When mentioned, CEP communities recognize Tostan as promoting community well-being, but its actions are often expressed in vague terms
3. Some changes that are seen as improving community well-being are not attributed to a particular organization or group

Step 2: We decided to investigate these thematic findings further to see if there was additional nuance and to better assess their alignment with Tostan's expectations. We asked the following new sub-research questions to fill those gaps in our knowledge:[33]

- Is there evidence that communities are leading activities/efforts to further their own wellbeing/development?
- Who is leading these efforts, if not community members themselves? Which actors were involved and how?
- Is there evidence that women are involved in initiating some changes?
- Is there evidence that the CMC is involved in exercising collective influence to advocate for community well-being?

Step 3: We selected deep-dive villages purposively across all countries to ensure we looked at villages with a variety of expected outcomes, and which had richer responses to facilitate a deeper

[31] It was important, for example, to avoid having only villages in which the CMC was working well in the collective action deep dive. Trends identified there might be coincidental but appear causal given their correlation with the positive outcome. As a general practice, we always ensure variance in the outcomes of interest in any sample or subsample analyzed.
[32] For example, a researcher's deep-dive thought process might sound like: "No one has voluntarily mentioned the CMC when asked generally about social changes in the community. However, several people have credited Tostan with changing how the community makes decisions and have listed that as an important social change. I wonder if the CMC has led or sustained those changes. If so, I would expect responses to later questions that ask directly about CMC activities to reference this same change in decision-making. Let's go see if this is true - if it is, it seems like the CMC has a larger role here than it first appeared."
[33] A complete list of sub-research questions asked and evidence gathered for deep dives is available in the Appendices.

investigation.

Step 4: We examined responses to these new sub-research questions to generate the following cross-country trends:

1. There is mixed evidence that CEP and diffusion communities in the five study countries are initiating or playing a leading role in activities that further the community's overall wellbeing.
2. The role of village-level discussions and consensus in driving socio-economic change in the village seemed important in most villages, even if an external actor was initiating them.
3. The most frequently occurring examples of community action were village members mobilizing to keep the community clean, advocating for resources to build community infrastructure, or inviting outsiders to lead discussions that could promote socio-economic change.
4. Evidence of CMC activity in CEP villages is mixed. Where they are active, they are most often described as working on conducting or mobilizing for village clean-ups, organizing sensitization meetings on various topics, and dispute resolution.
5. There is no strong evidence that women and youth are major drivers of collective action in the village, although in some study countries, their participation in community level activities (particularly village meetings and cleanups) is acknowledged.

These deep dive trends therefore reinforced our thematic analysis finding that Tostan -- when mentioned -- is recognized as promoting community well-being, but its actions are expressed in vague terms. Our deep dive analysis added the nuance that CMCs often do exist, but their levels of activity varies across countries and villages. Where they are active, they are recognized for specific positive actions like village clean-ups and dispute resolution. Where they are less active, community members seem unsure about their roles.

On the other hand, the deep dive weakened our finding that community members think financial and economic well-being initiatives are more important compared to social well-being initiatives. Our deep dive helped us unpack the process by which these important changes came about. In most cases, community members see positive social change -- such as village-level discussion-- as a driver of socio-economic change and therefore integral to how communities have achieved their aspirations in the recent past.

2.7.6 Tostan expectations analysis

Finally, IDinsight compared our findings for each research question to Tostan's expectations as shared by Tostan staff and embedded in Tostan's theory of change. The purpose of this analysis was to help identify those parts of Tostan's theory of change and broader expectations that are most and least consistent with the current reality in study communities. This may inform revisions to the theory or change or its implementation that would improve future outcomes.

To conduct this analysis, we first coded Tostan's expectations as we would interview responses. This gave us codes whose frequency would be initial indicators of the extent to which reality aligned with the expectation. We then applied these codes to the data, where relevant. In many cases, these expectation codes did not match our data well enough to assess directly in this way. In these cases,

we iterated - first generating findings from the data and then revisiting the expectations to match them to related findings. In the case of the deep dives, Tostan expectations not yet effectively assessed were one source of new sub-questions for the deep-dive. Finally, during drafting of this report, we compiled all findings for each research question and cross-checked them again with the expectations to make our final assessments.

3. MITIGATING BIASES

3.1. MINIMIZING ASSOCIATION WITH TOSTAN, MINIMIZING PRO-PROGRAM BIAS

Our primary goal was to understand the current state of village activity and, secondarily to understand respondent views of whether and how change has happened in their community. Understanding respondent views of Tostan and their activities was only of interest to the extent that community members associated Tostan (or any organization) with the current state of their community.

To limit pro-program (or anti-program) bias, we were careful not to mention Tostan during community entry and during the consent process. We mentioned Tostan in interviews only after a respondent mentioned the organization spontaneously, if they did at all. This technique helped us mitigate any pressure on participants to describe Tostan or the CEP in a favorable light and gave us a more objective perspective of the drivers of change (or lack thereof) in each community.[34] When we have conducted an interview this way, we can interpret a respondent's mentioning Tostan first as a signal that Tostan is prominent in their mind.

3.2. MINIMIZING SOCIAL DESIRABILITY BIAS

Social desirability bias refers to the tendency of respondents to respond to questions in a manner they believe will be viewed favorably by others. This is a particular concern with value-laden questions about sensitive topics such as FGC or domestic violence. The study sought to understand what respondents thought and perceived on these topics, not what respondents thought the interviewers believed or hoped to hear. In a context where residents have experience with outsiders who express opinions on these issues, it is particularly likely that they might assume -- for example -- that an interviewer from an urban area opposes FGC. Social desirability would then make them more likely to say that they, too, oppose it, whether this is their true opinion or not.

We employed three main approaches to mitigate such bias in our interviews: ensuring confidentiality at the beginning and throughout the interview, ensuring that interviewers did not display or pass judgment, and limiting our association with any program or viewpoint on 'good' behavior.

In addition, we structured many of our questions in the form of hypotheticals and vignettes. As suggested in the literature addressing sensitive topics and social norms, this can help distance responses to particular questions from respondent's personal experiences (Mackie, G. et al., 2016), allowing respondents to reveal the belief systems surrounding the issue given their social reference groups. For example, to gather respondents' perceptions of FGC practice in their villages we employed the following vignette:

> *We will ask you to imagine a couple in your village, Fatou and Cheikh. I don't want you to think about a real Fatou and Cheikh who actually live here. I could have chosen other names, but for now let's stick to those.*

[34] IDinsight's approach of mentioning Tostan only after respondents mentioned it, is further supported by past Tostan evaluations which reveal that pro-program bias is particularly difficult to avoid when respondents are asked directly about Tostan (Korvne, K.J., 2017).

They have a daughter named Fatima who is at an age when girls in your village are/were often cut. Fatou and Cheikh are trying to decide whether to have Fatou cut.

- In this discussion, what do you think someone like Fatou's opinion might be about cutting her child?
- In this discussion, what do you think someone like Cheikh's opinion might be about cutting his child?

In each study location we worked with field staff to ensure vignettes were detailed enough and that fictional characters had enough relevant similarity (including names) to the study population. This was to ensure respondents could relate to the scenario and that they did not "fill in'' missing information that could bias their responses and add undesirable noise in the data (Bicchieri, Lindemans, & Jiang, 2014).

3.3. MINIMIZING POSITIONALITY BIAS

While our surveyors were culturally similar and spoke the same languages as study participants, there was likely some bias introduced through the participants' seeing our field teams as outsiders, and as having received approval to interview them from -- often male -- authorities in the community. The fact that our Field Managers -- who conducted community entry and gained pre-approval for surveying from community authorities -- were both male and female in most countries, may have mitigated some of this inherent social bias but likely not completely given the existing hierarchies that need to be respected in order to successfully work in our study communities.

4. FINDINGS

This section is organized into three "chapters" -- one for each of the study's three main thematic areas: social dynamics, human rights alignment, and FGC abandonment. In each chapter, we present results by research questions, occasionally combining two questions for which the approach and findings overlap substantially. For each research question, we describe our approach to generating findings, summarize those findings in a narrative overview, and then explore key findings in greater detail.[35] We select key findings based on a combination of the strength of evidence for them and their likely importance or decision-relevance for Tostan. A detailed summary of all findings is available in *Appendix 2*. We also use our findings to compare current reality with Tostan's expectations, as collected from Tostan staff here prior to data collection.

As explained in Study Methodology, this study does not measure the causal impact of the CEP but instead provides a rigorous description of the current situation in study communities. As such, we cannot attribute our reported findings to Tostan's efforts (or any other factor). Furthermore, we present findings from **the village as a whole, not just CEP class participants.**

This report responds to all study research questions, though we have richer and more robust evidence for some than for others. We assess the limitations of our approach and evidence in each research question section.

OVERALL APPROACH TO GENERATING FINDINGS

IDinsight coded responses from interviews and focus groups across countries and villages using the process described in section *2.7 Data Analysis.* Once the analysis team had developed a broad set of thematic codes to describe the data for each interview question (or set of linked questions), we assessed the most common responses (code frequencies) as well as outliers as a first-pass at understanding and describing the content of our data. Then, through triangulation with trends for other questions, field observations, and para-data, we developed a more holistic understanding of study communities.[36] A comprehensive list of interview questions, focus group questions, and other data sources used to generate findings for each research question is in *6. Appendices.*

For a selection of particularly important and nuanced findings related to communities' collective influence/action and to FGC, we conducted an additional deep-dive analysis, cross-referencing all data from related interview questions, focus-group questions, and observation checklists in one village at a time. We describe the details of this approach in section *2.7 Data Analysis.* We did this deep-dive analysis to see if study-wide thematic trends held under closer scrutiny.

Unless otherwise specified, statements like "most respondents said X" or "the most common response was Y" are based on our analysis of coded responses and apply across countries and across CEP and diffusion villages. "Most" and "majority" refer to ideas or themes supported by more than 50% of the

[35] In cases where two research questions largely share the same content in these sub-sections, we combine their sections to avoid repetitiveness.

[36] "Paradata" refers to data about the process by which the data were collected. For this study, paradata commonly consisted of field-staff's notes and observations about the attitudes of respondents or the difficulty of obtaining survey consent.

responses analyzed while "most common" refers to ideas or themes supported by more responses than any other idea or theme. "Some," "few," or "a minority" refer to responses that do not fit the above categories but whose presence in the data is still notable. While not all qualitative work provides the reader a sense of code frequencies, we do this because it allows us to discern broad patterns in the data and to report these patterns more precisely than we otherwise could.

As discussed in section *2.5.4 Data collection tools and approaches*, interviewers were deliberate about when and where to mention key concepts such as “Tostan” or the “CMC” explicitly to respondents. In addition to mitigating bias, this approach allowed us to draw inferences about the salience of a concept for respondents from how often they mention it unprompted. In this section, we use “volunteered” or phrases like “mentioned without prompting” to note cases in which respondents introduced a concept without being asked directly about it.[37]

For some research questions and findings, we report country-level findings where these differ from cross-country trends in meaningful ways. In the sections that follow, we include additional “approach to generating findings” sub-sections where necessary to clarify nuances of the approach used to address individual research questions.

Each chapter concludes with our assessment of the extent to which current reality aligns with Tostan’s expectations.

[37] For example, if respondents cite the CMC when asked generally about positive social change in the community, which is before the point in the interview when the enumerator first mentions the CMC.

Social Dynamics

We organized our investigation of social dynamics around the below research questions:

- **SD1:** How have perceptions of relationships and interactions in the community evolved over the past 6 years?
- **SD2:** What social dynamics influence community and household decision-making processes and outcomes?
- **SD3:** Have communities exercised collective influence to advocate for community well-being?

Narrative overview of social dynamics findings

Respondents described study-area social dynamics characterized by discussion and broad participation and noted an increase in respect or harmony -- between men and women and in general -- over the past several years. They perceived a decrease in violence against women and affirmed that household decisions should be (and are) discussed between husbands and wives before husbands take final decisions. In the public realm, community decisions are made following consultation among different community members. Especially in CEP communities, respondents place value on participation of all community members in these discussions and express an expectation that decisions will often favor majority opinions. Following discussion, village leaders will usually make final decisions.

When it comes to changes achieved in the past six or eight years, respondents most-often cited education and health projects -- often physical infrastructure like schools and health centers -- as the most important. An increase in social harmony and in the importance of discussion when making community decisions is the next most common positive change cited.

Once communities decide on desired changes, what happens next varies by village. Some villages' respondents report that the community is able to initiate, lead, and sustain important change (or effectively advocate for it with local authorities or external organizations). In other communities, respondents perceive important change or action as dependent on external actors, lamenting the cessation or failure of particular efforts after the end of external support (from NGOs or the government).

Evidence is also mixed regarding CMCs. CMCs exist in most CEP communities but the extent to which these are involved in the changes, actions, and projects respondents think are most important varies both within and across communities.

Table 3 lists the selected Key Findings for Social Dynamics (for each research question), which are summarized along with other findings in the above narrative overview. A complete list of findings and data sources used is available in *Appendix 2.*

Table 3: Summary of Key findings for Social Dynamics

Research question	Key findings
SD1. How have perceptions of relationships and interactions in the community evolved over the past 6 years?	SD1.1. It is widely seen as acceptable for women to work outside of the home
	SD1.2. Discussion seems to be central to how respondents in CEP villages think couples should make decisions or resolve disputes. Respondents who think this is a change from the past often highlight it as among the most important social change that has occurred.
	SD1.3. Residents of CEP villages perceive that violence towards women has decreased
SD2. What social dynamics influence community and household decision-making processes and outcomes?	SD2.1. Community members cite better education, sanitation, and more respectful relationships among community members as changes perceived in the past six (or eight in Senegal) years
SD3. Have communities exercised collective influence to advocate for community well-being?	SD3.1 Village-level decision-making involves broad discussion
	SD3.2 There is mixed evidence that CEP and diffusion communities in the five study countries are initiating or leading activities that improve the community's well-being. Where external actors are initiators of positive changes, some respondents report that the changes are not sustained when these actors leave the community.
	SD3.3 Evidence of CMC activity in CEP villages is mixed. Where CMCs are active, they are most often described as mobilizing for village clean-ups, organizing sensitization meetings, and assisting residents in conflict resolution.

Below, we summarize our approach and findings for each Social Dynamics research question. We combine research questions SD1 and SD2 in the same subsection given a large degree of overlap in the approach, evidence, and findings relevant to each.

Research question SD1 and SD2: How have perceptions of relationships and interactions in the community evolved over the past 6 years?

and

What social dynamics influence community and household decision-making processes and outcomes?

Approach to generating findings for SD1 and SD2

For these research questions, our interview and focus group topics centered on perceptions of how husbands and wives interact with respect to issues that affect their lives and that of their family and how they resolve differences and conflict both privately and publicly. Some of the interview questions employ vignettes and hypotheticals to distance sensitive questions from respondents' personal experiences. For example, we used a vignette involving an imaginary couple deciding whether or not

to allow their daughter to continue with school. This hypothetical scenario was meant to enable us to gather respondents' perceptions of how couples in the village would come to a decision in this situation. We subsequently asked respondents how *they* would resolve a disagreement with their spouse in a similar situation.

Focus groups explored whether and how these dynamics have evolved by asking about changes in the village over the past six (or eight in Senegal) years. Focus group leaders asked participants to discuss and rank the most meaningful changes that have happened in the past six (or eight in Senegal) years. Participants then reflected on the community dynamics that have led to those changes.

Overview of findings for SD1 and SD2

Across the study, respondents in CEP villages think that women and men should (and usually do) use discussion to resolve disputes at home and that women should be able to work and participate in community life outside the home. Respondents also indicated that increased harmony and respect, among spouses and in the community, was a change from the past and one they considered to be among the most important. In focus groups, women participated; in activities during which the group was asked to reach a consensus decision, women contributed their opinions before deferring to men for final decisions - all of which aligned with Tostan's expectations.[38] We also found a perceived decrease in violence against women across communities, though it is possible this perception depends on the particular context of the vignette used. Taken together, our findings suggest that women are participants in household decisions and public life. In both contexts, men and women recognize the value of consensus and discussion in the decision-making process.

[38] For a few focus group questions, we asked group participants to discuss and come to a consensus. In interviews, we also asked a few questions on who would be the final decision-maker on decisions of joint concern in the household. Given the existing traditional hierarchies and beliefs sometimes grounded in religious teachings in study communities, it is not surprising that we believe -- in retrospect -- that these questions on decision-making should have been framed differently as we expect the majority of responses overriding response to a question on final decision-making to noted that the husband or man would will make the final decision.

Key finding SD1.1. It is widely seen as acceptable for women to work outside of the home

Evidence

Key finding SD1.1	Summarized evidence/ trends in data
It is widely seen as acceptable for women to work outside of the home	• Most CEP and diffusion respondents disagreed with those (in a vignette) criticising a woman for working outside the home. They often stated a personal opinion that women can work outside of the home.[39] • In these responses, the most common reason volunteered is the economic benefits to the household of the woman working and earning. • Some CEP respondents volunteered that there was a community expectation or value supporting women working outside the home. • Some respondents say it is okay for women to work outside the home only if they do not neglect their responsibilities or have permission from their husbands

When presented with a scenario where an imaginary wife in the village is criticized for working and earning money outside of the home, most female and male respondents in CEP and diffusion villages disagreed with that criticism and expressed support for the wife's working. The most commonly volunteered reasons for this opinion were the economic benefits of the wife's earnings. One quote from a male respondent encapsulates this view:

"[A] wife who finds a respectable job outside her home, even if it is to do [...] housework, to support her home and feed her family, should not be criticized. This does not make her a bad wife or a bad mother, people who think otherwise are in bad faith and hypocrites" - Man, Ranerou village, Senegal

Of the respondents who said it is acceptable for the woman to work outside the home, some added that it would only be acceptable if they did not neglect their responsibilities in the home and/or if they had permission from their husbands.

[39] In the vignette a woman working outside the home is criticized by others in the community for being a bad wife or mother.

Key finding SD1.2. Residents of CEP villages see discussion as central to household dispute resolution

Evidence

Key finding SD1.2	Summarized evidence/ trends in data
Discussion seems to be central to how respondents in CEP villages think couples should make decisions or resolve disputes. **Respondents who think this is a change from the past often list it among the most important social changes that have occurred.**	• A majority of respondents said disagreements are resolved by discussion. Some respondents said that "not discussing" could be a source of disharmony or conflict. • When discussion alone does not resolve disputes, some respondents said they would involve others as a next step. • Some respondents described conflict resolution as one person apologizing or ceding to their spouse (there were references to both husbands and wives ceding). • Some focus groups ranked more respectful relations and more consultation on household decisions among the two most important social changes that have happened over the past six (or eight in Senegal) years.

When asked how they would resolve a disagreement with their spouse, a majority of respondents in CEP villages and diffusion villages said that while husbands and wives can have differing views, they should (and usually do) discuss to try to convince each other. Many respondents also said that "not discussing" could be the reason for disagreement among hypothetical couples in the vignettes we presented, such as:

"[If one of them makes a decision without discussing it with the other, there may be a disagreement. When a husband and wife live together but make decisions on their own without discussing it, it will not work. I think that the source of all disagreement is the lack of discussion and cohesion, it is always necessary to discuss together to find a consensus." - Man, Kodiolel village (CEP), Senegal

While responses in interviews did not usually indicate whether this practice represented a change over time, there is evidence from focus groups that more respectful relations and more consultation on household decisions is seen as a change. This social change was ranked as one of the two most significant recent social changes in some focus groups in CEP villages and most focus groups in diffusion villages.

When discussion alone does not resolve disputes, many male and female respondents said they would involve others as a next step. Some respondents in all countries, and more women than men, described conflict resolution as one person apologizing or ceding to their spouse. For example, one respondent described how they usually resolve disputes with their spouse as follows:

"In order not to disagree, I agree to be in the place of the wife. So I try to give in on a lot of things." - Woman, N'diawaldy Boully village (CEP), Mauritania

Some responses also referred to men ceding to their wives to avoid disagreement.

Key finding SD1.3. Residents of CEP villages perceive that violence against women has decreased

Evidence

Key finding SD1.3	Summarized evidence/ trends in data
Residents of CEP villages perceive that violence against women has decreased - though this may be contextually dependent	• Most respondents said none or very few men in their village *would* threaten to beat their wives for wanting to attend a community meeting. • Some respondents also reported that this is a change in practice from the past. • Some respondents also mentioned they or others in the community think men would *not* beat or threaten their wives in this context - which reflects the presence of a normative expectation. It is unclear whether the change reported by respondents refers to all violence against women or only in the context of her desire to attend a community meeting. • **Guinea:** Some respondents said hitting a wife if she disobeys her husband is justified. • **Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Senegal:** Some respondents said it is more acceptable for women to attend community meetings now compared to the past, and that fewer men would beat their wives in this situation • **Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, and Senegal:** In focus groups, decreased domestic violence was cited as one of the most significant social changes at least once in each country. • **Senegal:** A few male respondents said it is less common for husbands to beat their wives in this case because they now value community meetings which have taught them about human rights among other topics.

When asked how many men in their villages they think would threaten to beat their wives for wanting to attend a community meeting, most respondents said that none or very few men would do so.[40] When asked whether this number has changed in the last six (or eight in Senegal) years, some respondents said that it is less common for husbands to beat their wives now. The most commonly volunteered reasoning for this change was the increased acceptability of women attending village meetings.

We therefore have evidence that it is now more socially acceptable for women to attend community meetings (and that their husbands usually grant them permission to do so). However, we cannot necessarily generalize to say that respondents think violence against women has decreased in other contexts since responses often anchored to the acceptability of women attending community meetings.

[40] All final in-depth interview and focus group questions were developed collaboratively with the Tostan team in October 2019. In addressing the topic of gender-based violence, it was -- for instance-- important for Tostan that we use a hypothetical scenario exploring a relatively benign example to help respondents better navigate the sensitivities around this topic, as opposed to asking the question more directly and generalized to any situation.

Country-specific nuances[41]

Guinea

While most respondents said that violence against women does not happen as much anymore, a few male respondents said husbands continue to beat their wives in other cases (but not for wanting to attend a village meeting), such as when the wife disobeys or refuses to have sexual intercourse with her husband. One respondent reports his personal position and practice in the following quote:

"[If] I say for example to my wife not to go somewhere, [and] she goes, she disobeyed me and she did not take my word into consideration. [Then] on her return, I will beat her." - Man, Damaniah village (CEP), Guinea

Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Senegal

A few respondents in CEP villages expressed an opinion that wife-beating is acceptable in some circumstances, though not for wanting to attend a community meeting. Respondents often clarify that it has become increasingly acceptable for women to attend community meetings, making this no longer likely to provoke violence. The following quotation represents this view:

"[Before] there were [men who beat their wives] but during the eight years that has completely changed; we men know that meetings are beneficial for us and our women so we allow them to go" - Man, Boulone-Thiekey village (Diffusion), Senegal

Senegal

A few male respondents said it is less common for husbands to beat their wives in this case because they now value community meetings which have taught them about human rights.

[41] Countries showing similar trends have been grouped together for clarity.

Key finding SD2.1. Community members cite better education, sanitation, and more respectful relationships as important social changes

Evidence

Key finding SD2.1	Summarized evidence/ trends in data[42]
Community members cite better education, sanitation, and more respectful relationships among community members as changes perceived in the past six (or eight in Senegal) years	In order of frequency of mentions in a focus group, changes cited as significant are: improved hygiene (though none in Guinea), followed by better education and better access to water. • Some focus groups credit change in hygiene and education to Tostan courses and awareness-building, while others did not attribute these changes to any one particular entity or influence • Participants in both gender-mixed and segregated focus groups most commonly say women practice and drive these changes **Guinea-Bissau and Mali:** After improved hygiene, the second most commonly cited significant change in CEP villages was increased unity and harmony among villagers. This is often described as the village making decisions collectively and more peaceful interactions between husbands and wives

The most commonly cited positive changes across countries were improved hygiene, better education and better access to water. This sentiment is echoed in some focus groups who attribute positive changes related to hygiene and education to Tostan's efforts in the village. These focus groups (both mixed and gender-segregated groups) say Tostan's lessons on hygiene and education are being practiced by women in the village.

Country-specific nuances[43]

Guinea-Bissau, Mali

After improved hygiene, most focus groups in these countries also ranked increased unity and harmony between residents as a significant change. Participants often describe this dynamic as having helped residents maintain peace and make decisions collectively.

Limitations to our analysis of research questions SD1 and SD2

One important question in this section relied on a vignette in which a couple is deciding whether to keep their female child in school. The intent of the question is to explore the way the couple is expected to make the decision. However, some respondents seem to have anchored to the value of education, as opposed to the process of making a decision, as in the following quotation:

"We will discuss together, each will give his reasons and if it is my husband who does not want the child to continue his studies I would tell him the importance of studies, I want to try to make him

[42] Where not specified, the evidence applies across countries
[43] Countries showing similar trends have been grouped together for clarity.

aware of the need for school for the child. [...] the final decision is up to my husband but I know that I could convince him." - Woman, Colondito village (CEP), Guinea-Bissau

In such responses, the importance of discussion is clear. These responses were given in the context of a vignette about a child attending school and so tell us something about the household dynamic with regards to children's education. We did not explore, and therefore cannot draw inferences about, the decision-making process or the woman's confidence in her ability to convince her husband hold for other issues.[44]

Similarly, when respondents were asked how many men in their village, hypothetically speaking, would threaten to beat their wives for attending a community meeting, many respondents anchored to the acceptability of attending a community meeting rather than to the prevalence of violence. As such, it is likely that some responses regarding the prevalence of violence are influenced by the respondent's perception of the social acceptability of women attending community meetings. Again, we must be careful in generalizing conclusions from this question to situations beyond the vignette we used.

[44] Given more time, this study could have explored whether and how this dynamic is consistent for a broader range of household decisions that Tostan expects husbands and wives to now be making together.

Research question SD3: Have communities exercised collective influence to advocate for community well-being?

Approach to generating findings

To generate findings for research question SD3, we first applied the thematic content analysis described in Section *2.7 Data analysis* to interview and focus group data. Through this process, we identified emerging findings that would benefit from a more nuanced analysis. Specifically, we and Tostan sought to understand in greater detail how communities make decisions and carry out community-improvement activities -- including who is involved and in what ways.

To explore these questions, we selected two villages in each country and analyzed them in greater depth.[45] We selected these villages purposively to ensure variance in how much community action they displayed and how active their CMCs appeared to be prior to the deep dive.[46] Section *2.7 Data Analysis* contains additional details on our approach to deep dives.

The thematic analysis identified general, cross-country trends in the types of changes and decisions community members highlight as well as which actors or processes they cite as involved in them. For example, it told us what proportion of respondents cited positive changes led by the community itself. We then used the deep-dive to test these trends by answering the more holistic question "Is there evidence that communities are leading activities/efforts to further their own wellbeing/development?" Here, we searched for evidence of community-led efforts across all information available on each selected village. We did so by examining responses to several interview and focus-group questions for each village simultaneously and in conversation with each other. If responses to one question did not cite examples of community-led action but community-led action came up in answers to several other questions, we detected this during the deep-dive even if we had missed it in question-based thematic analysis. If the deep dive cast doubt on a finding in the thematic analysis, we discounted that finding.

A table reporting all the evidence gathered in the deep dive can be found in the *Appendix 4.* The findings we report below are supported by both broad trends in codes across all villages and the deep-dive analysis.

Overview of Findings for SD3

Across countries, we observed that both CEP and diffusion communities value discussion and participation in decision-making. This includes decisions about how to allocate or employ resources for community projects. However, once communities have made decisions, what happens next seems to vary more from village to village. In some CEP and diffusion communities, respondents reported that the community is able to initiate important change or action itself or effectively advocate for local

[45] The deep-dive was conducted in one CEP and one diffusion village per country. Specifically, we investigated Sonkhonya and Damaniah villages in Guinea, Sintcham-Dicori and Sintcham-Massacunda in Guinea-Bissau, Beleco and Farabougou in Mali, Wouro Amadou Hawa and Mourtogal in Mauritania, and Kodiolel and Gounas in Senegal.

[46] Importantly, since we selected purposively and had only two villages in each country, these results should not be interpreted at the country level - they are unlikely to be representative of all villages in our sample from that country.

authorities or external organizations to initiate and support it.[47] In other CEP and diffusion communities, respondents perceived important change or action as more dependent on external actors, whether to initiate it or to sustain it. Respondents in these communities often said that important change, action, or projects ended along with the external support.

Evidence was also mixed regarding CMCs. Most CEP communities reported having active CMCs but with varying reported involvement in the changes, actions, and projects respondents deem most important. Below, we report the Key findings underlying this description in more detail, along with the data sources and evidence used to arrive at them. *Appendix 2* contains all findings related to this research question.

[47] In this section we use "important" to refer to changes or activities that are more important to respondents. In most cases, this is based on responses to direct questions such as "what are important changes that have happened in the village in the past 6 or 8 years?" In some cases, it is based on which changes respondents mention most-often unprompted, using this to infer salience and - therefore - importance.

Key finding SD3.1. Village-level decision-making involves broad discussion

Evidence

Key finding SD3.1	Summarized evidence/ trends in data
Village-level decision-making involves broad discussion	• A majority of respondents say that a meeting usually happens during a community decision process. Universal participation is expected and the village leader and elders are the most influential. It is unclear how much women and youth participate in these discussions. Respondents acknowledge women's participation in some interviews and some focus groups but not in others. • In addition to discussion's role in community decision-making, some respondents in CEP villages also said community discussion is a key *positive social change* that has occurred in the village

Key finding SD3.1 focuses on the processes by which communities make decisions. In a majority of focus groups, participants cited a meeting as a key feature of how the village would decide how to use a grant to benefit the whole community.[48] The village chief would usually be present or convene the meeting, in which other groups would participate to various degrees, expressing opinions before the leader made a final decision informed by the collective discussion. Below is one typical comment, from a mixed-gender community focus group in Colondito in Guinea-Bissau:

"[If] an NGO [brings] money here for everyone in the village, the village chief is going to summon everyone. He is the one they present the money to. Everyone gives their opinion and finally [concludes] on what to [do with the] money. It is the opinion of the elderly who will be the most influential, but that does not prevent others from saying what they think [...] So that's what shows that we make very important decisions collectively." Focus group, Colondito, Guinea-Bissau

In some villages, respondents said community discussion was not just part of the decision-making process, but an important type of positive change in and of itself, as illustrated by the two quotations below:

"There have been changes in this village…We have awareness campaigns for talks and discussions and know a lot now" - Woman, Oure Yoro Sow village (CEP), Senegal

"[Thanks] to the different training we received thanks to Tostan projects, we understood a lot of things. [There] were even families who did not speak to each other. [But] thanks to these changes, the whole problem is solved. [There are now fewer] grudges, and [there is] also [...] exchange between men and women when making decisions concerning the village." - Woman, Zabantoukoro village (CEP), Mali

Para-data observations

[48] This was a hypothetical question that did not specify where the grant came from and whose aim was to understand the community decision-making process.

When focus groups were asked to come to a consensus on the two most significant changes that have happened over the past six (or eight in Senegal) years, field staff observed the following country-specific dynamics:

- **Senegal:** In two gender-mixed focus groups in CEP villages, field staff reported that women did not participate in the consensus-building process, and instead let the men decide on behalf of the group. Among male deciders, the older male participants were often given the final word on this choice, after which other participants agreed with their choice. Transcribers further noted that when women in mixed focus groups voiced their opinions -- including in disagreement with top choices -- they spoke softly (in comparison to the voices of men) and only spoke up when the moderator intervened.
- **Guinea-Bissau:** In at least three focus groups in CEP villages, women participated more than men in the consensus-building process. In leadership focus groups, the village chief spoke the most, but it was clear that he was allowing others to speak before giving his final opinion on the matter.
- **Mauritania:** In community focus groups in diffusion villages (which were all gender-segregated) women participated, albeit not as actively as men -- often needing the moderator to prompt them for more information.

These observations need to be interpreted carefully given that they come from subjective impressions of our field staff. They also cannot tell us about changes over time (i.e. we do not know how a similar focus group would have gone six years ago or prior to the CEP). They do, however, complement our findings from other questions related to dynamics between men and women, suggesting that women voice their opinions, that men accept their doing so, and that respect for traditional authority is important.

Key finding 3.2. Evidence is mixed on whether communities initiate, lead, and sustain activities that improve their wellbeing.

Evidence

Key finding SD3.2	Summarized evidence/ trends in data
There is mixed evidence that CEP and diffusion communities in the five study countries are initiating, leading, and sustaining activities that improve their wellbeing. Where external actors are initiators of positive changes, some are perceived as not sustained when these actors leave the community.	**Trends from study-wide thematic analysis:** ● A majority of respondents in CEP and diffusion communities provided examples of *positive* changes that have happened in the past six (or eight in Senegal) years. ● Most of the cited positive changes are public infrastructure and hygiene improvements. ● Among respondents who volunteer attribution, these changes are most often attributed to external actors, such as government entities and NGOs of different sizes, including Tostan. Some respondents mention -- unprompted -- that these changes have failed or ceased with the end of external support. ● **Guinea-Bissau**: Most community and leadership focus groups said that external actors promised to deliver on the community's aspirations and that those promises have not been met **Evidence from deep-dive villages:** Similar to the broad trends above, in the ten deep-dive villages, the degree to which respondents say communities act collectively to initiate, lead, and sustain these important changes varies: <u>Initiation and Leadership (both CEP and diffusion villages):</u> ● **Sonkhonya** and **Damaniah** (Guinea)**, Mortougal** (Mauritania)**, and Gounas** (Senegal): Respondents described positive changes that were clearly initiated or led by the community working together. Respondents most often said that these changes were initiated or voted on by the community and realized through external support (i.e., NGOs or local government). ● **Sintcham-Massacunda** and **Sintcham Dicori** (Guinea Bissau)**, Beleco and Farabougou** (Mali)**, Wouro Amadou Hawa** (Mauritania)**, and Kodiolel** (Senegal): Respondents most commonly cite external actors (including Tostan) as initiators and drivers of positive changes. <u>Sustainment (CEP Only):</u> ● In **Sintcham Dicori** and **Beleco**, there is strong evidence that the CMC and/or other community body is sustaining the changes initiated by Tostan: respondents report that the CMC is working on hygiene and revenue-generation activities initiated by Tostan ● In **Sonkhonya** and **Wouro Amadou Hawa**, the evidence is mixed with respondents giving examples of projects that have not been sustained but also of some ongoing activities. ● In **Kodiolel**, no responses suggested that positive changes were sustained or ongoing and few could think of current CMC activities. <u>References to Tostan:</u> ● In all deep-dive CEP villages and three of five deep-dive diffusion villages, Tostan is among the external actors credited for involvement in positive changes.

Full-study

Key finding 3.2 gives us a picture of what has changed in communities and how community members view the process leading to that change. While we asked for both positive and negative changes, the majority of interview respondents and focus group participants provided examples of positive changes that occurred over the past six or eight years. The most commonly cited changes were the construction of local schools in CEP villages and better access to water in diffusion villages. The degree to which communities initiate and act collectively to achieve these important changes varied across villages. This trend does not seem to differ between CEP and diffusion communities. The most common responses to how the changes came about focused on external actors. Respondents who said that external actors initiated positive changes generally characterized community members as involved primarily as beneficiaries -- for example, in microfinance programs. Some respondents noted that these externally driven changes were not sustained when these actors left the community. In other cases respondents in some CEP and diffusion communities said community members successfully petitioned outsiders to execute a positive change, such as the renovation of a local school or mosque. In some of these cases, respondents said positive changes were sustained by the community with limited external support.

Deep-dive

The deeper analysis confirmed the above trend of mixed evidence. In four of ten villages analyzed, respondents clearly think the community is initiating/leading changes for itself and in two of five CEP villages there is clear evidence that communities can sustain the changes triggered by Tostan after the conclusion of the CEP.

The following is a comment typical of a community in which respondents appeared confident the community could initiate and lead change itself:

"[The changes that were] initiated by the community members themselves [are] the construction of the school and the mosque, the pump, [and] the pounding machine. With the exception of the hospital, which was initiated by the government" - Woman, Sonkhonya village (CEP), Guinea

The below statement is a typical view expressed by male and female respondents in communities where important change/progress is perceived as having ceased when external support ended:

"Tostan [brought] money here for people to work with, but the CMC did not then manage this well because we no longer even speak of this microcredit. They also taught [us but] because they stopped people have almost forgotten." - Man, Sintcham-Adjango village (CEP), Guinea-Bissau

Key finding SD3.3. Evidence of CMC activity is mixed

Evidence

Key finding SD3.3	Summarized evidence/ trends in data
Evidence of CMC activity in CEP villages is mixed. Where they are active, they are most often described as working on conducting or mobilizing for village clean-ups, organizing sensitization meetings on various topics, and conflict resolution.	• CMCs seem to exist in a majority of CEP communities. In these communities, when respondents mention the CMC, they most often describe its activities as sensitization, holding meetings, or otherwise encouraging positive social practices such as village cleanups. In a minority of cases, sensitization topics include abandonment of FGC or ending child marriage. • Below, we report results from the deep dives conducted in one CEP village per country. – **Sintcham-Dicori** (Guinea-Bissau): A majority of CEP respondents know of the CMC, and 50% of them described them as a group of people (varying sizes) active in community activities such as clean-ups, conflict resolution, mobilizing people for meetings (esp. sensitization meetings), and managing microcredit in the village. – **Beleco (Mali):** The CMC is not mentioned (unprompted) as involved in any important changes. When prompted, most respondents recognize it, are unsure who is in it, and credit it with conflict resolution efforts and continuing to sensitize people about various topics (no trend in the topics cited). – **Sonkhonya (Guinea):** Some respondents suggested that the CMC acted as an intermediary between the community and external actors, but was otherwise inactive and its projects ended three years ago (coinciding with the end of the CEP). – **Kodiolel (Senegal): Half of respondents said the CMC implements health-related activities and skills-training for women on income-generating activities. Others** said they couldn't recall any activities the CMC had initiated since Tostan's program ended. – **Wouro Amadou Hawa (Mauritania):** Some CEP respondents mentioned that the CMC mobilized the community to clean the village or work on health issues. Others say the CMC has ceased to function after the CEP ended.

Full-study

The majority of CEP community members indicate that CMCs exist in their communities. The CMC's level of activity varies both across and within countries and villages. When asked about the most important changes that have happened in the past six or eight years, individual respondents and focus groups rarely mentioned the CMC. Once prompted to discuss the CMC, most CEP respondents recognized it and knew something about its members or activities.

When respondents mentioned Tostan, we asked specific questions about the CMC's role and activities over the past year. Responses showed that some communities are aware of their role and could list their activities over the past year. Other respondents could not, and perceived the CMC as no longer active.

For instance, a typical response reporting an active CMC:

"[The CMC is still] cleaning up the village, raising awareness about health, they told us how to take care of our children to avoid illness and they organize meetings each time" - Woman, Santambato village (CEP), Guinea-Bissau

By contrast, a typical response reporting a lack of CMC continuity after the end of Tostan's program:

"When Tostan came they cleaned the village and made people aware of hygiene, they also brought micro-finance [to] the village, through this we worked a lot, they did a lot of other things here [but] since Tostan is gone everything [has] stopped, the CMC have done almost nothing." - Woman, Colondito village (CEP), Guinea-Bissau

Deep-dive

Villages with strong evidence of an active CMC

In Sintcham-Dicori (CEP village in Guinea-Bissau) and Beleco (CEP village in Mali), it was clear that respondents thought the CMC was still active. The level of reported activity varied but was focused on sensitization or information-sharing in the community. This was most-clearly the case in Sintcham-Dicori, where all respondents recognized the CMC and said it was currently conducting clean-ups, conflict resolution, mobilizing people for meetings (especially meetings to sensitize the community), and managing microcredit in the village. In Beleco, most respondents could list CMC activities, focused on conflict resolution and sensitization, though they were not sure who was part of the CMC:

"[The] role of the CMC is to establish dialogue between the couples, to resolve conflicts within the village [...] to respond to the aspirations of the villages. [There are] ten members at most." - Woman, Beleco, Mali

"[The] role of the CMC is raising awareness and reforestation, organizing ideas exchange meetings. There are three in number I believe." - Woman, Beleco, Mali

Villages with limited evidence of an active CMC

In Kodiolel (CEP village in Senegal), half of respondents reported that the CMC was no longer active while the other half reported that it still conducted health-related sensitization and training for women on income-generating activities. In Sonkhonya village, we only had two responses referring to the CMC: one response said the CMC's activities ceased three years ago while another said that its main role was to act as an intermediary between the community and external actors, including both government and foreigners:

"[The] CMCs continue to do their job, once the foreigners have to come, they will go to the community then they will place the chairs for the reception" - Man, Sonkhonya village, Guinea

"We have understood [that] for the village to be helped it is necessary that you have the high officials [as] citizens of your village" - Man, Sonkhonya village, Guinea

Limitations to our analysis of research question SD3

We faced two main challenges to responding to research question SD3: respondents' failure to recall the names of external actors and failure to answer questions about most changes initiated by the community precisely. Our findings provide a description of what change has happened and how this change has come about. However, while interview and focus group questions solicited narratives of change around the most *significant* social changes over the six (or eight in Senegal) years, some respondents were unable to attribute changes to actors precisely. These respondents were more certain about community members' involvement in socio-economic change than about external actors (when respondents said they knew NGOs were involved, many could not recall names). This means we likely did not get a complete listing of actors/organizations who are promoting/have promoted community well-being from our interviews and focus groups.

Overall, our approach allowed us to gather descriptions of the changes that respondents believe are most meaningful and why. However, a few individual interview responses indicate that respondents may not have understood that we were asking about changes initiated by the community rather than their general perceptions of how the village had changed. For example, one respondent listed changes weather among the most important:

"Personally [...] we live on our fields thanks to the help of God. Before there was rain [and] we cultivated our fields[...]. But [since] last year there is a consequent lack of rain and the difficulties are felt. Drought has become a problem [for] us. "- Woman, N'diawaldy Boully village, Mauritania

In these few instances, it seems that interviewers did not clarify or probe properly to gather the required information.

Comparing Social Dynamics findings to Tostan's expectations

Table 2 lists the Key findings for SD1 and SD2, followed by a list of Tostan's expectations related to that research question and findings, then finally an assessment of whether each expectation has been met. Where our evidence clearly corroborates Tostan's expectations, we ticked "Yes" next to that expectation and conversely, marked "No" when we had evidence that countered that expectation. In instances where we could not draw clear, study-wide conclusions on alignment, we ticked "Mixed evidence/unclear". Table 3 lays out the same assessment but for Key findings for SD3. Below each table we provide a detailed explanation of our assessment of the alignment of our findings to Tostan's expectations.

Table 4: Tostan expectations analysis for research questions SD1 and SD2

Key findings	Tostan's expectations	Expectation met?		
		Yes	Mixed evidence / unclear	No
SD1.1. It is widely seen as acceptable for women to work outside of the home	New social dynamics involving men, women and children as participants and aspiring to leadership		✓	
	New roles open to women. Women are less confined		✓	
	Men seen as final decision-makers	✓		
SD1.2. Discussion seems to be central to how respondents in CEP villages think couples should make decisions or resolve disputes. Respondents who think this is a change from the past often highlight it as among the most important social changes that have occurred.	Men and women both involved in household decisions	✓		
	More communication between husbands and wives	✓		
	Diplomacy in conversations between husbands and wives	✓		
SD1.3. Residents of CEP villages perceive that violence towards women has decreased	New social dynamics involving men, women and children as participants and aspiring to leadership		✓	
	New roles open to women and youth; less confined	✓		
	Men still seen as final decision-makers	✓		
	Human rights knowledge is the foundation for changed social dynamics		✓	
SD2.1. Community members cite better education, sanitation, and more	Men have final word but women consulted	✓		

respectful relationships among community members as changes perceived in the past six (or eight in Senegal) years	Diplomacy in conversations in the community	✓		
	Communities appreciates CMC activities		✓	
	Communities appreciates social cohesion between husbands, wives and other family members	✓		
	Topics like health, birth registrations, school enrollment, village clean-ups will come up in meetings	✓		
	Women respected and in leadership		✓	
	Women are able to initiate community meetings involving all community members		✓	
	Women and youth are able to voice their opinions publicly		✓	
	Children speak and adults listen (role-modelling)		✓	

Key finding SD1.1. It is widely seen as acceptable for women to work outside of the home: we have strong evidence that community members across genders find it acceptable for women to work and earn money outside the home. We cannot determine whether they see this as a community norm. Our interview questions did not allow us to explore the extent to which this view has changed from the past. The fact that most respondents who shared this view justified it based on economics suggests that it could be pragmatic or situationally dependent. It is also unclear to what extent working outside of the home is seen as a new role for women.

Key finding SD1.2. Discussion seems to be central to how respondents in CEP villages think couples should make decisions or resolve disputes this finding aligns with Tostan's expectations that men and women are both involved in household decisions and consult more on decisions. While both husbands and wives are involved in household decision-making, the husband is often viewed as the final decision-maker, which also aligns with Tostan's expectations. We also have some evidence from each country that husbands and wives seek and value diplomacy in their interactions.

Key finding SD1.3. Residents of CEP villages perceive that violence towards women has decreased shows this finding shows that communities are more accepting of women attending community meetings compared to in the past, and that violence towards women as a result of their attendance at meetings has decreased. In this way, we have evidence that women are perceived to have more freedom to participate in community meetings. Interview responses suggested that husbands make final decisions regarding their wives' movements outside the home.[49] In some communities, there is

[49] This finding aligns with our understanding of existing traditional hierarchies and beliefs sometimes grounded in religious teachings in study communities.

evidence that both men and women believe that women should be allowed to attend a community meeting and should not be threatened or subject to violence for doing so. Some respondents suggested that this normative expectation was new.

We also found evidence of the importance of diplomacy and social cohesion to focus groups, many of which ranked "increased unity and harmony among villagers" as one of the two most significant changes in the past six years. They often described diplomacy as a means of maintaining peace in the village. Field staff also observed this diplomacy in how women and young people agreed with men and older members of the community when focus groups were asked to come to a consensus on the most significant changes that had happened in the past six (or eight in Senegal) years. When asked directly about whether women could voice opinions opposing those held by traditional authority, we received mixed responses.

Key finding SD2.1. Community members cite better education, sanitation, and more respectful relationships among community members as changes perceived in the past six (or eight in Senegal) years also aligns with Tostan's expectation. In a discussion of the most significant changes in the community, topics like health, school enrollment, village clean-ups and increased birth registrations came up (though birth registrations come up in a minority of focus groups) -- which also aligns with Tostan's expectations.

However, responses related to significant changes were unclear on the role of CMCs. While some focus groups attributed changes related to hygiene and education to Tostan classes, it is unclear whether CMCs played and continue to play a role in these changes. The evidence is also unclear on expectations regarding women and children. We have evidence that women are perceived as driving or leading important changes in communities, however there was no explicit mention of women being respected in particular. Instead, many focus groups said community members were more respectful towards each other in general. A few focus groups said there were now more respectful interactions between young and older people in the community, suggesting a shift in the traditional norms of respect. Field staff also observed in focus groups that -- consistent with the social norms on respect -- young people spoke less than older participants.

Table 5: Tostan expectations analysis for research question SD3

Key findings	Tostan's expectations	Expectation met?		
		Yes	Mixed evidence/ unclear	No
SD3.1 Village-level decision-making involves broad discussion	Class participants are perceived to be able to participate in community dialogue		✓	
	Men are in meetings with women	✓		
	Women and youth speak in meetings		✓	
SD3.2 There is mixed evidence that CEP and diffusion communities in the five study countries are initiating or leading activities that improve the community's wellbeing. Where external actors are initiators of positive changes, some are perceived as not sustained when these actors leave the community.	Communities have the support of traditional leaders		✓	
	Communities have the ability to organize awareness-raising activities and to meet with local officials		✓	
	Communities have the ability to identify and reach a goal		✓	
	Communities have organized activities to promote positive social practices		✓	
SD 3.3 Evidence of CMC activity in CEP villages is mixed. Where CMCs are active, they are most often described as working on conducting or mobilizing for village clean-ups, organizing sensitization meetings on various topics, and conflict resolution.	CMC rallies community around positive social practices	✓		
	CMC organized public declarations to end child marriage and FGC		✓	
	CMC hold continuous dialogues on harmful practices		✓	
	CMC talks about human rights		✓	
	CMC encounters some resistance on religious grounds		✓	
	CMC continues to conduct sensitizations in neighboring communities	✓		
	CMCs advocated with local authorities for resources		✓	
	CMCs have encouraged and managed economic projects		✓	
	CMCs resolve ordinary conflicts between people	✓		

Key finding SD3.1 Village-level decision-making involves broad discussion: this finding aligns with Tostan's general expectation that communities - both CEP and diffusion - will value discussion and participatory decision-making. Evidence is less clear on Tostan's specific expectations about who would participate in these discussions: respondents did seem to expect men and women to be present in them but usually did not say whether they would speak and be heard. Respondentes also tended not to explicitly mention Tostan class participants in reference to community discussion and decision-making.

Key finding SD3.2 There is mixed evidence that CEP and diffusion communities in the five study countries are initiating or leading activities that improve the community's well-being: this finding neither fully meets Tostan's expectations nor is it fully inconsistent with them. The evidence of community collective action and communities' ability to organize and pursue goals differs across countries. This assessment also accounts for the possibility that some respondents may not have understood that we were asking about changes that were initiated by community members themselves. This also leaves alignment with Tostan's expectations unclear.

In communities where change was perceived as depending more on external actors, community members seemed to value and participate in these changes. However, they perceived community action alone as insufficient to initiate and sustain changes that promote community well-being. Overall, our results indicate that while community members sometimes play a role in bringing about positive change that promotes well-being in CEP and diffusion communities, community members often see external actors as crucial initiators and executors of changes the community values. One implication is the perception that these changes are sometimes not sustained once these actors leave the community. It is likely that - in some cases - these respondents are referring to physical infrastructure changes that neither Tostan nor the CMC are best-placed to accomplish.

Key finding SD3.3 Evidence of CMC activity in CEP villages is mixed. Where the CMC exists (which we found to be the case in a majority of CEP villages), perceptions of its activity and composition varied. Overall, the activities they were most commonly credited with are aligned with Tostan's expectations: mobilizing communities for village clean-ups or sensitizing communities on various topics. Because respondents were often non-specific about the topics of sensitization, it is unclear to what extent CMCs across countries still sensitize on more sensitive/controversial topics such as FGC and child marriage. There is also some evidence that CMCs were seen as responsible for resolving ordinary conflicts between community members. Further investigation be needed to understand the CMCs' current relationship with local authorities and whether they are able to successfully advocate for resources. There is little to no evidence of CMC activities in diffusion villages.

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Human Rights Alignment

We organized our investigation of human rights around the below research questions:

- **HR1**: To what extent are community members aware of their human rights and responsibilities?
- **HR2**: To what extent does community dialogue reflect human rights?
- **HR3**: To what extent have communities advocated for the human rights of all community members?

Narrative overview of human rights findings

Across CEP and diffusion communities, basic awareness of human rights was high: respondents could name several rights when asked. However, the role these rights play in community members' decision-making or opinion-forming is unclear. In response to our vignettes, community members tended to support the result implied by a belief in human rights (i.e., children should go to school or women should not be threatened or beaten for attending community meetings) but they often justified these preferences using the material, instrumental benefits of the action, rather a human right. Education and health were the most commonly cited rights in individual interviews and focus groups most often listed health and education improvements as top community aspirations. Again, respondents volunteered reasoning for these aspirations thatd focused on their economic and wellbeing implications rather than their connection to rights.

Community members recognized fathers (as heads of household) as those with the clearest responsibility for upholding a girl's right to be enrolled in school and as permission-granters for women to participate in life outside the home. Outside the household, residents occasionally (when prompted explicitly) said that they expected the CMC would intervene to try to persuade reluctant parents to enroll their daughter in school. Beyond this, however, there is no evidence that community members assign responsibility to external actors to uphold human rights or expect any external actors to do so.

To the extent that human rights "alignment" simply refers to communities seeking results that human rights encourage, we find consistent evidence of alignment. Whether that alignment arises from community members seeing the rights as rights - as opposed to seeing them as beneficial practices - is less clear.

Table 6: Summary of key findings for Human Rights Alignment

Research question	Key findings
HR1: To what extent are community members aware of their human rights and responsibilities?	HR1.1. Respondents can cite at least three human rights from Tostan's list that a young girl should have. HR1.2. Most respondents think children should be in school. Parents, especially fathers, are seen as responsible for enrolling children in school.
HR 2: To what extent does community dialogue reflect human rights?	HR2.1. Communities most commonly aspire to improved essential services, such as schools, access to water and health centers.
HR3: To what extent have communities advocated for the human rights of all community members?	HR3.1. Human rights do not factor prominently in community members' reported reasoning HR3.2. Most respondents in CEP villages - when asked directly - believe that the CMC would intervene to convince parents to enroll their child in school. Most of these responses specify that the CMC would use discussion/persuasion in its intervention. There is otherwise little mention of intervention or advocacy in defense of human rights.

Research question HR1: To what extent are community members aware of their human rights and responsibilities?

Approach to generating findings

Our interviews and focus groups aimed to reveal whether community members understood what human rights were, whether these rights were important to them, and who they perceive as responsible for advocating for them. Interviews began with a vignette specific to a young girl's right to education before exploring human rights more broadly. We used responses to probes to discern where respondents learned about these rights and whether and why they were important to them. In our analysis, we considered both explicit mentions of the term 'human rights,' as taught in CEP classes and whether the respondent was talking about things they believed were important and that people were entitled to without discrimination.

Focus groups sought to assess whether communities' collective or shared aspirations were based on and aligned with human rights. We also used voluntary additional comments on these rights to infer their importance or perceived role in the minds of respondents.

Overview of findings for HR1

We find high awareness of human rights. Most respondents could name multiple human rights recognized by the Tostan curriculum. Respondents also occasionally cited human-rights education as a key Tostan or CMC activity. More commonly cited CMC activities were general "sensitization," which could plausibly include human rights given their importance to Tostan's curriculum and approach. When given a specific scenario, respondents argued that it is not normal for a girl's parents to keep her out of school. The most common reason they volunteered was that she has a right to education,

suggesting the salience of rights-based thinking in the context of girls' education. Lastly, most respondents recognized fathers as responsible for ensuring their daughters are enrolled in school. There is some evidence that this is related to fathers' status as heads of household and primary economic providers. If not the father, respondents most often recognize both parents as responsible -- very rarely did they cite anyone outside the household as responsible for ensuring a girls' education.

Key finding HR1.1. Respondents can cite at least three human rights (of a young girl) from Tostan's list.

and

Key finding & HR1.2. Parents, especially fathers, are seen as responsible for enrolling children in school.

Evidence

Key findings HR1.1 & HR1.2	Summarized evidence / trends in data
HR1.1. Respondents can cite at least three human rights from Tostan's list that a young girl should have. **HR1.2.** Parents, especially fathers, are seen as responsible for enrolling children in school.	**Key finding HR1.1.** ● Half of respondents (53%) are able to cite three human rights from the list of those Tostan teaches in the CEP. ● The most commonly cited human rights in CEP villages are the rights to education, food, and health ● In diffusion villages, the most commonly cited human rights are the rights to education, food, and clothing – A few respondents say they learned these rights from Tostan (either through classes or sensitizations – Other respondents say they haven't learned about rights from anywhere in particular, but have come to know them through their life experiences. ● Some respondents in CEP villages volunteered that they thought these rights were important ● **Senegal:** Two respondents in diffusion villages understood rights differently. One respondent cited "the right to be cut [FGC]" while another said that the right to education depends on whether parents agree **Key finding HR1.2:** ● A majority of respondents in CEP and diffusion villages said the father is responsible for enrolling the child at school – The second most common response after "father is responsible" is that both parents are responsible. – Some respondents specified that the father is responsible because he is the head of the household. ● There is no strong evidence that respondents think other members of the community should intervene if a girl's right to education is being neglected though - when asked directly - most respondents said the CMC will try to convince the parents to enroll their daughter (see Key finding HR3.1).

Responses to our questions on human rights highlighted community members' awareness of the human rights to education and food, as the majority of respondents in CEP and diffusion communities cited these rights when asked to list up to three human rights a young girl should have. In CEP communities, health-related rights were similarly common.

When asked who was responsible for ensuring a child is enrolled in school, a majority of respondents in both CEP and diffusion villages said the parents, especially fathers -- who are seen as heads of households -- are responsible. This perception was driven by the view that children are the sole

responsibility of their parents (particularly the financial responsibility of their parents) as demonstrated by the following quotation:

"Both [parents] must [enroll the child], it depends on who has the means to finance, it may be that the father may not have [the money] [so the] mother [...] must do so for the future of her child." - Man, Colondito village (CEP), Guinea-Bissau

Aside from the CMC (discussed later), there is no strong evidence that respondents thought other members of the community or external actors such as the government should or would intervene if a girl's right to education were being neglected.

Limitations to our analysis of research question HR1

Because our questions on human rights were linked to education, which appears to be an important social value across communities, we are unable to assess the extent to which our findings on the importance of human rights are generalizable to *all* human rights. Similarly, because many respondents anchored to the idea that education is important, many did not articulate what they think it means to have a human right to education. Instead, respondents focused on why education is beneficial.[50]

[50] With more time, the interview guide could have explored respondents' perceptions of a broader range of human rights, including those related to more sensitive or controversial social practices like FGC or domestic violence.

Research question HR 2: To what extent does community dialogue reflect human rights?

Approach to generating findings

We explored the importance of human rights in community dialogue through focus groups, with a particular focus on how communities talk about their aspirations for the future and the actions they are taking (or plan to take) to achieve these aspirations. We asked focus groups to list important changes they would like to see in the village in the next five to ten years and to agree on whether the community had shared aspirations for the future. Where communities described a common vision, our analysis sought to understand whether and how that vision aligned with human rights.

Focus group discussions provided a listing of communities' aspirations for the future and explanations of why these aspirations are perceived as important for the whole community. Though few responses specified a timeline or progress towards achieving these aspirations, many focus groups described the circumstances that led them to settle on these aspirations, indicating who or what drove or determined them. Volunteered reasoning for these aspirations provided us with a window into what made them important to respondents.

Overview of Findings for HR2

Communities were able to articulate common aspirations and these aligned with human rights insofar as they aimed at results also targeted by rights: the most common aspirations dealt with improving the status of education, nutrition, or health. It is not clear, however the extent to which their status as rights motivates these aspirations. Focus group participants most often cited the benefits of the aspirations as opposed to the fact that community members have a right to them.

Key findings HR2.1. Community aspirations for the future include improved essential services such as schools, access to water and health centers.

Evidence

Key finding HR2.1	Summarized evidence/ trends in data
HR2.1. Community aspirations for the future highlight essential services such as schools, access to water, and health centers.	• The most commonly listed and agreed upon future aspirations (in order of frequency of mentions) are the following essential public services: schools, improved access to water and health centers • Most respondents who volunteer reasoning for these aspirations focus on their benefits for wellbeing

Focus groups most commonly agreed on essential public services -- schools, improved access to water, and health centers -- as shared aspirations for the community. These aspirations were described as the most important community needs. When asked when the community started hoping for these changes, many focus group participants agreed that the community has needed these changes for a long time. For example, when one focus group was asked when the community started hoping for these changes, participants said:

"For a very long time, because there have always been no taps in the village, and we are in lack of agricultural machinery, in addition our children go away to study far from [the village]" - Participant in mixed focus group, Sintcham-Adjango village (CEP), Guinea-Bissau

Focus groups rarely justified or explained their aspirations in detail, but when they did they tended to focus on their effects on wellbeing. For example:

"We want a school [...] to reduce the rate of illiteracy. If people are educated we can look to fix our problems ourselves." - Participant in a focus group, Tamwiyya village, Mauritania

"We want advances in education so our children's future will be better" - Participant in a focus group in Ouré Yoro Sow village (CEP), Senegal

Para-data observations

During debriefs, field staff reported that participants in both community and leadership focus groups were most enthusiastic about talking about village aspirations, especially in Guinea-Bissau. Surveyors interpreted this dynamic as meaning that participants perceived the survey team as outsiders who could potentially provide for the needs they were listing. For example:

"[Outsiders] like you who make us hope that these changes will happen; because when someone asks us about our difficulties and our expectations, we believe that it is only to pass on information to leaders who will take positive measures to remedy our situation" -- Mixed-gender community focus group, Kodiolel village, Senegal

These observations help us understand how this question may have been perceived (namely as a means to meet the village's most pressing needs) as compared to our intention to understand whether

communities had a vision and the extent to which it was aligned with human rights. Nevertheless, even assuming some of them are advocating for external support, it is meaningful to observe the ways in which community members make these arguments.

Limitations to our analysis of research question HR2

That participants seem to have interpreted the presence of outsiders as a means to have their most pressing needs met means we should interpret these results with some caution. It is possible that respondents told interviewers about those aspirations they thought outsiders were most likely to support and that these do not fully overlap with those that are most important to them personally.

Research question HR3: To what extent have communities advocated for the human rights of all community members?

Approach to generating findings

To answer this research question, we looked for human rights dialogue in responses to questions/vignettes that related to human rights but did not mention them directly, i.e. in the context of FGC, children's schooling, or violence against women. In focus groups we also assessed the extent to which changes achieved or aspired to aligned with improved human rights conditions for all community members. In interviews, we asked respondents to discuss action the CMC had taken to advocate for rights in the community.[51]

This approach allowed us to understand whether and how respondents assessed situations in their lives through a human rights lens. That is, are their opinions on these situations aligned with human rights and do they explicitly acknowledge when human rights are being violated? Questions about CMC activity allowed us to understand community members' perceptions of the extent to which the CMC advocates for human rights and how it does so.

Overview of findings for HR3

Community members seemed to expect the CMC to advocate on behalf of a girl whose parents did not plan to enroll her in school. It is not clear whether they thought this advocacy or persuasion would or should focus on the fact that education is a right. This evidence also comes from a direct question in which the interviewer mentioned the CMC and asked explicitly whether it would intervene to defend a girl's rights. It was very rare for respondents to mention intervention -- by the CMC or otherwise -- in less direct questions.

[51] Questions about the CMC only asked if respondents had already mentioned Tostan.

Key finding HR3.1. Human rights do not factor prominently in community members' reported reasoning

and

Key finding HR3.2. Respondents in CEP villages believe that the CMC would intervene to convince parents to enroll their child in school.

Evidence

Key findings HR3.1 & HR3.2	Summarized evidence/ trends in data
HR3.1. Human rights do not factor prominently in community members' reported reasoning HR3.2. When prompted, respondents in CEP villages believe that the CMC would intervene to convince parents to enroll their child in school.	• When asked questions regarding FGC or domestic violence, a minority of respondents mention human rights or express the need to protect community members' rights. Most reasoning instead focuses on medical harms or the importance of maintaining harmony in the home. • Similarly, a minority of focus groups mentioned an increased awareness of or respect for human rights as an aspiration for the future. This includes both general, explicit mentions of "human rights" and specific mentions of the aspiration to abandon childhood marriage or FGC. Taken together, all of these categories of aspiration still form a small minority of aspirations cited. • Similarly, a small minority of focus groups listed increased awareness or defense of human rights (whether general or specific to certain rights) among the two most important social changes of the past six (or eight in Senegal) years.

Human rights were not a common topic for study respondents until prompted. In addition to explicit mentions of rights, we looked for reasoning that would reflect a rights-based mentality, even without using rights language. Respondents who opined that it was normal or good for women to work outside the home or for girls (or all children) to go to school or for girls to not be subjected to FGC might have justified these opinions by implying that they were rights based. For example, they might have said things like "all people should be able to do this" or "no one can stop someone from doing this." We found few instances of this sort of reasoning. In general, respondents who volunteered justifications for opinions of this sort focused on the benefits or costs of the behavior in question: FGC has negative health consequences, women working outside the home support the family's wellbeing, education prepares children for a better future.

One other way respondents might have implied rights-based thinking is by expressing the opinion or expectation that the community would intervene to protect the rights of an individual. The only common example we found for this was the expectation among some CEP community members that the CMC would attempt to convince a girl's parents to enroll her in school. This was in response to a direct question on whether the CMC would defend the girl's rights in this situation. It is possible that - if asked directly - respondents would report an expectation that the CMC would intervene to defend other rights in other contexts. It is also possible that the absence of unprompted mentions of intervention means that it is rare or not particularly salient to respondents. Additionally, while a few responses in Senegal suggested that human rights knowledge has played a role in decreased violence

towards women, it is unclear how influential this knowledge has been and whether this influence extends to community members across countries. We cannot know for sure based on our data.

Table 7: Comparing Human Rights Alignment findings to Tostan's expectations

Key findings	Tostan's expectations	Expectation met?		
		Yes	Mixed evidence/unclear	No
HR1.1 Respondents can cite at least three human rights from Tostan's list that a young girl should have.	Community members know about human rights and believe they are important		✓	
	Trusted social networks have explained human rights			✓
HR1.2 Parents, especially fathers, are seen as responsible for enrolling children in school.	Community members describe the right to participate to achieve a better community		✓	
	Community members will most often cite the rights to health, education, peace, governance, clean environment and to participate in economic activities		✓	
	Responsibility of the person, community, the law, government officials to protect human rights		✓	
	Community members feel responsible for taking action that only they can, i.e registering babies, breast-feeding babies, keeping children in school		✓	
	Community members responsible for informing others about their rights		✓	
HR2.1 Communities most commonly aspire to improved essential services such as schools, access to water and health centers.	Community members advocate for rights through public declarations, birth registrations, cleaning the village, prenatal visits, sensitizing others		✓	
	Human rights advocacy attributed to Tostan	✓		
HR3.1 Many respondents in CEP villages believe that the CMC would intervene to convince parents to enroll their child in school.	5-year community vision exists		✓	
	Not all goals in vision are achieved	✓		
	CMC or other groups have facilitated evolution of vision		✓	

We have strong evidence that community members know about human rights but no clear understanding of how important the fact that these are rights is to respondents in either abstract or tangible, quotidian ways. Respondents in all communities seemed to value education, making it difficult to disentangle how important education was from how important having a right to it was for communities.

Respondents (both CEP and diffusion) were aware of and dable to recall several human rights that are taught in Tostan classes, particularly the human rights to education and health. However, few or no respondents mentioned human rights that are not considered *basic needs* for survival, such as the right to governance, the right to participate to achieve a better community, or the right to participate in economic activities, which are also taught in CEP classes. It is therefore unclear to what extent community members are aware of rights that are not considered basic human needs, and whether they believe they are important.

We also have no evidence that trusted social networks share knowledge on human rights. No respondent said that they learned about human rights from someone in their social circle -- some said they learned about them from Tostan classes, whereas others said they had not learned about them anywhere in particular. Few respondents cited human rights advocacy as a CMC activity or a social change that had occurred in their community. Some activities they cited are related to human rights (improvements in education and health or decreases in violence against women), but rarely did they cite rights-focused advocacy as opposed to benefits-focused advocacy, as described above.

There are several expectations for which our evidence is unclear. Our results do not shed light on whether community members feel a responsibility to take specific action to protect their rights (apart from parents enrolling their children in school) nor whether they feel responsible for informing others about human rights. We do not necessarily consider this evidence that these ideas do not exist in the minds of community members, as our interview questions did not focus on them. Rather, we fail to find evidence that they are salient enough for respondents to volunteer them in the context of interview questions about related topics.

FGC Abandonment

This section covers our key findings for the following research questions:

- **FGC1:** What are individual and community perceptions of FGC and its abandonment?
- **FGC2:** Is there ongoing community dialogue around FGC and if yes, what form does this dialogue take?
- **FGC3:** To what extent do communities exercise collective influence to realize their vision for how FGC should or should not be practiced?

Our findings for FGC2 and FGC3 are only relevant for Senegal, where we conducted an additional set of interviews and focus groups to further investigate norms and behaviors surrounding female genital cutting (FGC) in CEP communities. Specifically, we conducted more interviews and covered a wider range of topics on FGC in Senegal than in the other study countries.

Approach to generating findings

All countries (research question FGC1)

Our interview and focus group questions on FGC drew from CARE's Social Norms Analysis Plot (SNAP) Framework[52] and employed vignettes to help us understand empirical and normative expectations, reference groups, personal attitudes, and any existing sanctions towards the practice of FGC. The use of vignettes and hypotheticals helped mitigate the high risk of social desirability bias by minimizing lines of questioning directed at respondents' personal choices and behaviors, and focusing instead on their perspective on community norms. Questions within the vignettes were designed to elicit perspectives on each element of the SNAP Framework. The particular vignette employed in interviews and focus groups introduced an imaginary couple who are deciding on whether to have their daughter cut or not. The vignette asks respondents to say what each parent's preferences might be (empirical expectations), who they would seek advice from (~reference group), what advice they would get from advisors (normative expectations), what would happen if they went against community advice (sanctions), whether the opinions of others would change their minds (sensitivity to sanctions).

This approach allowed us to gather community members' descriptions of current FGC practice in their communities, how this has changed, and -- where applicable -- their overall perception of the move towards FGC abandonment. Analysis from a village-level deep dive on FGC provided a description of ongoing discussions on FGC as well as individual and community action taken towards FGC abandonment (if this was part of the community's aspirations).

The thematic analysis identified cross-country trends in community members' perceptions of FGC practice and its abandonment. For FGC, we complemented this thematic analysis with a deep dive to further explore findings where looking more carefully/comprehensively at a single village would add nuance or test the robustness of a broad thematic trend. We conducted this deep dive by looking at all responses in ten villages across the five study countries to understand, in particular, whether and how communities described a vision for FGC -- and if so -- which community members drove this

[52] CARE (2017). Applying Theory to Practice: CARE's Journey Piloting Social Norms Measures for Gender Programming. *Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, Inc.*

vision. Findings from the deep dive were used to either enrich findings from the thematic analysis (usually by adding nuance to those findings) or to discount findings that were clearly unsupported by the deep dive. The deep-dive was conducted in one CEP and one diffusion village per country. Specifically, we investigated Sonkhonya and Damaniah villages in Guinea, Sintcham-Dicori and Sintcham-Massacunda in Guinea-Bissau, Beleco and Farabougou in Mali, Wouro Amadou Hawa and Mourtogal in Mauritania, and Kodiolel and Gounas in Senegal.

A table reporting all the evidence gathered in the deep dive can be found in the *Appendix 4.* The findings we report below are supported by both broad trends in codes across all villages and the deep dive.

Senegal only (research questions FGC2 and FGC3)

In Senegal, we asked additional interview and focus group questions focused on whether and how FGC is discussed, and what actions -- if any -- communities are taking to either reinforce or change existing community norms around FGC.

Narrative overview of findings

Across all five study countries we find evidence of norms against FGC in most CEP villages. This norm manifests as a belief that most members of the community have abandoned the practice of FGC and -- when prompted -- an expectation that the community will discourage it and sanction individuals who continue to practice it. Health and legal consequences were the most commonly cited reasons for the norm, while tradition was the most commonly cited barrier. The role of religion is unclear – it was not mentioned often and, when mentioned, was cited as both a reason for and a reason against FGC practice. Despite the overall trend, there were some CEP villages in which larger proportions of people reported that they were in favor of FGC.

Norms against FGC appeared to be weaker in diffusion villages. There were some diffusion villages in which most or all respondents expressed opinions favorable to FGC, usually on the grounds that it was a traditional obligation. Diffusion respondents also tended to think that more of their fellow community members still practiced FGC and were less likely to say they expected sanctions against those who practiced it. Among those who opposed FGC, health reasons were also less commonly reported in diffusion villages with legal consequences most common.

Some community members in both CEP and diffusion suggest that women were involved in decision-making around FGC (as they usually know more on the subject); men were usually seen to have final decision authority. When seeking advice on FGC, community members reported that women would most likely turn to their mothers, and men would most likely turn to their fathers.

Our field staff also noted reluctance to respond to some questions on FGC by both men and women across the study. This was more pronounced in diffusion villages, however. Two diffusion villages in Mali refused to participate in the study due to its inclusion of FGC-related questions.

Table 8: Summary of key findings for FGC Abandonment

Research questions	Key findings
FGC1: What are individual and community perceptions of FGC and its abandonment?	FGC1.1: There is still hesitance to discuss FGC, at least with outsiders, including in CEP communities but more pronounced in diffusion communities
	FGC1.2: There is evidence of a norm against FGC in CEP villages. There is, however, mixed evidence of a norm against FGC in diffusion villages.
FGC2: Is there ongoing community dialogue around FGC and if yes, what form does this dialogue take?	FGC2.1 In Senegal, FGC is a topic of discussion in communities, especially in CEP villages
FGC3: To what extent do communities exercise collective influence to realize their vision for how FGC should or should not be practiced?	FGC3.1: Community members most commonly cite sensitizations, especially on health consequences, as a key action to promote FGC-abandonment
	FGC3.2: CEP communities can recall participating in a public declaration. Diffusion communities are unsure.

Key finding FGC1.1. There is still hesitance to discuss FGC, at least with outsiders, including in CEP communities but more pronounced in diffusion communities

Evidence

Key finding FGC1.1	Summarized evidence/ trends in data
There is still hesitance to discuss FGC, at least with outsiders, including in CEP communities but more pronounced in diffusion communities	**Trends from Study-Wide Thematic Analysis:** ● Some respondents in CEP and diffusion villages either gave no response or refused to respond to a subset of FGC questions. ● Some respondents in CEP and diffusion villages evaded questions on FGC. For example, some male respondents deferred to women on the matter, while other respondents said they did not know much on the topic. ● Field teams corroborated this trend, reporting some challenges obtaining village and respondent-level agreement to participate in the FGC modules. ● Two diffusion communities in Mali refused to participate in the study altogether because it involved FGC.

Para-data observations

Field staff in the five study countries reported the following challenges when asking questions about FGC:

Guinea-Bissau

During debriefs, field staff reported that participants in both mixed community focus groups and leadership focus groups would become silent when asked about FGC. Field staff also noticed that while some individual respondents would say that FGC was being practiced in secret, the same individuals in focus groups would say that no one practices FGC in the village anymore. The transcriber further noted that in **Colondito** village (CEP), the discussion became tenser when participants in the mixed-gender community focus group started discussing FGC. Many participants did not want to talk about it and tried to avoid the subject, especially the men in the group. In in-depth interviews, field staff reported that respondents seemed to have closed body and facial expressions when talking about FGC.

Guinea

Field staff noted that respondents employed certain strategies to avoid talking about FGC. For example, field staff reported that respondents in Kissidougou department started speaking in a different dialect of Malinke (which they believed the interviewers did not understand) when answering questions on FGC as a way to avoid further questions.

Senegal

Field staff reported that in a leadership focus group in **Thionokh** village (CEP) -- which consisted exclusively of men -- some participants started leaving the focus groups when they started discussing FGC. Those who left included the village imam, and other older religious leaders.

These observations reinforce our Key finding that both men and women in communities (especially in diffusion communities) experience discomfort when discussing FGC (at least with outsiders), both privately and in the context of a community discussion.

Key finding FGC1.2. There is some evidence of a norm against FGC in CEP villages.

Evidence

Key finding FGC1.2	Summarized evidence/ trends in data
There is some evidence of a norm against FGC in CEP villages. There is, however, mixed evidence of a norm against FGC in diffusion villages.	**Trends from Study-Wide Thematic Analysis:** In response to a question on whether an imaginary mother or father would prefer to cut their daughter or not, most CEP respondents said FGC is no longer practiced in their community. In diffusion communities some respondents denounced the practice of FGC, while other respondents clearly endorsed the practice. Evidence of a norm against FGC in CEP communities is demonstrated through community responses to the following components of CARE's SNAP:[53] <u>Empirical expectations:</u> ● In response to a question on whether or not an imaginary mother or father would prefer to cut their daughter, respondents most commonly said the parents either should not or would not cut their daughter. ● Respondents in CEP villages most commonly reported knowledge of the legal and health risks as reasons for the community no longer practicing FGC. Despite this shift against FGC, some respondents report a tension between knowledge of the risks and the knowledge that FGC is a traditional custom. <u>Normative expectations:</u> ● When given a scenario where parents seek advice from others in the community on whether or not to cut their daughter, most CEP respondents said trusted advisors would likely advise them not to cut their daughter <u>Sanctions regarding FGC:</u> ● In response to a scenario where two parents go against the community's advice regarding FGC, most respondents in CEP villages said that someone wanting to cut their daughter would be discouraged by their community ● Some respondents said that - if the couple goes against the preferences of the community regarding FGC - they will no longer be supported by the community <u>Sensitivity to negative sanctions:</u> ● In communities where most respondents seem to endorse FGC abandonment, some respondents said a negative reaction from the community would likely change the minds of parents who want to have their daughter cut. **Evidence from deep-dive villages:** Findings from our deep-dive analysis further corroborates the above trends: ● Respondents in CEP communities across deep-dive villages most commonly expressed consensus around FGC abandonment. These respondents also described social pressures to conform to what everyone else in the village is doing (which in CEP villages is to endorse FGC abandonment). However, the deep-dive also revealed some <u>exceptions:</u> ● In **Beleco** (CEP, Mali) and **Sonkhonya** villages (CEP, Guinea) some respondents said there is pressure to continue practicing FGC because it is part of village custom. In **Farabougou** (diffusion, Mali) and **Mourtogal** (diffusion, Mauritania) villages FGC is openly supported by community members. Most respondents in these villages said the practice of FGC should continue because it is a village custom and everyone is expected to do it. ● Moreover, in Mali two villages refused to participate in the study because it dealt with FGC.

Full study

To explore social norms around FGC practice we adapted the SNAP framework. Using this framework, we found evidence of empirical expectations (that is, people's beliefs about what others do) of FGC abandonment across CEP villages. Most respondents in these communities said that community members no longer practiced FGC because they knew about the legal and health consequences. For example, when asked what a parent (whether mother of father) in the village would think about cutting their daughter, one respondent said:

"[We] know that FGC is a traditional practice, but since awareness about giving up excision has gone well in our community, we know the consequences of this practice. So, I think that [the mother] must absolutely renounce [cutting] her daughter." - Man, Ranerou village (CEP), Senegal

Another respondent further explained how health and legal consequences are driving this norm:

"FGC was practiced here before, now it is prohibited and we have also received lessons on the consequences of this practice so the [mother] will not think of doing it." - Man, Sintcham-Dicori village (CEP), Guinea-Bissau

We further have evidence of normative expectations **(**people's beliefs about what others think should be done) that support FGC abandonment. When asked what they think others in the community would advise parents to do when deciding whether or not to cut their daughter, most CEP respondents said trusted advisors would likely advise them not to cut their daughter. This trend held for different kinds of advisors (i.e. close family members, religious or village leaders).

Furthermore, responses to a situation where a couple goes against the community's advice not to cut their daughter suggested the existence of negative sanctions towards those choosing to practice FGC. Many respondents said a couple that goes against the community's advice regarding FGC would no longer be supported by the community. The severity of negative sanctions varied from being socially isolated to being reported to authorities (more common in Senegal) as demonstrated by the following responses:

"If everyone advises them not to do it and they do it in case of consequences they will [suffer alone] because this practice is abandoned and prohibited." - Woman, Colondito village (CEP), Guinea-Bissau

"[If] they go against the [advice] of the community and try to [cut] their daughter, they will be in big trouble, they may even be brought to justice because in our community there are more people who are for the abandonment of FGC [compared to] people who are against it." - Woman, Ranerou village (CEP), Senegal

In these CEP communities, most respondents said they think a negative reaction from the community would change the minds of those wanting to practice FGC to no longer pursue this action -- suggesting a perceived sensitivity to negative social sanctions in favor of FGC abandonment.

[53] To organize and present evidence for this finding, we adapt CARE's Social Norms Analysis Plot (SNAP) framework. The SNAP framework is widely used by practitioners like Tostan to design vignettes and diagnose social norms. In this section, we use this framework to unpack findings for each component of social norms as they relate to FGC abandonment.

Deep-dive

Results from our deep-dive analysis support the overall trend toward FGC abandonment in CEP villages, though not without resistance or barriers or exceptions. In Beleco village (CEP, Mali) and Sonkhonya (CEP, Guinea) some respondents said parents in their village would likely prefer to have their daughters cut. Some respondents said there is pressure to continue practicing FGC because it is part of village custom. All interview respondents in Farabougou (diffusion, Mali) and most in Mourtogal (diffusion, Mauritania) said the practice of FGC should continue because it is a village custom and everyone is expected to do it.

Table 9: Comparing FGC1 findings to Tostan's expectations

Key finding	Tostan's expectations	Expectation met?		
		Yes	Mixed evidence/unclear	No
FGC1.2: There is evidence of a norm against FGC in CEP villages.	Communities say FGC is not a religious obligation		✓	
	Community members will point to a few who still believe FGC is a religious or traditional obligation	✓		
	Communities say FGC has harmful health consequences	✓		
	Communities say FGC is no longer celebrated publically		✓	
	Few people report that they still practice FGC	✓		

Our Key findings partially align with Tostan's expectation that CEP communities will be moving toward abandonment and that community members will talk about the health consequences of FGC -- both were true for most respondents in CEP communities, though with notable exceptions. Some respondents said that some people in their communities likely practice FGC in secret (in all countries except Mali).

Public celebrations are rarely mentioned when discussing the current status of FGC practice in communities. While we can infer from the illegal status of FGC in most study countries that FGC is likely no longer celebrated publicly, it is unclear whether communities -- including diffusion villages -- still hold celebrations.

There is also no strong evidence that communities do not think FGC is a religious obligation. Only a few respondents in CEP villages said FGC is no longer viewed as a religious obligation. On the contrary, some respondents in diffusion villages endorsed FGC on religious grounds. Some respondents, especially in Senegal, said there was a tension between what they learned about the health risks of FGC, and their religious obligations to practice it.

Narrative overview of FGC2 and FGC3 findings (Senegal Only)

In CEP communities in Senegal, we found that FGC was the subject of discussion, both by village residents and by advocates or organizations conducting sensitization. Sensitization was the most common pro-abandonment activity cited and respondents most often reported that it focuses on health consequences, aligning with the prominence of health consequences as reasons for abandonment (see above). Tostan was frequently credited with these sensitization efforts. Most CEP respondents could recall at least one event related to FGC.

Some respondents in CEP communities said the village chief usually convenes discussions on FGC and that everyone in the village is invited to participate. When prompted on how discussions happen between different groups in the community, a few of these respondents said that women and men, youth and older people openly exchange opinions during these discussions. When asked how they thought the community would come to a decision on whether to abandon FGC or not, a majority of respondents in CEP and diffusion villages said the decision would be reached by consensus. Some respondents cited village chiefs, Badien Gokhs, Tostan members and household heads as influential in this decision.

In diffusion communities these trends are much weaker. Community members sometimes reported that FGC was not discussed or did not remember having participated in discussions on FGC. Fewer respondents in diffusion villages said they knew of groups or individuals advocating against FGC, and were unsure about the existence of any events related to FGC.

Overall, few respondents knew about the CMC's work in this domain, and those who did said they organized sensitization activities. Most CEP respondents held a generally positive view of the CMC's work in this area even though they felt abandoning FGC was not necessarily in accordance with their values and traditions and not everyone agreed with their work.

Below we discuss the Key findings for the in-depth investigation of FGC in Senegal in more detail.

Key finding FGC2.1. In Senegal, FGC is a reported topic of discussion in communities, especially in CEP villages.

Evidence

Key finding FGC2.1	Summarized evidence/ trends in data
In Senegal, FGC is a topic of discussion in communities, especially in CEP villages	**Trends from Country-Wide Thematic Analysis:** ● Most respondents in CEP villages said FGC is still discussed ● The evidence in diffusion communities is mixed: some respondents in diffusion villages say FGC is not discussed while some say FGC is frequently discussed. ● Some respondents in CEP villages said they knew of discussions but they had not participated in them

Results from the country-wide analysis show that FGC is still discussed in CEP villages, whereas not discussed as much in diffusion villages. In CEP villages, respondents described discussions as being sensitizations aimed at encouraging villagers to abandon the practice. For instance, when asked whether FGC is still discussed in their community, one respondent said:

"Yes [...] almost every day there are discussions like this, where they educate people about [abandoning FGC]; the village chief and other people organize these kinds of discussions" - Man, Kodiolel village (CEP), Senegal

In diffusion villages, there was variation in responses about FGC discussion within villages. Within a given diffusion village, some respondents said FGC is not discussed at all, and some other respondents said FGC is frequently discussed. In some villages, there were different responses to this question even within the same household in a village. In diffusion villages where respondents said FGC is not discussed, some said that it was a frequent topic of discussion in the past (though respondents do not specify a timeline).

Key finding 3.1. In Senegal, community members most commonly cite sensitizations, especially on health consequences, as key actions to promote FGC abandonment

Evidence

Key finding 3.1	Summarized evidence/ trends in data
Community members most commonly cite sensitizations, especially on health consequences, as a key action to promote FGC abandonment	**Trends from country-wide thematic analysis:** • The most common actions community groups have been reportedly taking to promote FGC abandonment in CEP and diffusion villages is sensitizing people on the negative health consequences of FGC • These respondents most commonly cite Tostan and Badienou Gokhs (delegated village health representatives) as conducting sensitizations

Some respondents in CEP and diffusion villages said there are individuals or groups in their villages actively advocating against FGC. Most of these respondents said these actors mainly sensitize the community on the negative health consequences of FGC. In order of frequency, community members most commonly cited Tostan and Badienou Gokhs (delegated village health representatives) as groups conducting these sensitizations.

Key finding 3.2. CEP communities can recall participating in a public declaration. Diffusion communities are unsure

Evidence

Key finding 3.2	Summarized evidence/ trends in data
CEP communities can recall participating in a public declaration. Diffusion communities are unsure	**Trends from country-wide thematic analysis:** ● Most CEP respondents said their village had participated in a public declaration; most diffusion village respondents either did not know or did not think they had. ● Most CEP respondents said these events were important because they build awareness on the consequences of FGC

A majority of CEP respondents could recall at least one event related to FGC. Most respondents said their village supported the event and could recall specific details about the event such as its location or who attended. Most respondents in diffusion villages -- on the other hand -- could not recall much about such events. For example, one respondent in a CEP village shared specific details about a public declaration that happened close to their village:

"In Ranerou there was a big event. I was absent but the marabouts, the supervisors, the doctors and the whole village [abandoned] excision. Most of the village members supported the events, as everyone says that they have abandoned the practice and are afraid of the consequences." - Woman, Kodiolel village (CEP), Senegal

A respondent in a diffusion village, on the other hand, shared their lack of awareness of the existence of such an event:

"I am not aware. [We] were not invited because if it was done we would go there [and] on the return we [would] report to the other members of the village. But if we are not called we will not go and we will have nothing to say." - Woman, Gounas village (diffusion), Senegal

Respondents who did recall these events, most commonly said they were important because they raised awareness about the consequences of FGC.

Table 10: Comparing FGC2 and FGC3 findings to Tostan's expectations

Key findings	Tostan's expectations	Expectation met?		
		Yes	Mixed evidence/ unclear	No
FGC2.1 In Senegal, FGC is a topic of discussion in communities, especially in CEP villages	If communities have abandoned, FGC is no longer discussed		✓	
	If communities have not abandoned, discussion happens among the most committed to abandonment		✓	
	Women and girls discuss FGC among themselves		✓	
	Men discuss FGC when asked to in public forums		✓	
	Religious leaders, village chiefs, Tostan facilitators, and social mobilization agents most influential in discussions	✓		
	Dialogue on FGC is different now because community members are aware of negative consequences of FGC	✓		
FGC3.1: Community members most commonly cite sensitizations, especially on health consequences, as a key action to promote FGC abandonment FGC3.2: CEP communities can recall participating in a public declaration. Diffusion communities are unsure	Communities have held discussions and conducted sensitizations to advocate for FGC abandonment	✓		
	CMCs (where they exist) focus on meetings and other sensitization. They intervene (through discussion) in cases considering FGC		✓	
	CMCs (where they exist) play a prominent/leading role in sensitization and intervention		✓	
	CMCs (where they exist) will also have worked to spread sensitization to neighboring communities		✓	
	Efforts to change FGC norms/practice are participatory (try to involve the whole community)		✓	
	Efforts to change FGC norms/practice catalyzed/led by a few or one person (activists clearly identified and stand out as more-involved than average community members)	✓		
	Efforts to change FGC norms (general, CMC or not) discuss harms of FGC (as part of persuasion)	✓		

	Efforts to change FGC norms (general, CMC or not) involve traditional/religious leaders (as part of persuasion)		✓	
	Efforts to change FGC norms (general, CMC or not) discuss consequences of the law		✓	
	Community members (individuals, not CMC) will actively diffuse knowledge about FGC to family members		✓	

Key finding FGC2.1 In Senegal, FGC is a topic of discussion in communities, especially in CEP villages, provides evidence that CEP communities express more consensus towards FGC abandonment, whereas in diffusion villages there is some resistance towards FGC abandonment. Tostan expects that FGC is no longer discussed in communities that have abandoned, yet we find that most CEP respondents -- where there are empirical expectations that community members no longer practice FGC -- said FGC is frequently discussed. In villages where respondents suggested that FGC is still practiced, our results are mixed. Some respondents in diffusion villages said FGC is discussed, while some said it was no longer discussed.

We do not have strong evidence that CMCs play a prominent role in advocating for FGC abandonment as few respondents knew about their work in this domain (even after being prompted to discuss it). For the few respondents that could cite actions that the CMC had taken, respondents spoke about them organizing sensitizations -- though unclear how and where said sensitizations were conducted. While we have strong evidence that knowledge of the health consequences of FGC influence current norms against the practice, we do not have strong evidence that action against FGC involves traditional/religious leaders. Some respondents -- especially in diffusion villages -- said that religious leaders openly endorse FGC. We also do not have strong evidence that sensitizations on FGC discuss the legal risks as most respondents said sensitizations focus on health risks, though it is clear that community members are aware of the consequences of the law (in all countries except Mali). Lastly, it is unclear whether community members diffuse their knowledge about FGC to family members, as this kind of individual action or within-household conversation was never mentioned during in-depth interviews.

Our results align with Tostan's expectations on several fronts. In discussions around FGC, most respondents said that village chiefs, Tostan members, or Badien Gokhs were most influential. Most respondents also suggested that community members are more aware of the negative consequences of FGC now compared to in the past, and that this knowledge has influenced how people talk about FGC (particularly discussions around FGC abandonment). Respondents in both CEP and diffusion communities said discussions on FGC in diffusion villages focus on sensitizing communities to abandon the practice. Sensitizations focus on raising awareness of the health risks -- in particular -- of FGC. Furthermore, in communities where there seems to be consensus around FGC abandonment, respondents cited specific individuals or groups advocating for FGC abandonment (i.e., Badien Gokhs or Tostan members) in the village.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Social Dynamics

Discussion, deference, and harmony

Across the study, we found communities referring to social changes as among the most important changes related to their well-being. Social dynamics are characterized by discussion and broad participation and by an increase in respect or harmony - between men and women and in general. Evidence indicates the participation of women in discussion and in reaching decisions. Husbands discuss decisions with their wives and village leaders discuss projects and aspirations with community members. This suggests agreement, by men and women alike, that everyone can and should participate in both household and community affairs.[54] This also suggests an underlying capacity for women to form opinions and share them. Evidence also suggests that the positive value of respect, which is very strong in West African communities, extends to women and youth who also feature in discussions. The respect for traditional authority of men and older community members remains, with husbands in the home and village leaders in public seen as final decision makers though they consult others before exercising this authority. In similar ways, perceived decreases in violence against women and the belief that women should be able to work outside the home also accompany the expectation that women respect and comply with decisions taken by their husband. Residents appreciate and value this discussion and respect, and see both as contributing to harmony at home and in public. Many study respondents highlight this harmony as one of the most important social changes they have experienced in the past six (or eight in Senegal) years. Harmony is highly valued and both men and women mention efforts to maintain this harmony.

Community-led decision-making, externally supported implementation, mixed sustainability

Some villages' residents are confident and proud of their ability to implement and sustain activities to pursue the collective well-being without outside support or with support they request and obtain. In others, residents are less optimistic, reporting that important change or action ceases or fails after the end of external support. Evidence is also mixed regarding CMCs. They exist in most CEP communities and are often reported organizing community cleanups, conducting sensitization, and assisting in dispute resolution.

Human rights alignment

High awareness and alignment; unclear importance of rights-based thinking

Across study villages, community members seem to have a basic awareness of human rights: respondents can name several rights when asked. Community members also tend to support or aspire to the results implied by rights (i.e., children should go to school or women should not be threatened or beaten for attending community meetings). Education and health are the most commonly cited rights in individual interviews and focus groups most often list health and education improvements as top community aspirations. Respondents volunteer reasoning for these aspirations focused on their

[54] While it is possible that this finding represents a shift in the capacity and agency of women with regard to their participation in community affairs, we cannot draw inferences about whether this reality is changed from the past.

economic and wellbeing implications rather than their connection to rights. Community aspirations are therefore aligned with human rights in that they aim at goals also promoted by rights. Whether that alignment arises from the fact that community members seek to defend the rights of all -- as opposed to seeking the benefits of those results in terms of wellbeing -- is less clear.

FGC Abandonment

Norms against FGC in CEP villages across all countries

Across all five study countries we find evidence of social norms against FGC in most CEP villages. This norm manifests as a belief that most members of the community have abandoned the practice of FGC and an expectation that the community will discourage it and sanction individuals who continue to practice it. Health or legal consequences are the most commonly cited reasons for the norm, while tradition is the most commonly cited barrier. The role of religion is unclear -- it is not mentioned often and, when mentioned, is cited as both a reason for and a reason against FGC practice. Despite the overall trend, there are some CEP villages in which larger proportions of people reported that they are in favor of FGC.[55]

Social norms against FGC appear to be weaker in diffusion villages. There are some diffusion villages in which most or all respondents expressed opinions favorable to FGC, usually on the grounds that it is a traditional obligation. Diffusion respondents also tended to think that more of their fellow community members still practiced FGC and were less likely to say they expected sanctions against those who practiced it. Among those who oppose FGC, health reasons are also less commonly reported in diffusion villages with legal consequences most common.

FGC in Senegal: Community Discussions, sensitization, and declarations - mostly in CEP villages

In CEP communities in Senegal, we found that FGC was the subject of discussion, both by village residents and by advocates or organizations conducting sensitization. Sensitization was also the most common pro-abandonment activity cited and respondents most often reported that it focused on health consequences, aligning with the prominence of health consequences as reasons for abandonment (see above). Tostan was frequently credited with these sensitization efforts. Most CEP respondents could recall at least one event related to FGC and also reported that their village had participated in a public declaration of abandonment. All of these trends were much weaker in diffusion villages where some respondents say FGC is rarely discussed and few can recall sensitization activities or public declarations.

[55] The study was not designed to assess if the support for the practice has changed over time.

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7. APPENDICES

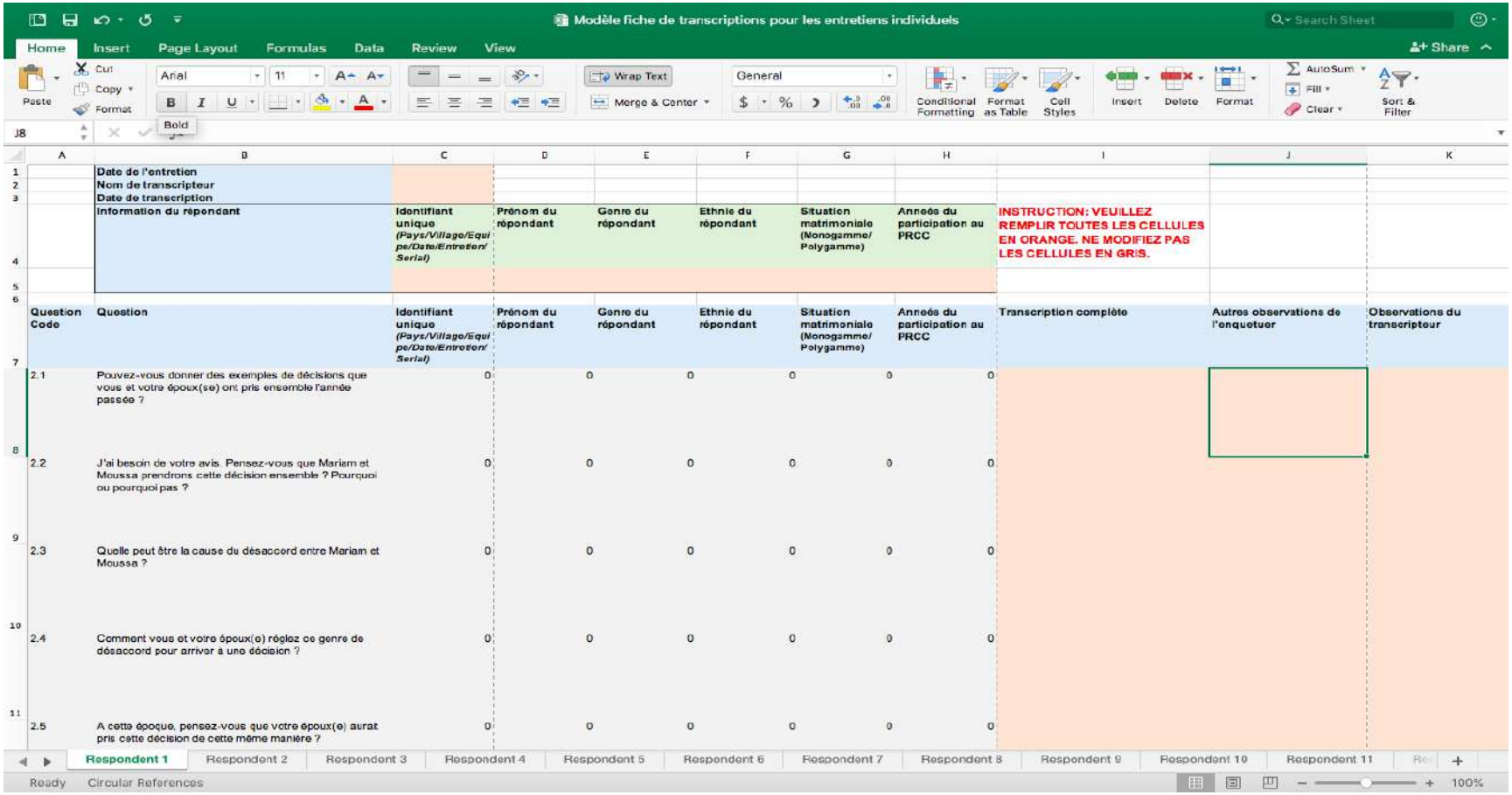
APPENDIX 1: TRANSCRIPTION TEMPLATE

The image below shows the template that transcription teams used. Information about the respondent and interview came from photographs of field teams' notes, shared along with the audio recording for each interview.

The below example is for in-depth interviews - transcribers used a similar template for focus groups. Each row in Columns A and B lists a question of the interview. Columns C to H list the demographic information of each respondent such as their gender, marital status and unique identifier (a code generated from the respondent's geographic information that is guaranteed to be unique among all respondents). Once demographic information was entered in row 5 at the beginning of the excel sheet, it automatically populated from rows 7 onwards in the corresponding columns, replacing the number "0" that appears in the image below.

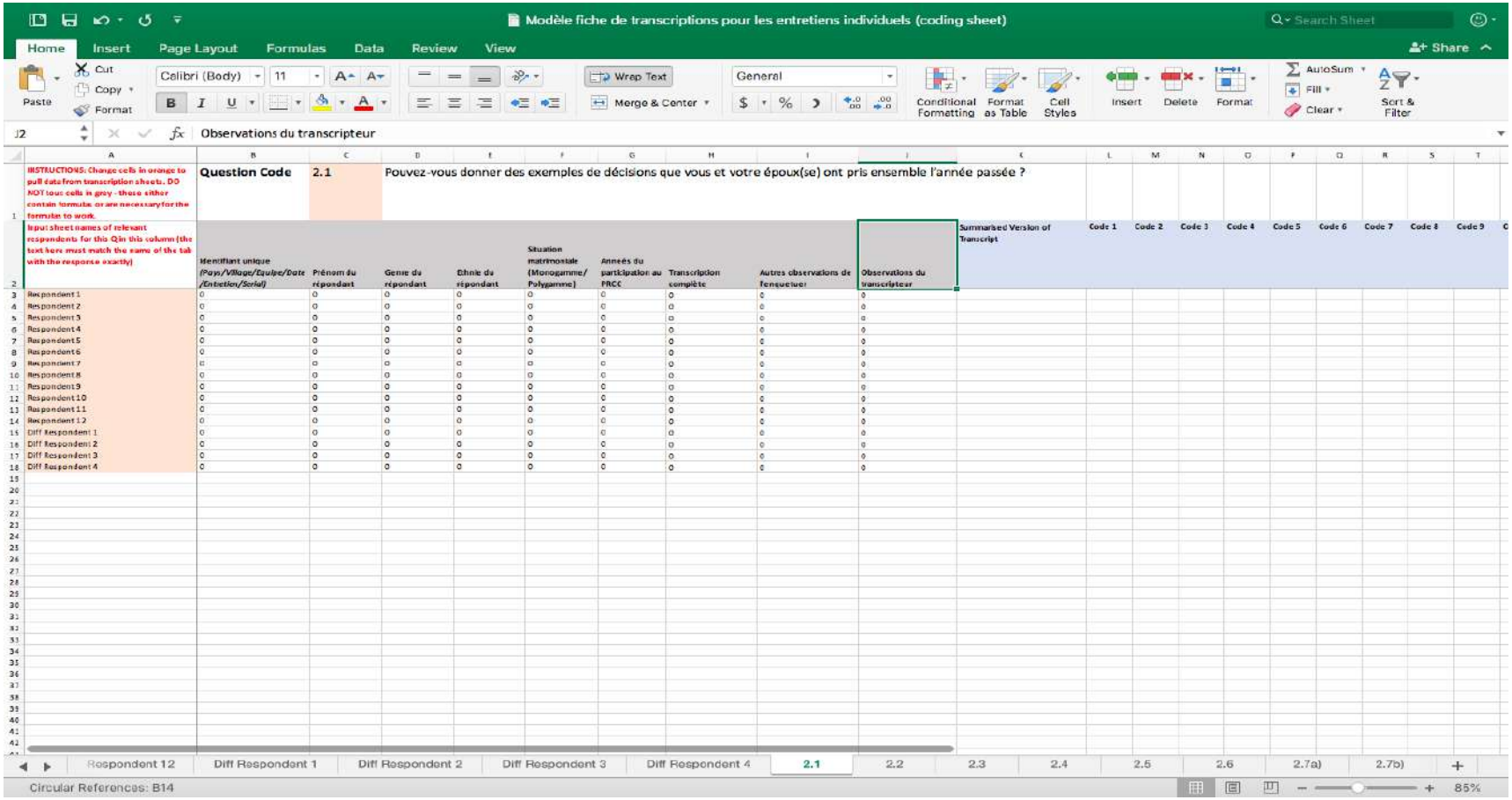
For each question in the interview guide, transcribers recorded the complete transcription -- translated into **French** -- in column I below. Where relevant, transcribers noted observations such as whether questions were posed correctly, their perception of participants' comfort, and the audio quality of the recording in column K.[56]

[56] In practice, transcriber notes are rare in our data. In many cases transcribers passed feedback directly to field teams and to IDinsight staff but did not record this feedback in the template.



As explained in *Section 2.5.4* the transcription template was organized such that all responses to each interview question as transcribed in Column I in the above image appeared automatically on one sheet, allowing the research team to examine all responses to a given question alongside each other (for a given CEP/diffusion village set) as shown in the image below. This approach facilitated a line-by-line analysis of answers to specific interview questions or sets of interview questions, across all respondents corresponding to specific research questions as was set-up during data collection.

Column A below lists each respondent for a CEP (numbered 1 to 12) and diffusion village (numbered 1 to 4). Columns B to G list the demographic information pulled automatically from Columns C to H in the above image, while H, I, and J automatically displays the transcription and any enumerator and transcriber notes. Transcribers worked on a sheet that looked like the image above, while the analysis team started first-cycle coding on a sheet that looked like the image below.



Once we received completed transcriptions in the above Excel template, we used a function in Stata 15 that moved the transcripts into a set of master Excel sheets, each containing all responses to a given interview or focus group question. This facilitated first-cycle coding of interview and focus group responses.

APPENDIX 2: COMPLETE LIST OF FINDINGS AND DATA SOURCES USED

In the main report, we organize our findings by research question in an effort to provide a clear -- though nuanced -- answer to each. As sets of interview questions were inspired by specific research questions, these were relatively bounded analyses, triangulated across data sources related to the specific research question. However, our analysis also yielded findings that emerged across research questions and through various data sources. These cross-cutting findings are important to holistically understanding social norms and the practices that reinforce them. When a finding cuts across research questions, this also increases our confidence in it, since it arises in multiple contexts. Accordingly, we organize this Appendix by cross-cutting theme, rather than by research question, to emphasize lessons generated by considering the totality of evidence. Some cross-cutting themes are similar to Key findings presented in the main report -- we include them here, at the risk of repetition, to demonstrate in more detail to the reader how they also arose across research questions.

Our evidence generated the following cross-cutting themes:

1. **Discussion, deference, and harmony.** Social interactions in study communities are characterized by discussion in decision-making and dispute resolution. Residents value social harmony, and believe it is achieved through broad participation in community discussions and through deference to male and elderly community members in these discussions.

2. **Community-led decision-making, externally supported implementation, mixed sustainability.** Communities generally feel empowered to make decisions around their own development - setting priorities and choosing initiatives. External actors support implementation to varying degrees and communities vary in how much they think their progress depends on external support. In some communities, initiatives are sustained even after external actors leave the community, while in others positive developments cease with the end of external support.

3. **High awareness and alignment; unclear importance of rights-based thinking.** Community members seem to have a basic awareness of rights in that they can cite several when asked. Community members can often describe the benefits of the most commonly cited rights, but it is unclear whether communities seek to defend the rights of all and see this action as important.

4. **Norms against FGC in CEP villages.** CEP villages seem to have a norm against FGC which is mostly driven by knowledge of its health or legal risks. These norms appear to be weaker in diffusion villages, where community members believe that FGC is still practiced by some in their communities.

5. **FGC in Senegal: Community Discussions, sensitization, and declarations - mostly in CEP villages.** In Senegal, where we asked additional questions on FGC, FGC is a topic of discussion in CEP villages. Most community members in CEP villages are able to recall at least one event related to FGC compared to in diffusion communities where FGC seems to be rarely discussed and few community members can

recall sensitization activities or public declarations.

In each subsection below, we start by presenting the data source tables for Key findings already discussed in detail in the main report. Each data source table lists the Key finding as it appears in the main report and below it, details of the sources used to generate the Key finding. Since we have already discussed the trends in evidence for Key findings in the main report, we do not repeat them here - we only list the data sources used to generate that evidence. Specifically, for interviews and focus groups, we provide the paraphrased interview or focus group questions and the number of interviews and focus groups analyzed to generate each finding. For quantitative indicators, we state the specific question(s) asked and the disaggregation of the results. Lastly, for para-data observations, we state the specific observations that complemented our analysis of the finding during the triangulation.

After listing the Key findings, we then list *Other findings*. Since Other findings are not covered in detail in the main report, each table for *Other findings* lists the data sources used, the finding generated, and the supporting evidence from those data sources. Unlike the Key findings, we believe these *Other findings* have either relatively weaker evidence to support them or were not as decision-relevant for Tostan based on its expectations. We list them here to provide a comprehensive list of findings from the study and to lend additional support to the cross-cutting theme and the Key findings that fall under it.

Discussion, deference, and harmony

Key findings

Summary: The Key findings in this cross-cutting theme relate to how different community members interact with each other both privately and publicly. The first three Key findings demonstrate the importance of discussion and broad participation in decision-making and dispute resolution. The last two Key findings speak more to women's freedom, for instance the acceptability of them participating in community discussions and working and earning a living outside of their homes. These Key findings also reveal the social dynamics that allow those freedoms to exist, namely by deference to their husband's authority. In most interactions, community members value and strive for social harmony. Other findings further reinforce Key findings for this cross-cutting theme.

Key finding SD1.2: Residents of CEP villages see discussion as central to household dispute resolution	
Individual interviews (n=143)	**Focus groups (n=25)**
We asked the following interview questions: • Imagine an imaginary couple in your village, Mariam and Moussa. Mariam and Moussa have to make a decision soon about whether their 13-year-old daughter, Hawa, should continue with school. Do you think this a decision that Mariam and Moussa would make together? Why or why not? • We understand that husbands and wives can resolve disagreements in different ways, and we would like to hear from you about how this might happen in your village.How would you and your wife/husband resolve a disagreement like this and come to a decision? — What would you say during the disagreement? — What actions might each of you take? — Would others be involved in the decision? — Who do you think will have the final say in this decision? Would it be you, your husband/wife or someone else? — Is the way this decision is taken typical of couples in your village?	We asked focus group discussants the following questions: • Do you think there has been a change in how men and women, and youth and older people in the village interact with each other over the past six (or eight in Senegal) years? — If so, which of these changes is most significant and why? — How did each of these changes come about? Was it gradual or abrupt? Who was involved?

Key finding SD2.1: Community members cite better education, sanitation, and more respectful relationships as important social changes	
Focus groups (n=44)	**Para-data observations**
We asked the following focus group question: ● What have been some changes or events that have happened in the village over the past six years? *Participants were asked to list whatever change comes to mind* ● As a group, we would like you to agree on which of these -- whether you liked them or not -- have been the 'most significant change' for the community. You can work to come to an agreement in whatever way you see fit.	Key observations in focus groups included: ● Who speaks more in a community discussion (youth, older people, men or women)? ● Who is most influential if the group needs to reach a consensus (youth, older people, men or women)?

Key finding SD3.1: Village-level decision-making involves broad discussion	
Individual interviews (n=100)	**Focus groups (n=25)**
We asked the following questions:[57] ● What are important changes that have happened in the village in the past 6 or 8 years? These could be both positive, or changes you weren't happy with. ● What changes were initiated by community members themselves? ● Did outsiders/NGOs initiate any changes? ● Why and how did this change come about, and who was most involved? *[Only if Tostan is mentioned in the previous questions]* ● Since the Tostan program ended, what changes have been initiated by the CMC or other community members themselves?	We asked focus group discussants the following questions: ● Do you think there has been a change in how men and women, and youth and older people in the village interact with each other over the past 6 or 8 years? — If so, which of these changes is most significant and why? — How did each of these changes come about? Was it gradual or abrupt? Who was involved? ● Imagine that your village receives a small grant to do something for the benefit of the community. What would be the process by which your community would take a decision on this (project funds spending)?

[57] Please note that the interview questions in this table have been paraphrased for brevity. The full text of the interview and focus group guides can be referenced here and here

Key finding 1.1: It is widely seen as acceptable for women to work outside of the home		
Individual interviews (n=78)	**Focus groups (n=25)**	**Quantitative indicators**
A wife in your village works and earns money outside of her home. Some people in the village believe that she is a bad mother and wife because of this. To what extent do you agree?: ● Agree a lot ● Agree a little ● Disagree a little ● Disagree a lot ● Don't know **Probing:** ❖ Why do you say this? ❖ Do you think others in your village would think the same way you do?	We asked focus group discussants the following questions: ● Do you think there has been a change in how men and women, and youth and older people in the village interact with each other over the past six (or eight in Senegal) years? — If so, which of these changes is most significant and why? — How did each of these changes come about? Was it gradual or abrupt? Who was involved?	**Question:** A wife in your village works and earns money outside of her home. Some people in the village believe that she is a bad mother and wife because of this. To what extent do you agree? Indicator results: ● % who agree a lot ● % who agree a little ● % who disagree a little ● % disagree a lot ● % don't know

Key finding 1.3: Residents of CEP perceive that violence towards women has decreased		
Individual interviews (n=78)	**Focus groups (n=25)**	**Quantitative indicators**
Let us pretend that you have a neighbor, Soxna. One day, she tells you that her husband is seriously threatening to beat her if she goes to a community meeting being held in the village square. How many men in your village do you think would threaten to beat their wives for wanting to attend a community meeting in the village square? ● None ● Some ● Many ● Most of the men in my village would threaten to beat their wives in this situation **Probing:** ● Why do you say this? ● Do you think this number has changed in the last six (or eight in Senegal) years? If so, why? ● Are there other situations in which you think men in your village would threaten to beat their wives?	● Do you feel like there have been any changes in interactions between men and women, and between young people and older people in your village over the last six years? Please select as a group, 2 that you believe are the most significant changes in these interactions.	**Question:** How many men in your village do you think would threaten to beat their wives for wanting to attend a community meeting in the village square? % of men and women who say: ● None ● Some ● Many ● Most of the men in my village would threaten to beat their wives in this situation

Other findings

Data sources Interviews (N= 84)	Finding SD1.4	Supporting evidence from different levels of triangulation
We gave respondents the following scenario: During a village meeting, a husband listens to and agrees with what his wife says, even though the other men don't agree with her. To what extent do you agree: ● Agree a lot ● Agree a little ● Disagree a little ● Disagree a lot ● Don't know **Probing:** ● Why do you say this? ● Do you think others in your village would think the same way you do	CEP residents state that - in community discussions - the majority should rule and being in line with the majority opinion is valued	*In the context of a meeting in which a woman voices a different opinion from that of a group of men, the most common response in CEP communities was that the majority opinion should prevail.*

Data sources **Interviews (N= 80)**	**Finding SD1.5**	**Supporting evidence from different levels of triangulation**
We gave respondents the following scenario: In a discussion, a wife suggests a different opinion than that of her husband. To what extent do you agree: ● Agree a lot ● Agree a little ● Disagree a little ● Disagree a lot ● Don't know **Probing:** ● Why do you say this? ● Do you think others in your village would think the same way you do?	CEP residents express that women must agree with their husband's opinions	*The most common response in CEP communities was that women must agree with their husbands in this situation. This is likely not a community norm as few respondents confirmed that others in the village would agree with this view.*

Data sources **Interviews (N= 115)**	**Finding SD2.2**	**Supporting evidence from different levels of triangulation**
We provided the following vignette: Imagine a married couple, Mariam and Moussa in your village. Let's pretend they are from this village. Mariam and Moussa have to decide soon about whether their 13-year-old daughter, Hawa, should continue with school. Imagine that Mariam and Moussa have a disagreement about whether Hawa should continue school. ● How would you and your wife/husband resolve a disagreement like this and come to a decision?	When discussion alone does not resolve a dispute, respondents identify involving others and one party ceding to the other as next steps for resolving household disputes.	● A majority of respondents in CEP and diffusion communities say they would discuss. It is unclear whether couples discuss together, decide together or both. ● Some respondents express that a disagreement will be resolved by someone apologizing or ceding to their spouse ● Some male and female respondents also say they would involve other people if disagreement is not resolved

Data sources **Interviews (N= 72)**	**Finding SD2.3**	**Supporting evidence from different levels of triangulation**
We provided the following vignette: Imagine a married couple, Mariam and Moussa in your village. Let's pretend they are from this village. Mariam and Moussa have to *decide* soon about whether their 13-year-old daughter, Hawa, should continue with school. Imagine that Mariam and Moussa have a disagreement about whether Hawa should continue school. ● How would you and your wife/husband resolve a disagreement like this and come to a decision? ● Do you think you and your husband/wife would have taken this decision in the same way six years ago?	It is not clear that couples discussing to reach a solution during household decision-making is a pre-existing approach to household decision-making or whether this represents a change in the past six (or eight in Senegal) years	Most respondents in CEP villages say decision-making has not changed, while some respondents say there is more understanding or discussion now.

Data sources **Interviews (N= 87)**	**Finding FGC1.3**	**Supporting evidence from different levels of triangulation**
We provided the following vignette: We will ask you to imagine a couple in your village. This time, Fatou and Cheikh have a daughter named Fatima who is at an age when girls in your village are/were often cut. Fatou and Cheikh are trying to decide whether to have Fatou cut**.** ● Who do you think will take the final decision on whether Fatima should be cut? This need not be Fatou or Cheikh; it could be someone inside or outside the household.	Women are involved in decision-making processes around FGC. Men are usually seen to have final decision authority.	● *Most men (and some women) in CEP villages across countries say FGC is a woman's domain.* ● *Some respondents across countries also express that the wife has a right to her opinion but that the man makes the final decision. Some respondents across countries said women must follow their husbands' decisions*

Community-led decision-making, externally supported implementation, mixed sustainability

Key findings

Summary: Key findings under this cross-cutting theme give us a picture of how important community well-being initiatives are decided upon, executed and sustained in communities. The Key findings and Other findings show that community involvement in deciding on, executing and sustaining positive change varies. Some community members are confident and proud of their ability to implement and sustain change without outside support or with support they request and obtain. However, some communities are less optimistic, reporting that important change or action ceases or fails after the end of external support. Evidence of CMC activity is also mixed. Some community members believe the CMC plays an important role in promoting community well-being, while others think it plays a limited role or is inactive.

Key finding SD3.2: There is mixed evidence that CEP and diffusion communities in the five study countries are initiating, leading, and sustaining activities that improve the community's well-being.	
Individual interview questions (n=100)	**Focus group prompts (n=25)**
• What are important changes that have happened in the village in the past six or (eight in Senegal) years? These could be both positive, or changes you weren't happy with. • What changes were initiated by community members themselves? • Did outsiders/NGOs initiate any changes? • Why and how did this change come about, and who was most involved? *[Only if Tostan is mentioned in the previous questions]* ∉ Since the Tostan program ended, what changes have been initiated by the CMC or other community members themselves?	∉ Do you think there has been a change in how men and women, and youth and older people in the village interact with each other over the past 6 or 8 years? – If so, which of these changes is most significant and why? – How did each of these changes come about? Was it gradual or abrupt? Who was involved? ∉ Imagine that your village receives a small grant to do something for the benefit of the community. What would be the process by which your community would take a decision on this (project funds spending)

Key finding SD3.3: Evidence of CMC activity in CEP villages is mixed	
Individual interviews (n=100)	**Focus groups (n=25)**
We asked the following questions:[58] ● What are important changes that have happened in the village in the past six or eight years? These could be both positive, or changes you weren't happy with. ● What changes were initiated by community members themselves? ● Did outsiders/NGOs initiate any changes? ● Why and how did this change come about, and who was most involved? *[Only if Tostan is mentioned in the previous questions]* ● Since the Tostan program ended, what changes have been initiated by the CMC or other community members themselves?	We asked focus group discussants the following questions: ● Do you think there has been a change in how men and women, and youth and older people in the village interact with each other over the past six or eight years? — If so, which of these changes is most significant and why? — How did each of these changes come about? Was it gradual or abrupt? Who was involved? *Only for focus groups with village leaders:* ● Can the group recall some plans the CMC made over the past year? ● Think about a time when the CMC was able to achieve one of their action plans. How did it manage to do so? Can someone share the process they think led to success?

[58] Please note that the interview questions in this table have been paraphrased for brevity. The full text of the interview and focus group guides can be referenced here and here

Other findings

Data sources		Finding FGC3.3	Supporting evidence from different levels of triangulation
Interviews (N= 18)	**Focus groups (N=9)**		
• Imagine a situation where members of your community came together many times to discuss FGC. Specifically, these members were trying to decide whether, as a community, they should continue or abandon the practice of FGC. Would such a discussion be open to everyone in this community? • Following one or more discussions like this, by what process would the community come to a consensus on what to do?	• Are there individuals or groups in your community who, today, actively advocate for or against the practice of FGC in this community? • What actions do these different individuals and groups take? • Think back to the main actions that have taken place on the subject of FGC in the last three years. Can you provide some specific examples of actions that have been led by the CMC?	In Senegal, the CMC is most credited for organizing sensitizations on the subject of FGC. Although they encounter some resistance, their work is generally perceived in a positive light in CEP communities	• *Most CEP respondents hold a positive view of the CMC's work in this area, though some respondents said that abandoning FGC is not in accordance with their values or traditions and not everyone agreed with their work.* • *A few respondents in diffusion villages knew of the CMC's work and described them as prohibiting cutting.*

High awareness and alignment; unclear importance of rights-based thinking

Key findings

Summary: Key findings under this cross-cutting theme emphasize that community members seem to have a basic awareness of human rights: respondents can name several of them when asked. That said, respondents volunteer reasoning for these aspirations that is focused on their economic and wellbeing implications rather than their connection to rights. In particular, the social value of education is high in communities as indicated by the *Other Finding* under this cross-cutting theme.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Key finding HR1.1: Respondents can cite at least three human rights from Tostan's list that a young girl should have

& Key finding HR1.2: Parents, especially fathers, are seen as responsible for enrolling children in school</th></tr>
<tr><th>Individual interviews (n=129)</th><th>Quantitative indicators</th></tr>
<tr><td>We asked the following questions:
I'd like you to imagine another member of your village, a 6 -year old girl we can call Khoudia. She wants to go to school but her parents refuse to enrol her in school
What do you expect to happen if someone has a human right to education?
Who do you think is responsible for making sure that Khoudia can attend school? Why do you say this? Can you tell me more?
Are there other human rights that Khoudia should have? Please list 2 or 3 of these rights.
Where did you learn about each human right?
Why are these human rights important?</td><td>Question: Are there other human rights that Khoudia should have? Please list 2 or 3 of these rights.
Percentage of respondents who can list at least three of their human rights</td></tr>
</table>

HR2.1 Communities most commonly aspire to improved essential services such as schools, access to water and health centers & HR2.2 Respondents do not cite their status as human rights as primary motivations for these aspirations	
Focus groups (n=29)	**Para-data observations**
We asked the following questions: ● Please take a minute and think about how you would like to see your village change in the next 5 to 10 years ● What are some of the changes the community as a whole (or most people in the community) hope to see in the next 5 to 10 years? What makes you think the community as a whole (or most people in the community) hope for these changes? *Groups were asked to discuss together and to agree on whether there exists some shared aspirations for the future* ● Does the group have any ideas about when the community started hoping for these changes? — Do you think something or someone influenced these hopes? — If yes, who/what was a key influence? — Were outsiders or NGOs involved?	Key observations in focus groups included: ● Who speaks more during discussion on community aspirations (youth, older people, men or women)? ● Who is most influential if the group needs to reach a consensus (youth, older people, men or women)?

HR3.1 Most respondents in CEP villages - when asked directly - believe that the CMC would intervene to convince parents to enroll their child in school. Most of these responses specify that the CMC would use discussion/persuasion in its intervention. There is otherwise little mention of intervention or advocacy in defense of human rights	
Interviews (n=90)	**Focus groups (n=25)**
● I'd like you to imagine another member of your village, a 6 -year old girl we can call Khoudia. She wants to go to school but her parents refuse to enrol her in school ● What human rights should Khoudia have? Please list 2 or 3 of these rights. ○ Where did you learn about each human right? ○ Why are these human rights important? ● (Only if CMC is mentioned) Do you think the CMC defends these rights in your community?	We asked focus group discussants the following questions: ● Do you think there has been a change in how men and women, and youth and older people in the village interact with each other over the past six or eight years? — If so, which of these changes is most significant and why? — How did each of these changes come about? Was it gradual or abrupt? Who was involved? *Only for focus groups with village leaders:* ● Can the group recall some plans the CMC made over the past year? ● Think about a time when the CMC was able to achieve one of their action plans. How did it manage to do so? Can someone share the process they think led to success?

Other findings

Data sources Interviews (N= 143)	Finding SD1.6	Supporting evidence/ trends in data[59]
Imagine a married couple, Mariam and Moussa in your village. Let's pretend they are from this village. Mariam and Moussa have to decide soon about whether their 13-year-old daughter, Hawa, should continue with school. Imagine that Mariam and Moussa have a disagreement about whether Hawa should continue school. ● *What might lead Mariam and Moussa to disagree?* ● *What is your own opinion about whether Hawa should continue with school (or not)?*	There is a social value around the importance of education	*Most respondents in CEP and diffusion communities said the child should go to school and cited some benefits of education. Barriers mentioned include lack of financial means, child not doing well in school, child wanting to get married - the latter more commonly cited in diffusion communities.*

[59] Where not specified, the finding applies across countries

Norms against FGC in CEP villages across all countries

Key findings

Summary: Key findings under this cross-cutting theme contribute to our understanding of the current status of FGC practice as demonstrated through how people talk about it and the communities' expectations around the practice in their communities. Our Key findings show hesitancy towards discussing FGC as compared to other topics covered in interviews and focus groups. Our Key findings also indicate norms against FGC in most CEP villages. This norm manifests as a belief that most members of the community have abandoned the practice of FGC and an expectation that the community will discourage it and sanction individuals who continue to practice it. The *Other Finding* under this theme reveals that religion and tradition are seen as key barriers to norm shifts against FGC.

FGC1.1: There is still hesitance to discuss FGC, at least with outsiders, including in CEP communities but more pronounced in diffusion communities		
Interviews (n=87)	**Focus groups (n=9)**	**Para-data observations**
We will ask you to imagine a couple in your village. This time, Fatou and Cheikh have a daughter named Fatima who is at an age when girls in your village are/were often cut. Fatou and Cheikh are trying to decide whether to have Fatou cut. • What do you think Fatou and Cheikh's opinions might be about cutting their daughter? • Who would they go to for advice? • What would advisors advise them to do? • Imagine Fatou and Cheikh go against the advice they get. Who would react to this? • If Fatou and Cheikh had to make this decision six or (eight in Senegal) years ago, would they have received the same advice?	Fatou and Cheikh are trying to decide whether to have their daughter, Fatima, cut. • In this discussion, what do you think Fatou's and Chiekh's opinions might be about cutting their child? It is possible that their views might differ from each other. Can someone start us off to consider what they may be thinking and discussing? • Do you think they would ask someone else for advice? Who? • Think back to six (or eight in Senegal) years ago. Do you think they would have gone to the same people for advice? • Would these people have given the same advice six (or eight in Senegal) years ago?	Key observations in focus groups included: • To what extent are interview respondents and focus group discussants willing and able to discuss topics on FGC? How is this willingness/unwillingness demonstrated? • How do focus groups discuss FGC? Does the discussion flow freely? Who speaks more (between men and women, or between the young and elderly)? • Number and details of village-level refusals, particularly where FGC is stated as the main reason for refusal to participate in the study

FGC1.2: There is evidence of a norm against FGC in CEP villages. There is, however, mixed evidence of a norm against FGC in diffusion villages		
Interviews (n=87)	**Focus groups (n=9)**	**Quantitative indicators**
We will ask you to imagine a couple in your village. This time, Fatou and Cheikh have a daughter named Fatima who is at an age when girls in your village are/were often cut. Fatou and Cheikh are trying to decide whether to have Fatou cut. • What do you think Fatou and Cheikh's opinions might be about cutting their daughter? • Who would they go to for advice? • What would advisors advise them to do? • Imagine Fatou and Cheikh go against the advice they get. Who would react to this? • If Fatou and Cheikh had to make this decision six or (eight in Senegal) years ago, would they have received the same advice?	Fatou and Cheikh are trying to decide whether to have their daughter, Fatima, cut. • In this discussion, what do you think Fatou's and Chiekh's opinions might be about cutting their child? It is possible that their views might differ from each other. Can someone start us off to consider what they may be thinking and discussing? • Do you think they would ask someone else for advice? Who? • Think back to six (or eight in Senegal) years ago. Do you think they would have gone to the same people for advice? • Would these people have given the same advice six (or eight in Senegal) years ago?	• Percentage of respondents who can cite at least **one** negative consequence of FGC.

Other findings

Data sources		Finding FGC1.3	Supporting evidence from different levels of triangulation
Interviews (N= 87)	**Focus groups (N=9)**		
We will ask you to imagine a couple in your village. This time, Fatou and Cheikh have a daughter named Fatima who is at an age when girls in your village are/were often cut. Fatou and Cheikh are trying to decide whether to have Fatou cut. ● What do you think Fatou and Cheikh's opinions might be about cutting their daughter? ● Who would they go to for advice? ● What would advisors advise them to do? ● Imagine Fatou and Cheikh go against the advice they get. Who would react to this? ● If Fatou and Cheikh had to make this decision six or (eight in Senegal) years ago, would they have received the same advice?	Fatou and Cheikh are trying to decide whether to have their daughter, Fatima, cut. ● In this discussion, what do you think Fatou's and Chiekh's opinions might be about cutting their child? It is possible that their views might differ from each other. Can someone start us off to consider what they may be thinking and discussing? ● Do you think they would ask someone else for advice? Who? ● Think back to six (or eight in Senegal) years ago. Do you think they would have gone to the same people for advice? ● Would these people have given the same advice six (or eight in Senegal) years ago?	A norm change against FGC is resisted, by tradition and religious norms in favor of FGC.	*When asked to think of reasons why others would want the practice of FGC to continue, some respondents (especially in diffusion villages) express a desire to continue practicing FGC because it is seen as a custom or because it is what religion dictates*

FGC in Senegal: Community Discussions, sensitization, and declarations - mostly in CEP villages

Key findings

Summary: Our Key findings and *Other findings* for FGC in Senegal show that FGC is a subject of discussion, both by village residents and by advocates or organizations conducting sensitizations. Sensitization was also the most common pro-abandonment activity cited and respondents most often reported that it focused on health consequences. Individual data source tables for these findings are listed below:

Key finding FGC2.1: In Senegal, FGC is a topic of discussion in communities, especially in CEP villages	
Interviews (n=87)	**Focus groups (n=9)**
• Is FGC still discussed in your community? • If so, who is taking part in the discussion? • Are you able to recall any community meetings/discussions focused on FGC in the recent past? • Following one or more discussions like this, by what process would the community come to a consensus on what to do? • Imagine that this same discussion was taking place in this community 8 years ago. Would this discussion have been different in terms of who participated and if so, how?	• Imagine a situation where members of your community came together many times to discuss FGC. Could you describe how these discussions might take place [took place], and by what process the community might come [came] to a decision on whether or not to abandon FGC?

Key finding FGC3.1: Community members most commonly cite sensitizations, especially on health consequences, as a key action to promote FGC abandonment	
Interviews (n=20)	**Focus groups (n=9)**
• Are there individuals or groups in your community who, today, actively advocate for or against the practice of FGC in this community? • What actions do these different individuals and groups take? • Are you able to recall any events related to abandonment of FGC that took place in this community in the last eight years? *[If CMC is not already mentioned as a major player in FGC abandonment]* • Think back to the main actions that have taken place on the subject of FGC in the last three years. Can you provide some specific examples of actions that have been led by the CMC? Around when did each of these take place? .	*[If the community has abandoned FGC]* • Can you think of a few key actions this community has taken that allowed you to abandon the practice of FGC? • Who do you recall organizing or leading these actions/ events in your community? *[If the community has not yet abandoned FGC but many people in the community would like to do so]* • Can you think of a few key actions this community has taken that have helped prepare this village to abandon the practice of FGC? *[If the group generally agrees that the community wants the practice of FGC to continue]* • Can you think of a few key actions this community has taken to ensure that the practice of FGC continues?

Key finding FGC3.2: CEP communities can recall participating in a public declaration. Diffusion communities are unsure	
Interviews (n=20)	**Focus groups (n=9)**
• Are there individuals or groups in your community who, today, actively advocate for or against the practice of FGC in this community? • What actions do these different individuals and groups take? • Are you able to recall any events related to abandonment of FGC that took place in this community in the last eight years? *[If CMC is not already mentioned as a major player in FGC abandonment]* • Think back to the main actions that have taken place on the subject of FGC in the last three years. Can you provide some specific examples of actions that have been led by the CMC? Around when did each of these take place? .	*[If the community has abandoned FGC]* • Can you think of a few key actions this community has taken that allowed you to abandon the practice of FGC? • Who do you recall organizing or leading these actions/ events in your community? *[If the community has not yet abandoned FGC but many people in the community would like to do so]* • Can you think of a few key actions this community has taken that have helped prepare this village to abandon the practice of FGC? *[If the group generally agrees that the community wants the practice of FGC to continue]* • Can you think of a few key actions this community has taken to ensure that the practice of FGC continues?

Other findings

Data sources Interviews (N= 18)	Finding FGC2.2	Supporting evidence from different levels of triangulation[60]
If FGC is discussed, who is taking part in the discussion on FGC? Probes: ● Where do these discussions take place? ● Does everyone who takes part in the discussions reside in your community? If not, could you tell me more about who these individuals/groups are and where they come from? [ask for each individual/ group]? ● Is there anyone else you can think of that participates in discussions on FGC in your village? Imagine a situation where members of your community came together many times to discuss FGC. Specifically, these members were trying to decide whether, as a community, they should continue or abandon the practice of FGC. ● Would such a discussion be open to everyone in this community?	In Senegal, everyone in the village is invited to participate in discussions about FGC.	● *Most respondents in CEP and diffusion villages agree that discussions on FGC are open to everyone* ● *Some respondents say not everyone goes to meetings on FGC* ● *Majority of respondents said women participated more in discussions about FGC* ● *Open exchange of views between women and men, young and old, cited by a few respondents only in CEP villages* ● *Many respondents mentioned the role of the village chief in convening such discussions - they were often hosted at his house*

[60] Where not specified, the finding applies across countries

Data sources	Finding FGC2.3	Supporting evidence from different levels of triangulation
Interviews (N= 18)		
• Imagine a situation where members of your community came together many times to discuss FGC. Specifically, these members were trying to decide whether, as a community, they should continue or abandon the practice of FGC. Would such a discussion be open to everyone in this community? • Following one or more discussions like this, by what process would the community come to a consensus on what to do?	In Senegal, there is some evidence that respondents see the decision to abandon/not abandon as open to all and/or taken by consensus	*Some respondents said the decision to abandon or not was reached by consensus, while others cited village chiefs, Badien Gokhs, Tostan members and household heads as playing a role in the decision*

Data sources		Finding FGC3.3	Supporting evidence from different levels of triangulation
Interviews (N= 20)	**Focus groups (N=9)**		
• Are there individuals or groups in your community who, today, actively advocate for or against the practice of FGC in this community? • What actions do these different individuals and groups take? • Are you able to recall any events related to abandonment of FGC that took place in this community in the last eight years? *[If CMC is not already mentioned as a major player in FGC abandonment]* • Think back to the main actions that have taken place on the subject of FGC in the last three years. Can you provide some specific examples of actions that have been led by the CMC? Around when did each of these take place?	• Are there individuals or groups in your community who, today, actively advocate for or against the practice of FGC in this community? • What actions do these different individuals and groups take? • Think back to the main actions that have taken place on the subject of FGC in the last three years. Can you provide some specific examples of actions that have been led by the CMC?	In Senegal, few respondents cite individuals or groups actively advocating against the practice of FGC	A minority of respondents reported the existence of an association or group of village members advocating against the practice of FGC. Associations were mentioned twice as often in CEP villages than in diffusion villages.

APPENDIX 3: QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS

Table 11 shows our quantitative indicator results. Indicator questions, that is close-ended questions designed to yield indicators of interest to Tostan, were embedded within the in-depth interviews and focus groups. Indicator questions were phrased or to restrict responses to numbers, "yes or no," or multiple choice. However, interviewers were instructed to treat these questions as part of the semi-structured conversation on the topic at hand, which sometimes meant taking a respondent's answer as-is, rather than forcing them to select from a list. This is a slightly different approach than Tostan has used in the past but given our short time with each respondent, we wanted to mix in the indicator questions where they fit in the conversational flow. Our approach helped us better contextualize quantitative findings within a broader qualitative narrative and improve conversational flow -- preventing quantitative enumeration from detracting from the richer qualitative interview, which was the study's priority.

This approach explains the variability in the number of recorded responses (the *# total respondents*) across indicators within the same country. In other words, *# total respondents* records the number of relevant respondents who responded to "yes or no" or multiple to indicator questions. However, all responses – including those that did not respond "yes or no" or multiple -e were analyzed following the steps outlined in *2.7 Data Analysis* in the report and are therefore reflected in our qualitative results.

As explained in section 2.5.4 Data collection tools and approaches in the report, our sampling strategy does not guarantee precision or representativeness at the village-level.[61] Therefore, these quantitative results should be interpreted carefully. Moreover, they are self-reported and -- therefore -- subject to imperfect recall and social desirability bias, again requiring caution in interpretation, especially regarding sensitive topics like gender-based violence and FGC.It is also important to note that our sampling strategy and data collection tools differ from those previously used by Tostan, meaning that results should not be interpreted longitudinally.

For some indicators — specifically % or respondents who can recall at least three of their human rights and % of respondents who can cite at least two negative consequences of FGC — questions were not asked directly and therefore required an assessment of responses to several questions in the interview. For example, we did not directly ask respondents to cite two negative consequences of FGC but instead asked, through a vignette, what a hypothetical mother and father in the village would think about having their daughter cut. We also asked questions about what trusted advisors as well as the wider community on the matter would think, to understand what if any, negative consequences community

[61] To the extent that we randomly selected participants, we could say our sample is representative of a group of married couples that have been resident and married for the past six years (and specifically for this group) at the village-level but we cannot guarantee precision because of our small sample size. To improve precision, we would need a different approach that likely starts with knowing the total village population (maybe by conducting a household census or having a household listing) and selects a sample size that will allow an acceptable level of precision.

members associate with FGC. While overall, we found that respondents most commonly cite legal or health risks related to FGC, rarely did respondents cite both in an interview. This -- in part -- explains why the % or respondents can cite at least two negative consequences of FGC is very low despite there being evidence that awareness of legal or health risks related to FGC is high across countries. To examine the % of respondents who can recall at least three of their human rights, we considered both explicit mentions of the term 'human rights,' as taught in CEP classes but also whether the respondent was talking about things they believed were important and that people were entitled to, without discrimination in the interview.

Table 11: Summary of quantitative indicator results

Country	Quantitative indicator	% of respondents who can recall at least three of their human rights	% of respondents who can cite at least two negative consequences of FGC	% of female respondents who find it acceptable for a woman to work outside of the home	% of male respondents who find it acceptable for a woman to work outside of the home	% of all women and men who think a proportion of men (out of 10) in their village would hit or beat their wife for wanting to attend a community meeting in the village square				
						0 out of 10 men	1 -2 out of 10 men	3 or 4 out of 10 men	5 or over out of 10 men	no answer
Mali	*# total respondents*	*65*	*74*	*40*	*37*	*77*	*77*	*77*	*77*	*77*
	# of respondents who can recall/cite/agree as relevant	29	0	34	33	38	24	4	7	4
	% of respondents	**45%**	**0%**	**85%**	**89%**	**49%**	**31%**	**5%**	**9%**	**5%**
Mauritania	*# total respondents*	*48*	*47*	*24*	*24*	*48*	*48*	*48*	*48*	*48*
	# of respondents who can recall/cite/agree as relevant	32	2	17	16	21	6	4	3	14
	% of respondents	**67%**	**4%**	**71%**	**67%**	**44%**	**13%**	**8%**	**6%**	**29%**
Guinea BIssau	*# total respondents*	*53*	*46*	*28*	*26*	*55*	*55*	*55*	*55*	*55*
	# of respondents who can recall/cite/agree as relevant	32	1	26	23	34	10	7	3	1
	% of respondents	**60%**	**2%**	**93%**	**88%**	**62%**	**18%**	**13%**	**5%**	**2%**
Guinea	*# total respondents*	*41*	*30*	*24*	*26*	*49*	*49*	*49*	*49*	*49*
	# of respondents who can recall/cite/agree as relevant	22	1	23	23	20	5	17	5	2
	% of respondents	**54%**	**3%**	**96%**	**88%**	**41%**	**10%**	**35%**	**10%**	**4%**
Senegal	*# total respondents*	*47*	*44*	*29*	*29*	*57*	*57*	*57*	*57*	*57*
	# of respondents who can recall/cite/agree as relevant	19	4	27	25	40	15	0	0	2
	% of respondents	**40%**	**9%**	**93%**	**86%**	**70%**	**26%**	**0%**	**0%**	**4%**
TOTAL FOR ALL STUDY COUNTRIES	*# total respondents*	*238*	*229*	*137*	*131*	*266*	*266*	*266*	*266*	*266*
	# of respondents who can recall/cite/agree as relevant	127	8	115	108	146	61	20	17	22
	% of respondents	**53%**	**3%**	**84%**	**82%**	**55%**	**23%**	**8%**	**6%**	**8%**

APPENDIX 4: EVIDENCE GATHERED IN DEEP-DIVE ANALYSIS

Where we found some inconsistencies or divergence for findings that are important for Tostan, we conducted an additional deep-dive exploration of our data, so we could learn more by looking at a village more thoroughly. We conducted two deep-dives in total:

1) One focused on understanding the current role and actions of CMCs ("CMC deep-dive" in the tables below)
2) One focused on understanding the current status of FGC practice and its abandonment in communities ("FGC deep-dive" in the tables below)

We conducted each deep-dive in one CEP and one diffusion community in each of the five study countries, selecting the same villages for each deep-dive.[62] We selected deep-dive villages purposively across all countries to ensure we looked at villages with a variety of expected outcomes, and which had richer responses to facilitate a deeper investigation.

The below tables detail the questions asked and evidence gathered in each country for each deep-dive.

[62] Deep-dives were conducted in one CEP and one diffusion village per country. Specifically, we investigated Sonkhonya and Damaniah villages in Guinea, Sintcham-Dicori and Sintcham-Massacunda in Guinea-Bissau, Beleco and Farabougou in Mali, Wouro Amadou Hawa and Mourtogal in Mauritania, and Kodiolel and Gounas in Senegal.

Guinea

CMC deep-dive

CMC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Sonkhonya	Damaniah
Is there evidence that communities are leading activities/efforts to further their own wellbeing/development?	The idea of the community asking for help -- from authorities, from NGOs -- is very clear. Examples cited -- local health centre, improvements in local school, better access to water. All 12 respondents indicate these were initiated by the community, and with help from outsiders, and that they succeeded with these initiatives to varying degrees. Out of 12 respondents, 7 properly described some process aspects of this community led change. External actors like the government feature in a "support"/"funder" role.	Responses suggest that some changes were initiated by the community and were brought to fruition with the support of external actors. Three examples cited consistently - local school, mosque, grain store - as efforts led by community. Out of 4 respondents, 3 said these efforts were led/initiated/voted upon by the community but were financed/supported by external actors.
Why did these changes come about?	Out of 12 respondents, 5 said that whatever is done is done by consensus (and that this is something Tostan encouraged) and in response to certain problems that existed like lack of water, medical facilities for pregnant women, and because the community felt education was essential.	Unclear from the data.
Who is leading these efforts, if not community members themselves? Which actors were involved and how?	Respondents cited the government as having funded a school health center and water pumps. They cited that "educated people from outside villages" helped with construction and that Tostan provided money and guidance. Respondents also cited 'other NGOs,' though no names taken.	Respondents cited the following actors: "les arabes" who funded a mosque and the government who helped renew a school, and install a grain store and pump.
Which community members led/initiated efforts to further community wellbeing?	Respondents cited the village chief and the president of the youth association.	Respondents cited the village chief and the president of the youth association.
Is there evidence that women are involved in initiating some changes?	Yes: 1 of 12 respondents explicitly mention women's association.	No mention of women as involved.
Is there any evidence that the youth are involved?	Yes: 4 of 12 credit youth as involved in initiating community programs.	Yes: 1 of 4 respondents cited the youth association

CMC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Sonkhonya	Damaniah
Evidence that CMC involved in exercising collective influence to advocate for community well-being?	Maybe. The responses on this are mixed. Some respondents equated CMC with the youth, whereas other respondents suggest that the CMC's main role is that of a relay between community and external actors, but apart from that it isn't really active.	No.
% of respondents that mention Tostan (unprompted) in questions that relate to communities exercising collective influence to advocate for community wellbeing	17%	0%
Is there evidence that the changes initiated by Tostan's program are sustainable, and does the community continue to lead or advocate for change for itself?	Only 2 responses to this question. One not useful, another said CMC exists but their projects ended 3 years ago.	Tostan not mentioned
Is there evidence that women are involved in sustaining changes or initiating them now?	Unclear from the data	Tostan not mentioned
Youth?	Unclear from the data	Tostan not mentioned
CMC?	Unclear from the data	Tostan not mentioned
Cross validation with field observations	Of projects cited by respondents in individual interviews: - Local health centre: no health center reported in field observations (neither communal or otherwise) - Improvements in local school: school reported in checklist (but not as built at the initiative of the community) - Better access to water: A well reported in checklist (but not as built at the initiative of the community); communal irrigation reported (and that it was initiated by the community) Government funded projects: - School: reported in checklist - Health centre: not reported on checklist - Water pump: well and communal irrigation projects reported (not as initiated by the community) Additional projects cited: Communal equipment for agricultural transformation	Of projects cited by respondents in individual interviews: - Local school: one local school reported (not indicated that it was built by the community) - Mosque: no mention in field observation checklist - Grain store: yes, and reported by the community Additional projects reportedly built by the community: Irrigation system and market

Guinea

FGC deep-dive

FGC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Sonkhonya	Damaniah
Do respondents think the community has a vision for abandonment? (whether called vision or not, is there a sense that the collective wants to move toward abandonment)	Though some respondents condemn FGC, there seems to be no unified community vision of FGC abandonment as there are still some respondents still openly endorse FGC	There seems to be some social pressure towards abandoning FGC and it seems that respondents believe that villagers are aware of the consequences of FGC (both legal and from a health perspective).
Why/Why not? What factors have facilitated this move toward abandonment? What barriers have held it back?	Factors that promote abandonment: - the illegal status of FGC - "convincing and advantageous" sensitization campaigns - social pressure to conform to what everyone else is doing in the village Barriers cited: - Respondents cite that FGC is a custom and therefore should continue	Factors that promote abandonment: - Respondents "were told" that FGC puts the young girls at a health risk and therefore "were told" not to do it. - The legal restrictions around FGC. - Social pressure to conform to what everyone else is doing in the village.
Who is seen as involved in the process of developing the vision?	Respondents cited village leaders and Tostan	Respondents cite that the village leaders -- the village chief, the elders, the women's leader and the youth chairman -- have the last say in matters regarding FGC.
Who is seen as involved in holding back any moves toward abandonment?	Respondents cite that there are still some villagers that practice FGC in secrecy, explicitly citing that they are therefore defying the law.	Respondents cite that there are still some villagers that go to other villages to cut girls in secrecy because "they don't want to listen and believe in the consequences"
What is the role of women in the move toward abandonment (or in general in the context of FGC)?	Some respondents think that the decision to cut a girl should be taken by both parents, but the majority think that men are the final decision makers in the household. Women are not seen as sole undertakers of FGC in this village.	Women are seen as the ones who are concerned with the practice of FGC. Women are also seen as those that are "better placed" to answer questions about FGC and to decide "whether it is good or not". They are also seen as the ones that will "set the tone" for the conversation. In addition, "the president of women" (presumably of a women's association) was also cited as having openly condemned FGC.

FGC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Sonkhonya	Damaniah
What is the role of women in holding back the move toward abandonment (or FGC in general)?	Respondents did not explicitly cite that women hold back FGC abandonment.	FGC is still viewed to be in the purview of women rather than a village-wide concern.
CMC cited in the context of questions pertaining to FGC? If so, in what role?	CMC not cited.	CMC not cited.
Tostan cited in the context of FGC? If so, in what role?	Yes: having conducted sensitization campaigns	Tostan not cited.
Percent of respondents that mention CMC in the context of FGC	0%	0%
Percent of respondents that mention Tostan in the context of FGC	14%	0%
Willingness to Discuss FGC: Does it seem to be a topic of conversation in public? In private? If not, why?	All respondents replied to questions about FGC, without any major restrictions.	Out of 4 respondents, 1 refused to answer question 4.0 ("Fatou et Cheikh essaient de décider s'ils doivent exciser Fatima ou pas. Dans cette prise de décision, que pensez-vous que quelqu'un comme Fatou pourrait avoir comme opinion?")
Are we convinced the village has abandoned? If not, how close does it seem?	No, respondents openly talk about FGC still being practiced and continue to recommend FGC despite being aware of the legal status	We are not entirely convinced because there are still reports of villagers that practice FGC and not all respondents explicitly condemn the practice. Respondents however indicate that FGC is no longer practiced openly and mostly seem to go to other villages to do it,suggesting there may be movement towards abandonment over the past few years.

Guinea-Bissau

CMC deep-dive

CMC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Sintcham-Dicori	Sintcham-Massacunda
Is there evidence that communities are leading activities/efforts to further their own wellbeing/development?	There is little evidence of community-led changes, because most changes cited are attributed to Tostan. It seems like the question was misunderstood or badly posed as "what changes" rather than "what changes initiated by the community". The language used by respondents suggests that respondents see these changes as having been "received" due to Tostan's program. The percentage of respondents that mentioned Tostan mentions (100%) is very high. The most commonly cited changes were greater understanding and harmony (8 of 12 respondents), cleanliness (7 of 12), access to money via microcredit or direct transfers (5 of 12). FGC abandonment was mentioned by 3 respondents.	No evidence. None of the 4 respondents could cite any changes initiated by the community, although the phrasing of the transcription suggests that they understood the question as what changes occurred rather than were initiated.
Why did these changes come about?	Out of 12 respondents, 6 were not asked this question because enumerators understood the question dependency incorrectly. Of the 6 that did answer the question, everyone said these changes emerged in response to problems that existed in the community. They cite a variety of problems, and no clear trends emerged. Most respondents conclude by saying the arrival of Tostan made everything better.	No changes cited so don't have any data on this.
Who is leading these efforts, if not community themselves? Which actors were involved and how?	Respondents only mentioned Tostan.	No changes cited so don't have any data on this.
Which community members led/initiated efforts to further community wellbeing?	Village chief cited as coordinator/permission-giver by 2 of 12 respondents.	No changes cited so don't have any data on this.
Is there evidence that women are involved in initiating some changes?	No.	No changes cited so don't have any data on this.
Is there any evidence that the youth are involved?	No.	No changes cited so don't have any data on this.

CMC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Sintcham-Dicori	Sintcham-Massacunda
Evidence that CMC involved in exercising collective influence to advocate for community well-being?	Yes. All 12 respondents knew of the CMC, and 50% of them described them as a group of people (varying sizes) active in community affairs. They seem to be active even now. Main activities of CMC consist of organizing or doing clean-ups (10 of 12) conflict resolution (8 of 12), mobilizing people for meetings (especially sensitization meetings) and managing microcredit in the village (7 of 12 each). Most respondents (9 of 12) said the CMC should continue working in these areas, and that they should continue doing what they are doing, perhaps doing a bit more than they currently are. A minority (3 of 12) said the CMC is less active than they used to be/do less than before.	No changes cited so don't have any data on this.
%of respondents that mention Tostan in questions that relate to communities exercising collective influence to advocate for community wellbeing	100%	0%
Is there evidence that the changes initiated by Tostan's program are sustainable, and does the community continue to lead or advocate for change for itself?	Yes: via everything the CMC does.	No.
Is there evidence that women are involved in sustaining changes or initiating them now?	No.	No.
Youth?	No.	No.
CMC?	Yes.	No.
Cross validation with field observations	Of projects cited by respondents in individual interviews: - Cleanliness: no projects reported directly in link to this in checklist - Access to money via microcredit and direct transfers: no projects reported directly linked to this in checklist Other cited projects that came about through the initiative of the community: meeting place, Quranic school, well (built by local authorities), walking path	No data

Guinea-Bissau

FGC deep-dive

Guinea-Bissau	CEP	Diffusion
	Sintcham-Dicori	Sincham-Massacunda
Do respondents think the community has a vision for abandonment? (whether called vision or not, is there a sense that the collective wants to move toward abandonment)	Respondents seem to be very aware of the legal status of FGC and the repercussions associated with practicing it widely, though no cohesive community vision emerges.	The village respondents do not seem to cite a community vision towards FGC abandonment. In addition, respondents cite that the type of advice they would give regarding FGC has not changed over the past 6 years.
Why/Why not? What factors have facilitated this move toward abandonment? What barriers have held it back?	Factors that promote abandonment: - the legal status of FGC - that it is detrimental to women's health Barriers to FGC abandonment: - Respondents say that FGC is a custom and therefore should continue	Factors that promote abandonment: - the legal status of FGC - social pressure to conform to what everyone else in the village is doing Barriers to FGC abandonment: - Respondents say that FGC is a custom and therefore should continue
Who is seen as involved in the process of developing the vision?	Tostan's sensitization campaigns cited	Respondents cited the village chief.
Who is seen as involved in holding back any moves toward abandonment?	Respondents cite that there are still some villagers that will practice FGC despite it now being illegal.	Nobody is cited explicitly as holding back any moves towards abandonment.
What is the role of women in the move toward abandonment (or in general in the context of FGC)?	Respondents are mixed between men and women being the final decision makers regarding FGC. Respondents still recommend seeking out advice from female relatives regarding FGC, indicating that carrying out FGC is still mostly women's responsibility.	Mixed responses among the respondents: 2 of 4 respondents say that the wife has the final decision regarding FGC and 2 of 4 say that the wife must follow her husband's decision.
What is the role of women in holding back the move toward abandonment (or FGC in general)?	Some respondents cite that women still prefer to do FGC despite it being illegal.	Respondents did not explicitly cite that women hold back FGC abandonment.

Guinea-Bissau	CEP	Diffusion
	Sintcham-Dicori	Sincham-Massacunda
CMC cited in the context of questions pertaining to FGC? If so, in what role?	Yes: to potentially intervene and sensitize a couple if they decide to perform FGC.	CMC not cited.
Tostan cited in the context of FGC? If so, in what role?	Yes: for having conducted sensitization campaigns.	Tostan not cited.
Percent of respondents that mention CMC in the context of FGC	8%	0%
Percent of respondents that mention Tostan in the context of FGC	25%	0%
Willingness to Discuss FGC: Does it seem to be a topic of conversation in public? In private? If not, why?	Respondents say that people would not discuss it because it is no longer allowed and they fear that even asking for advice would get them in trouble with authorities.	Respondents gave comparatively very succinct responses to questions about FGC.
Are we convinced the village has abandoned? If not, how close does it seem?	No, some respondents openly cite that FGC is still a tradition that should continue and that some villagers would go to neighboring villages where it is still openly practiced	No we are not because respondents openly cite that villagers practice FGC.

Mali

CMC deep-dive

CMC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Beleco	Farabougou
Is there evidence that communities are leading activities/efforts to further their own wellbeing/development?	There is no evidence of community leading/initiating changes mentioned because almost everyone gives credit to Tostan, and initially does not describe how the community was involved other than being a "recipient". Maybe the question was misunderstood or badly posed as "what changes" rather than "what changes initiated by the community". But even so, the responses suggest that Tostan initiated the changes which were then carried forward by community members to varying degrees. Top changes are greater understanding/harmony/peace between couples/villagers generally (8 of 12), and health (expressed variously as less diseases, more antenatal and post neonatal care, vaccinations etc) (5 of 12 respondents).	No evidence. None of the 4 respondents could cite any changes initiated by the community. One respondent talks about greater harmony but says this is "grâce à une projet qui s'appelle Tostan je crois".
Why did these changes come about?	The response that comes up most is that changes occured due to the training/courses/sensitization offered by Tostan (5 of 12 respondents). A majority of responses (7 of 12 respondents) indicate that the change process involved community discussion (unclear who participated) but this does not seem to be the driving factor. Respondents emphasized Tostan's contributions more than their own community members' initiative.	No data for 3/4 respondents (based on their initial answers). One respondent who does cite a change says it happened because there was lack of harmony earlier but Tostan changed this (unclear why Tostan was participating in a diffusion village but one piece of context is that in Mali the geographical distance between CEP and non-CEP villages is much shorter than in other countries so there may be more "spillover" type dynamics here than usual).
Who is leading these efforts, if not community themselves? Which actors were involved and how?	Tostan (9 of 12 respondents) and other "projects" (2 of 12). Responses do not suggest that Tostan did everything necessarily but that they initiated and everything is thanks to them.	Respondents cite that the efforts are initiated by Tostan. Women trained in these courses were the most involved (1 of 4 respondents). Unclear whether this respondent is referring to Tostan in a neighboring CEP village or Tostan classes given in this diffusion village (unusually) or something else.

CMC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Beleco	Farabougou
Which community members led/initiated efforts to further community wellbeing?	The CMC may be an active entity in the village. Several respondents (7 of 12) did say that meetings were held to discuss some important changes (unclear whether organized exclusively by Tostan) and that the community came to some consensus on how to move forward.	Women trained by Tostan (1 of 4 respondents). Started with them, others learnt and began to follow.
Is there evidence that women are involved in initiating some changes?	Yes: 2 respondents mentioned that women were the most motivated and engaged in community meetings about important topics.	Women trained by Tostan (1 of 4 respondents). Started with them, others learnt and began to follow.
Is there any evidence that the youth are involved?	No	No
Evidence that CMC involved in exercising collective influence to advocate for community well-being?	The CMC as a group is not mentioned in the "who was involved in the change process" question but enumerators went ahead and asked questions about the role and achievements of the CMC anyway if Tostan had been mentioned. The CMC seems active, although information on its composition varies widely across respondents and people don't seem to be very sure about who is in the CMC. Their most common functions are seen as mediating disputes and bringing about greater harmony (between couples especially) and continuing to sensitize people about various things (no real trend on what they sensitize people about) (5 of 9 respondents who talked about the CMC).	CMC not mentioned.
%of respondents that mention Tostan in questions that relate to communities exercising collective influence to advocate for community wellbeing	75%	0%
Is there evidence that the changes initiated by Tostan's program are sustainable, and does the community continue to lead or advocate for change for itself?	Yes. The CMC seems active on a few fronts, and some respondents cite "meetings/dialogue" on various subjects as ongoing. Revenue generation activities initiated by Tostan/that Tostan trained people on were also cited as ongoing by 4 of 12 respondents.	No
Is there evidence that women are involved in sustaining changes or initiating them now?	No	No
Youth?	No	No
CMC?	Yes	No
Cross validation with field observations	No data	No data

Mali

FGC deep-dive

FGC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Beleco	Farabougou
Do respondents think the community has a vision for abandonment? (whether called vision or not, is there a sense that the collective wants to move toward abandonment)	Respondents renounce FGC and say it is no longer practiced in the community. Though there still remain some that actively encourage peer pressure towards performing FGC. What was surprising though was that despite what seemed like a community vision and citing Tostan and the CMC as drivers of change, 8/12 respondents cited that the couple would have received the same response 6 years ago.	No community vision towards abandonment – all 4 respondents endorse and promote FGC. They say this opinion would have been the same 6 years ago and cite no legal or health repercussions of FGC.
Why/Why not? What factors have facilitated this move toward abandonment? What barriers have held it back?	Factors that promote abandonment: - Consequences (not specified whether legal or health related) - Pressure to conform to what everyone else is doing Barriers towards FGC abandonment: - Respondents cite that FGC is a custom and therefore should continue	Factors that promote abandonment: - none cited Barriers towards FGC abandonment: - Respondents cite that FGC is a custom and therefore should continue - pressure to conform to what everyone else is doing
Who is seen as involved in the process of developing the vision?	Respondents cite that the following actors are involved in promoting FGC abandonment: - CMC - The griots and blacksmiths - Fokaben (an organization, though purpose and origin are not cited) - Community leaders	Respondents cite community leaders such as village chiefs as promoting FGC.
Who is seen as involved in holding back any moves toward abandonment?	Respondents say that individuals should still practice FGC as it is a tradition	FGC abandonment is not mentioned.
What is the role of women in the move toward abandonment (or in general in the context of FGC)?	Respondents say that women are still those responsible for carrying out FGC, though not exclusively cited as those that should be consulted for advice.	Women are not explicitly cited as driving FGC or it being exclusively in the realm of women.

FGC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Beleco	Farabougou
What is the role of women in holding back the move toward abandonment (or FGC in general)?	Respondents did not say that women hold back FGC abandonment	FGC abandonment is not mentioned.
CMC cited in the context of questions pertaining to FGC? If so, in what role?	Yes, to advise on FGC and the consequences associated with practicing it.	No.
Tostan cited in the context of FGC? If so, in what role?	Yes, to have changed community members' attitudes towards FGC.	No.
Percent of respondents that mention CMC in the context of FGC	25%	0%
Percent of respondents that mention Tostan in the context of FGC	8%	0%
Willingness to Discuss FGC: Does it seem to be a topic of conversation in public? In private? If not, why?	Respondents give comparatively succinct responses, but there are no flat-out refusals to engage in FGC conversations	All respondents replied to questions about FGC.
Are we convinced the village has abandoned? If not, how close does it seem?	No, some respondents still openly endorse FGC	No. All respondents cited either practicing or advocating for FGC.

Mauritania

CMC deep-dive

CMC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Wouro Amadou Hawa	Mourtogal
Is there evidence that communities are leading activities/efforts to further their own wellbeing/development?	A little evidence, and only relating to the building of a local school. Three responses suggest that the local school was built because village leaders reached out to Tostan for funding support with this. Out of 12 respondents, 3 respondents said the school was now closed. Although several other changes are cited, the responses do not suggest they were initiated by the community; instead, outside actors feature prominently. 10 of 11 respondents attribute changes/initiation of changes to an outside organization. Multiple NGOs are mentioned - Tostan, WB, UNHCR, Caritas, Oxfam. On the changes, no clear trend. Building a school (4 of 12 respondents), greater awareness of hygiene (3 of 12 respondents), social cohesion (2 of 12respondents), establishment of community gardens (3 of 12 respondents) feature across responses.	Yes - 2 of 4 respondents said changes were community-led, including describing how they financed the work. Water access was the main change cited. NGOs also cited - Tostan (1 of 4 respondents) and Oxfam (1 of 4 respondents).
Why did these changes come about?	This question did not land well - respondents either said they didn't know (3 of 12 respondents), were not asked (2 of 12 respondents), or re-stated why the changes were important. One respondent said village leaders initiated a request for external support with building the school. Out of 12 respondents, 3 said outside actors initiated changes, 2 attributed changes to Tostan's classes.	Only 1 response to this, that said changes happened as a result of sensitization and that they have discussions about the "situation" in the village.
Who is leading these efforts, if not community themselves? Which actors were involved and how?	Out of 12 respondents, 4 cited Tostan. Only 3 of 12 respondents answered/were asked the following process question - 2 say change was initiated by community leaders (mobilized to get finances because they wanted their children educated). The third response was not informative.	Tostan and Oxfam mentioned once each, another respondent just said "NGOs".
Which community members led/initiated efforts to further community wellbeing?	Respondents cite community leaders and the village chief.	Unclear, 1 respondent said "volunteers", another said they have a committee.

CMC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Wouro Amadou Hawa	Mourtogal
Is there evidence that women are involved in initiating some changes?	No.	Not in initiating changes.
Is there any evidence that the youth are involved?	No.	No.
Evidence that CMC involved in exercising collective influence to advocate for community well-being?	To some extent - four respondents say they either clean or mobilize community members for clean ups, and continue to sensitize people about cleanliness and hygiene.	1 respondent said they organize sensitization meetings (about Tostan's "program") and village cleanups.
%of respondents that mention Tostan in questions that relate to communities exercising collective influence to advocate for community wellbeing	67%	25%
Is there evidence that the changes initiated by Tostan's program are sustainable, and does the community continue to lead or advocate for change for itself?	Out of 12 respondents, 6 respondents answered the main question in this set - 3 said village members continue to work on cleanliness based on what they learned from Tostan, and 3 cited income generating activities continue (funds management learnt by women who participated in Tostan's classes). It is hard to attribute changes cited to NGOs from the responses but some evidence that a school was constructed with Tostan's help but is no longer functional (3 responses) - likely because there are not enough teachers. 2 of 12 respondents said more generally that the changes initiateMixed evidence on CMC activity levels - 3 of 7 respondents who answered the relevant questions said the CMC stopped working after Tostan's program ended. 4 others cited involvement in health and hygiene related sensitization and mobilization.	Not enough data on this - one respondent answered and said they have a committee that works on education and the environment.
Is there evidence that women are involved in sustaining changes or initiating them now?	Only 2 of 12 respondents said women were involved in community clean-ups.	No.
Youth?	No.	No.
CMC?	No response suggests the CMC continues to be very active. Out of 12 respondents, 3 suggest they continue to be involved in mobilizing/sensitizing people about hygiene.	No.
Cross validation with field observations	No data	No data

Mauritania

FGC deep-dive

FGC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Wouro Amadou Hawa	Mourtogal
Do respondents think the community has a vision for abandonment? (whether called vision or not, is there a sense that the collective wants to move toward abandonment)	Yes, respondents seem to cite a clear picture towards abandonment: there seems to be a social stigma associated with FGC, respondents do not advise performing FGC and do not cite that they do it themselves. There are some respondents that think that the hypothetical mother in the vignette would choose to perform FGC, indicating that even though respondents do not endorse it themselves, they still do believe others in the village still perform FGC.	No. Respondents still advocate for FGC and cite that the village imam still actively encourages it as well.
Why/Why not? What factors have facilitated this move toward abandonment? What barriers have held it back?	Factors that promote abandonment: - Health concerns - Sensitization campaigns - The legal status of FGC and the associated sanctions against those that still practice it - That FGC is poorly perceived "in the whole world" - Social exclusion against those that do practice it Barriers towards FGC abandonment: - Respondents cite that FGC is a custom and therefore should continue	Factors that promote abandonment: - Health concerns - Legal concerns and consequences associated with performing FGC (not clear what those are) Barriers towards FGC abandonment: - FGC is a religious obligation and respondents cite that it must be respected. - The view that unless you cut a girl she will "have a tendency to go after boys"
Who is seen as involved in the process of developing the vision?	Respondents cite village doctors, the imam and an NGO (not specified)	Respondents cite that the imam still encourages carrying out FGC. On the other hand, the village chief is cited to advocate that FGC should not be carried out.
Who is seen as involved in holding back any moves toward abandonment?	Respondents say others still perform FGC because it is part of their tradition.	The imam is cited as still encouraging FGC for religious reasons.
What is the role of women in the move toward abandonment (or in general in the context of FGC)?	Women are cited as being those that generally deal with the realm of FGC as it is "a women's affair". Respondents also cite that men are just not aware of FGC and are not consulted about it.	Women are viewed as generally concerned with FGC and that men are not consulted about it.

FGC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Wouro Amadou Hawa	Mourtogal
What is the role of women in holding back the move toward abandonment (or FGC in general)?	Respondents express the opinion that women practice FGC to control girls' sexual desires and prevent them from running after men, which can lead to serious diseases such as AIDS. Countries that do not practice FGC suffer more from sexually transmitted diseases than countries that do.	Respondents cite that women still practice it as a religious practice or as a commitment to tradition.
CMC cited in the context of questions pertaining to FGC? If so, in what role?	Yes, as someone to consult on the issue of FGC.	No.
Tostan cited in the context of FGC? If so, in what role?	Yes, cited in the context of sensitization campaigns against FGC.	Yes, as part of sensitization campaigns
Percent of respondents that mention CMC in the context of FGC	8%	0%
Percent of respondents that mention Tostan in the context of FGC	17%	25%
Willingness to Discuss FGC: Does it seem to be a topic of conversation in public? In private? If not, why?	Two respondents refused to respond because "this is not something I know about" or simply "no comments".	Respondents would sometimes refuse to answer questions about FGC, without any specific reasons why.
Are we convinced the village has abandoned? If not, how close does it seem?	Not convinced (at least two respondents still cited that they think others in the village still practice it). Though there seems to be enough social stigma around the practice that it seems like the village is relatively close to abandoning	No, respondents still advocate for FGC.

Senegal

CMC deep-dive

CMC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Kodiolel	Gounas
Is there evidence that communities are leading activities/efforts to further their own wellbeing/development?	There is some evidence that communities are leading activities and efforts to further their own wellbeing and development. Respondents cite many examples of change but provide few details on who was leading in the community or descriptions that suggest community members initiated or played a major role. Most respondents attribute change to Tostan's courses, though only 3 of 12 responses clearly attribute change to community action - namely community "members" and the village chief.	Yes, there is evidence that the community members are leading activities to further their own wellbeing. Respondents said that the village chief seems to have invited outsiders to the village to support with the project and to lead sensitization discussions. No real trend in changes mentioned - the only one that comes up twice is access to water via a well.
Why did these changes come about?	Tostan cited most often as the driver for social changes mentioned (7 of 8 respondents). Specifically, people attribute changes to its classes and discussions organized by Tostan. Out of 8 responses, 4 also cite literacy more generally as a driver of changes, although even this might be a reference to Tostan's classes	All respondents credit the village chief in some way (either for presiding over the construction of a well or for inviting outsiders. 3 of 4 respondents also said community discussions/debates were part of the change process. Out of 4, 3 respondents suggest external actors came to the village for various sensitization activities but only Tostan was named (once).
Who is leading these efforts, if not community themselves? Which actors were involved and how?	Tostan cited. Facilitator's name comes up a couple times.	Tostan cited once, efforts seem largely community led or due to "education".
Which community members led/initiated efforts to further community wellbeing?	Village chief mentioned three times, twice for bringing literacy to the village (might be via Tostan), and once for bringing a well.	Respondents cite the village chief.
Is there evidence that women are involved in initiating some changes?	One respondent said women participated actively in village discussions, other respondents said they were "implicated" in the change process along with the Tostan facilitator.	One respondent talked about a women's association that existed but failed (respondent was male).
Is there any evidence that the youth are involved?	One respondent said they were "implicated" in the change process along with the Tostan facilitator.	No.

CMC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Kodiolel	Gounas
Evidence that CMC involved in exercising collective influence to advocate for community well-being?	Overall, they don't seem that active. 3 respondents said they continue to work on health-related issues/improvements and 1 respondent said they continue to be involved in training women on income generating activities, while 4 respondents said they couldn't think of any changes the CMC had initiated since the end of the program.	No.
%of respondents that mention Tostan in questions that relate to communities exercising collective influence to advocate for community wellbeing	75%	25%
Is there evidence that the changes initiated by Tostan's program are sustainable, and does the community continue to lead or advocate for change for itself?	No examples that the community is actively advocating for itself since the program ended. CMC records are very mixed - half the responses suggest they are not active, while a few others suggest they continue work on a limited set of issues: health and encouraging income generating activities by women.	No.
Is there evidence that women are involved in sustaining changes or initiating them now?	No.	No.
Youth?	No.	No.
CMC?	Out of 8 respondents, 4 said they couldn't think of any changes the CMC had initiated since the end of the program.	No.
Cross validation with field observations	No projects observed in the village were built/established at the initiative of the community. Other projects cited in the villages: - Wells (2) - Ongoing development projects (2); with a note that "there are many development projects for women in the village"	Of projects cited by respondents in individual interviews: Well - confirmed in village observations (not indicated that it was built at the initiative of the community) Additional projects in the village: - Ongoing development projects (1) - cited as "Action Contre la Faim".

Senegal

FGC deep-dive

FGC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Kodiolel	Gounas
Do respondents think the community has a vision for abandonment? (whether called vision or not, is there a sense that the collective wants to move toward abandonment)	There seems to be a cohesive community vision for FGC abandonment. Respondents all cite that FGC has been abandoned due to its legal status and that it is no longer practiced.	Respondents seemed to believe the community has sufficient awareness of the legal and health consequences of FGC
Why/Why not? What factors have facilitated this move toward abandonment? What barriers have held it back?	Factors that promote abandonment: - Legal concerns and consequences associated with performing FGC (the police being involved) - Concerns about health complications - Concerns about the child's well-being later in life Barriers against FGC abandonment: - FGC is still seen part of tradition	Factors that promote abandonment: - Legal concerns and consequences associated with performing FGC - Health concerns (not specified) - Financial concerns related to taking the child to a hospital to treat her Barriers towards FGC abandonment: - the belief that if you don't cut your daughter she "will be impure" - FGC is a religious practice - FGC is a tradition
Who is seen as involved in the process of developing the vision?	Respondents cited: - Village chief - Village doctor - Les Badién Gokhs	Respondents cited: - Village chief - Doctor - Department of Ranerou
Who is seen as involved in holding back any moves toward abandonment?	Nobody explicitly cited it as holding back FGC abandonment.	Respondents cited people that still believed it was a traditional obligation to cut girls.
What is the role of women in the move toward abandonment (or in general in the context of FGC)?	FGC was considered as in the realm of women, but it seems that advice would still be asked of all members of the family.	Respondents say mothers are generally seen as taking care of their daughters, and therefore FGC is the realm of women.
What is the role of women in holding back the move toward abandonment (or FGC in general)?	No specific aspects cited.	No specific aspects cited.

FGC deep-dive questions	CEP	Diffusion
	Kodiolel	Gounas
CMC cited in the context of questions pertaining to FGC? If so, in what role?	CMC not cited.	CMC not cited.
Tostan cited in the context of FGC? If so, in what role?	Tostan is cited in the context of sensitization campaigns.	Yes: as having conducted sensitization campaigns against FGC.
Percent of respondents that mention CMC in the context of FGC	0%	0%
Percent of respondents that mention Tostan in the context of FGC	60%	25%
Willingness to Discuss FGC: Does it seem to be a topic of conversation in public? In private? If not, why?	Respondents respond to most FGC questions.	Respondents freely replied to questions about FGC.
Are we convinced the village has abandoned? If not, how close does it seem?	Reasonably well convinced the village has abandoned FGC, because there are no indications to the contrary (no indication of FGC being practiced secretly etc).	No, villagers still recommend cutting and cite it as necessary to follow tradition (despite often citing that it is no longer practiced)

APPENDIX 5: FIELD OBSERVATION CHECKLIST DATA – IMAGES OF OBSERVABLE FEATURES OF WELL-BEING

Below we present examples of images that show different community features of well-being respondents said were important developments in the past six years in interviews and focus groups. Field staff photographed these features during structured field observations to complement our descriptions of the current state of communities.

Picture 2: Garden irrigated with water drawn from borehole, Boyngeul Thilly village (CEP), Mauritania. Borehole was installed with support from an unspecified NGO.

Photo credit: IDinsight

Picture 3: Public tap in Jedda village (diffusion), Mauritania

Photo credit: IDinsight

Picture 4: Quranic school in Sintcham-Dicori village (CEP), Guinea-Bissau

Photo credit: IDinsight