Dear Tostan Friends and Supporters,

Among many of the participants in our [Community Empowerment Program](#) (CEP), I have seen the spark of curiosity turn into a lifelong pursuit of learning. Fatoumata Sumareh, a 16-year-old girl from Touba Sandu, The Gambia, is one such participant. While participating in Tostan's CEP sessions, she recently said to our project assistant in The Gambia, "I want to learn everything I can!"

Tostan CEP sessions on human rights and health together with lessons at her Koranic school are helping Fatoumata cultivate her understanding of the world and how her human rights are supported in her community. When approached by her parents about a possible marriage prospect, she was able to tell them she did not want to be married before the age of 18. She understood the health consequences of child marriage and was able to confidently take action to secure a healthier future. Furthermore, because of her parents' participation in human rights discussions during the CEP, they were able to understand Fatoumata's reasoning and respect her decision to postpone marriage until she was ready.

Fatoumata embodies what our holistic education program aims to do: empower individuals and communities to make decisions that will bring about positive social transformation based on respect for human rights. I thank you for your support, which allows us to continue working with inspiring individuals like Fatoumata.

Read on to learn more about our initiatives and partnerships that ensure human rights and
Warm wishes,

Molly Melching
Executive Director

Sustainable healthcare in Keur Sanou

A few years ago, women in Keur Sanou, Senegal, risked giving birth along the road as they walked to the nearest health clinic ten kilometers away. In collaboration with Tostan and the organization Sponsor a Mum, the Community Management Committee of Keur Sanou organized the construction and maintenance of a new health clinic using micro-credit funds. Now, women can give birth safely, and the community can access needed health resources.

Learn more about Keur Sanou's sustainable healthcare.

UN Women witness impact of solar energy on health

Recently, UN Women visited Keur Simbara, Senegal, a community with a long-standing partnership with Tostan. There, they witnessed the positive effect community-produced solar energy has had on public health. Through solar power, the health clinic is able to function around-the-clock for emergencies.

Read more about the UN Women visit to Keur Simbara on our website.

International attention brought to Stay tuned for updates on the Global women and girls' health are supported in communities across Africa.
child/forced marriage

Graça Machel and Desmond Tutu, two members of The Elders, illustrated the negative impact child/forced marriage has on a girl's health and wellbeing, and they heralded the positive change taking place to end the practice in The Washington Post. They highlighted the thousands of communities in Senegal, many of whom are participating in Tostan's CEP, that are publicly declaring their decision to abandon child/forced marriage.

Read the full article.

Tostan is partnering with Global Poverty Project and Half the Sky to empower women and end extreme poverty. To build momentum for the movement, we will join other organizations dedicated to improving the lives of people worldwide in New York City on September 29 for the Global Festival concert.

Learn more about how you can attend the Global Festival concert.

Click on the icons above to donate and stay connected with Tostan.

To find out more about upcoming events and ongoing projects, please visit our website.

Tostan is a US 501(c)(3) nongovernmental organization based in Senegal, West Africa.

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