

# COSTS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Volunteer Program



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*The purpose of this document is to provide some basic information about the Tostan Volunteer Program and associated costs and considerations to prospective volunteers. It was created to help prospective volunteers estimate the finances, resources, and general preparations they will need to volunteer for Tostan. The information it contains is for guidance only, and it should not be considered complete, or completely accurate, for any particular individual. Please see our responsibility waiver for further information and direct all specific questions to the Volunteer Coordinator. Prices are estimates and are given in US dollars and Euros.*

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## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### TYPES OF VOLUNTEERS

Tostan currently accepts 3 main types of volunteers for commitments of at least one year:

**Full-time University or Fellowship Volunteers:** Tostan has a partnership with several university and fellowship programs that allow students to earn credit while volunteering at Tostan. We also accept applications from undergraduate students wishing to volunteer on an independent basis. If you or your university would like to make arrangements or get more information, please contact us at [volunteer@tostan.org](mailto:volunteer@tostan.org) for details on program structure.

**Full-time Volunteers:** Tostan accepts highly qualified and motivated college students, graduates and career professionals into the Tostan for a minimum 12-month stay.

**Part-time Volunteers:** In general, Tostan does not accept part-time volunteers. On a limited, case-by-case basis, however, Tostan accepts professionals already living in Senegal to volunteer part-time, dependent upon current needs and a stable, long-term availability. Please call or stop by the Dakar or Thiès office for further information.

### VOLUNTEER SELECTION PROCESS

- ✓ Interested Volunteer reads **Costs and Considerations** (this document) and looks over **Volunteer and Intern opportunities** (on website).
- ✓ Prospective Volunteer fills out Tostan **Volunteer Application Form** and sends to [volunteer@tostan.org](mailto:volunteer@tostan.org), along with a current resumé or CV, a letter of motivation, and two short writing samples, one in French and one in English (if applying for a position francophone country) or a short writing sample in English (if applying for a position in an Anglophone country).  
*\*Students applying for fellowship or other academic programs must apply and be accepted through their institution before sending application materials to Tostan.\**
- ✓ If placement is a possibility for requested period, volunteer and Tostan schedule an **interview** (via Skype) to discuss possible locations and work assignments, and the general terms of the program.
- ✓ Tostan makes final decision on volunteers 2 months before new volunteer arrival date. Accepted volunteers receive a **Volunteer Commitment Form**.
- ✓ Volunteer makes decision and returns forms by stated deadline.
- ✓ Volunteer is sent **Welcome Information** with visa forms and other pre-departure information.
- ✓ Planning begins for arrival, orientation, and field placement.

### ORIENTATION START DATES

Tostan provides a volunteer orientation several times throughout the year in order to facilitate volunteer integration into Tostan and to the communities in which Tostan works. Start dates are:

January, June, September

Tostan recognizes that the price of plane tickets fluctuates by day and thus leaves it up to the volunteer to fix an arrival date up to one week before the scheduled dates. Though they may stay in volunteer housing, *volunteers who arrive before the beginning of the orientation must recognize that they may have to act independently for the first several days of their stay.*

## CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

Tostan feels honored to receive highly dedicated and talented individuals into its volunteer program every year. Volunteers can expect to find themselves in a range of environments and situations as Tostan carries out its activities in settings ranging from large cities to small towns to rural villages throughout Senegal. Volunteers must be able to adjust to extreme heat, cool evenings, and rural conditions with basic amenities as well as professional office environments. If you have any questions about the cultural or physical environments in which you may be working, please do not hesitate to ask as Tostan wishes that all of its volunteers be adequately prepared for the time they decide to dedicate to Tostan and the communities it serves.

Although Tostan is officially registered in the US and its Executive Director, Molly Melching, is originally from the US, volunteers must come prepared to work and live within the local culture and environment. This means that working to understand this environment, adjusting to it and *integrating in it* are as important as generously bringing your knowledge, skills, and experiences to contribute to Tostan's capacity as an organization. During a cultural and professional orientation, Tostan will help volunteers navigate through some of these adjustments. However, before this time, the following information can be used to prepare for integration into the multitude of environments volunteers will find themselves in while working with Tostan.

## INITIAL TRIP PREPARATIONS

### International Travel

**\$525+ / €350+ from Europe, \$1400+ from the US**

Many airlines fly to Dakar, including Air France, TAP (Air Portugal), South African Airways, Air Brussels, Royal Air Maroc/Air Senegal, Iberia, as well as many special charters. Be sure to:

- ✓ Search both internet and non-internet sources. Calling the airlines directly sometimes pays off and alternatively, travel agents can sometimes get cheaper tickets since their distributors buy in bulk. Many volunteers have had luck with [bingtravel.com](http://bingtravel.com).
- ✓ Book as early as possible.
- ✓ Try different days of the week and different dates during popular months as fares vary greatly from day to day. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday are generally the most expensive days to fly; Tuesday and Wednesday are generally the least expensive days to fly. Tostan tries to allow flexibility in volunteer arrival and departure dates so that you can purchase the least expensive ticket within a given timeframe.

*Note: Email your itinerary to the volunteer coordinator as soon as you have confirmed it. This is extremely important to facilitate your pick up at the airport and your orientation in Dakar.*

### Passport

**Up to \$100/€65**

*Obtain your passport as soon as possible.* Unless you want to pay extra to rush your passport at the last minute, planning ahead is an easy way to avoid unnecessary stress and reduce costs. Remember to make a few color copies of your passport and keep them in different bags from the original. It is recommended that you bring extra passport photos (at least 8 originals, not copies) for any necessary foreseen or unforeseen visas or identification cards. It is possible to obtain such photos while in Senegal, however it is probably much easier to bring them with you.

The National Passport Information Center (NPIC) is the U.S. Department of State's single, centralized public contact center for U.S. passport information.

Telephone: 1-877-4USA-PPT (1-877-487-2778)

### Visas

**\$70 – \$150/€50-€130**

*Please visit the website [www.visasenegal.sn](http://www.visasenegal.sn) to get more information and to apply for an online visa.*

We suggest also contacting the Senegalese Embassy or Consulate in your country to get information on how to obtain a visa.

If possible, please obtain a visa from the Senegalese Embassy or Consulate in your country. Otherwise, you can select the option "at the airport" if you live far away from the Senegalese Embassy or Consulate. Fill in the application form and make the online payment. The online visa costs 50 euros. Print the confirmation of payment and bring it with you during your trip. You will get your biometric visa upon your arrival at the airport in Dakar.

The entry visa is valid for 3 months. Before it expires, we will help you to regularize your stay in Senegal.

For volunteers who are going to be placed in other countries (The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, etc.), Tostan facilitates the application and the procedures with the competent Embassies in Dakar, before the volunteers leaves for his/her final duty-station.

*The volunteer is responsible for bearing the costs of the entry visa and of the visa renewal(s).*

## **Vaccinations and Necessary Medications**

**Up to \$1000+ / €400+**

Tostan does not require any specific vaccinations, but strongly recommends that volunteers seek information on the various diseases prevalent in West Africa, and the medicines used to prevent and treat them. A great place to start your research on necessary vaccinations for Senegal is the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website, which lists all the vaccinations required and recommended for specific countries. Currently, yellow fever is the only required vaccination while typhoid, hepatitis A and B, rabies, polio, meningitis, and all other routine immunizations are highly recommended. *Accepted volunteers will receive a pre-departure health document with more information.*

Most, if not all, vaccinations are available at a private physician's office, a county or city hospital, or a local State University, although you might need to call ahead to request that the office order the necessary vaccinations since not all offices carry these vaccines on a regular basis. Also consider travel clinics, which specialize in travel medicine and can often provide information and vaccines in one visit. Remember to compare prices, as they can vary greatly from one provider to another. For those on a tighter budget, remember that these vaccinations and prescriptions are not cheap, running anywhere from \$200-\$1000+ / €130-€650 depending on the doctors, vaccinations, and medicines you choose. Be sure to include this expense in any pre-trip budgeting you do.

## **Health Insurance**

**\$1200 / €780 per year or more**

*Tostan requires that all volunteers purchase health insurance, but does not provide it.* Past volunteers have had good experiences with International SOS and MedEx Assist. You can also compare several policies at once on [www.globalinsurancenet.com](http://www.globalinsurancenet.com) or [www.squaremouth.com](http://www.squaremouth.com). Tostan allows volunteers complete discretion in choosing their coverage, but it is wise to consider (and ask your insurer about) the following factors before signing up for any program:

- **Maximum Lifetime Limit:** Make sure you are aware of how much the insurance company will pay out, total, for covered expenses.
- **Deductible:** Choose your deductible wisely. If it is \$1000, where will this money come from if needed? What if it is near the end of your trip and you don't have that much cash available? Thinking about these things ahead of time will help you avoid problems later.
- **Evacuation Coverage:** Make sure that the insurance covers the cost of transfer to your home country if necessary. You don't want to risk not receiving treatment because transportation is not covered in your plan.
- **International Coverage:** Some insurance providers do not cover any expenses acquired outside of the home country. If you are not specifically purchasing international insurance, check to see what your carrier's policy is.

*Note: There is a Senegalese agent at MedEx, named Alphonse N'Dour, who is open to answering your questions. You can reach him at the general MedEx hotline: 800 732 5309*

## **Money**

The best route to get money is to bring a VISA ATM or MasterCard Maestro debit card (other cards do not always work in Senegalese ATMs) and simply withdraw money from a checking or savings account on an as-needed basis. Fees are similar to those in the US, between \$2/€1.30 and \$5/€3.25 per transaction. This route also gives you the best rate for money transfers. In case your ATM card does not work, bring some Euros or dollars to exchange – large denominations are usually better – and one or two personal checks, which Tostan can cash if no other option is available.

*Note: You should notify your bank as to what countries you will be traveling to as most US banking institutions will deny overseas ATM transactions unless they have been alerted.*

## PREPARING TO GO

### PACKING POINTS

#### **Weight restrictions**

**Up to US \$100/ 80 €**

Check with your airline for the total weight allowance per bag, per person. For international flights, most airlines currently allow each passenger to check two bags, each weighing no more than 23kg (50lbs), free of charge. For domestic flights within the U.S., almost all airlines now charge a fee of \$10-\$35 per bag, even if they are under the maximum weight of 23kg (50lbs). Overweight bags may be subject to further fees of up to \$100 per bag.

#### **Locks**

**5-\$20/3-15 €**

We encourage you to lock your luggage to avoid inconvenient. Most travel stores now sell special locks that can be opened by combination (which the owner sets). Nevertheless, be sure to carry-on any items that you cannot afford to lose, such as cameras, laptops, jewelry, medicine, etc.

### THINGS TO BRING

#### **Laptop Computer**

**(cost varies)**

Tostan does not *require* volunteers to bring laptops. In most cases, however, a new or used laptop is indispensable to your trip. Tostan has very limited IT resources and past volunteer highly recommend bringing a laptop. Before you buy a laptop, consider that at times when you don't want it, you will need to make sure it is safe and secure, or carry it with you if no safe place is available. In general, Tostan runs Mac OS X and higher, and Windows XP, thus it is not recommended to bring a laptop with an older operating system as you may not be able to transfer or print documents. In addition, Macs not running the Microsoft Office suite will not be compatible. Volunteers will be using the computer often and on a day to day basis for work. Therefore it's important to have a laptop that can hold up to a decent amount of wear and tear.

#### **High-Speed Flash Drive**

**\$15+ / €10+**

Regardless of whether you decide to bring a laptop or not, Tostan highly recommends that volunteers bring a high-speed flash drive so you can easily transfer files between computers, especially when internet is not available.

#### **Digital Camera**

**(cost varies)**

Digital cameras are a great addition, though not a necessity when coming to work with Tostan. Even a relatively inexpensive (under \$200/€150) digital camera may well be worth it, as digital files easily integrate into documents, and are perfect for emails. In addition, you can see the pictures before you save it, and still get prints when you need them, either in Senegal or upon return

Before buying a digital camera, consider the size of each photo (in terms of digital memory) and the corresponding memory card that you will require for your trip. This is especially important to consider if you are not bringing a laptop computer as the memory in your camera or in additional memory cards will have to last throughout your trip. Also consider batteries. Some cameras have rechargeable batteries, but not all Tostan locations have electricity so a back-up rechargeable battery might be necessary. Alternatively, some digital cameras use AA batteries which can be found in most cities. You



might also consider a USB card reader, a USB key that accepts your memory card and plugs directly into a USB port.

### **Other Electronics**

**(costs vary)**

Past volunteers have brought video cameras, voice recorders, personal CD players, iPods, and other personal electronic devices. Tostan does not require these items, but be sure to include them, necessary batteries, and accessories (i.e. blank tapes, videos, etc.) in any budgeting estimate.

### **Voltage Converters and Plug Adapters**

**\$10-\$40/€7-€30**

Before bringing any electrical item with you to Senegal, look on the back to see if it lists a voltage input. If it records a voltage of 100V-240V (or something similar), it should work fine in Senegal with the use of a simple plug adapter, which you can purchase before you come for \$5-\$20/€4-€15, or once you arrive in West Africa for less than \$1/€0.75. If the electrical item lists a single number like 100V or 120V, it will not work in Senegal without a voltage converter, which past volunteers have had significant problems using. If you have a plug-in, 110V-125V item you are thinking of bringing with you, consider a battery-operated version of the item, or purchasing a Senegalese 220V version upon arrival instead.

### **Power surge protectors**

**Do not buy in the US; \$5/€4 in Senegal**

If you buy a surge protector in the US, it will not work in Senegal. Safe surge protectors are available for \$5-\$10/€4-€8 in Dakar and Thiès.

### **Language preparation materials**

**Basics provided in-country**

While French is the colonial language of Senegal, the extent to which most people speak it is limited and the usefulness of each language will steadily decrease outside cities. Tostan currently provide new volunteers with a copy of the Peace Corps Wolof handbook, which is effective for guided lessons with a Wolof speaker but a bit less effective on one's own. Tostan also provides other Peace Corps language books (Pulaar, Mandinka, etc.) when relevant. You can find good further Wolof-English language resources online through the Peace Corps-Gambia, though it is important to note that in Senegal, the Wolof used is slightly different than in the Gambia.

### **Clothing**

**Cost varies**

The respect Tostan employees and volunteers show to the population at large has a *huge* impact on Tostan's ability to carry out its often-sensitive work. In Senegal, the clothes you wear can be one of the most important symbols of respect you have for those around you. This means that, even in the office, wearing appropriate clothing will facilitate your integration into and respect from the work environment.

Especially when working in villages and field regions in Senegal, which tend to be more "conservative," women (when not in traditional dress) will need to wear skirts well below the knee, and men will need to remove their earrings and wear long pants. Both men and women may be asked to remove other facial piercings, however, discrete nose piercings for women have been ok in the past. *The final decision will be left to Tostan's discretion.* Tostan is not interested in micro-managing each person's dress or imposing on anyone's personality, but as an organization, we must consider the impact of personal appearance upon the goals of our program. Please contact us directly if you have any questions or concerns relating to this policy.

Though Senegal and the Gambia have a very warm climate, *except for use in sports* (jogging, swimming, etc.) *shorts are not culturally acceptable, so do not plan on wearing them.* For running and



sports, most volunteers are comfortable wearing capris or long, basket-ball shorts.

Outside of work, skirts and shorts below the knee, nice tank-tops, nice jeans/pants, and sandals are fine. During the day, it is warm, if not hot, almost all year so keep that in mind when packing. Be sure to bring light, breathable clothing with some layers (jacket, fleece, long-sleeved shirts) as the “cold season,” December through March, averages 65°F/16°C, while the warm/rainy season, July-October can rise well above 100°F/35°C in temperature. For work in the main or satellite Tostan offices, “business casual” attire is the standard (nice tank tops, nice breathable shirts, button-down shirts, skirts below the knees, linen, khaki, or other pants or capris, black pants, etc...), which includes traditional dress (see below). Nice sandals are completely acceptable and likely to be the only shoes you will wear while here.

Please note that Senegalese people are, in general, incredibly well-dressed and in step with western and traditional fashion. Many westerners tend to want to bring just the basics and consequently find themselves underdressed. Often, the clothes volunteers might only save for special occasions in their home countries are the daily-wear of many Senegalese! Do not shy away from bringing clothes and shoes that are appropriate for nice dinners and clubs; in fact, many former volunteers highly encourage it!

## SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

(\* Available \*\* Easily Available \$ Expensive ? Questionable Quality)

### Recommended Supplies

(\$50-\$100/€40-€75)

- Sufficient supply of any personal medications you may be taking (i.e. antihistamines birth control, etc.)
- Band-aids, bandages, Liquid Bandage, etc. \*\*
- Neosporin, Bactine, or other disinfectants
- Prescription glasses, contacts, contact solution, etc.
- Antibiotics \*
- Tylenol, Advil, or other painkillers \*\$
- Pepto-Bismol
- Anti-diarrhea tablets/Cipro \*\*
- Benadryl or other anti-histamine
- Dayquil/Nyquil or other cold medicine
- Calamine lotion or other anti-itch creams (for bug bites)
- Sunscreen, sunglasses, hat \*\*
- Body/face lotion \*
- Hand sanitizer and/or disinfectant hand wipes \*\$
- Bug spray, lotion
- Multi-Vitamins – **highly recommended**
- Towel(s)—one large and one or two small \*\*?
- Razor, electric razor, etc.
- Shampoo, conditioner, toothbrush (es), toothpaste, floss, mouthwash etc. \*\$
- Sarongs (great for use as towel, beach wrap, sheet etc...) \*\*
- Backpack/small bag for travel \*?
- Small purse/handbag \*\*?

- Mosquito net (can also be purchased in Senegal and The Gambia) \*\*
- Contraceptive devices (quality, cost, and availability vary widely) \*\*?
- Notebooks, paper, pens, pencils, highlighters, etc. \*\*
- Alarm clock \*
- Plug converters and voltage adapter (see “Voltage Converters and Plug Adapters”)\*
- Blank CD's for backup and photo storage \*\*
- Portable USB drive (recommended) \*?
- Batteries \*?
- Money belt for carrying large sums of money
- Flashlight/headlamp
- One or more rolls of toilet paper for the first several days \*\*
- Running/sport shoes, socks \*?
- Hair ties \*?
- Rubber sandals (for the beach, shower etc...) \*\*
- Bathing suit

### **Special Considerations for Women**

- A supply of tampons and/or sanitary napkins \*\$
- Medication for yeast infections** (highly recommended) which may be necessary if you are taking antibiotics such as anti-malaria medication for a prolonged period of time
- Ample supply of birth control \*?

Most of these items are small and fairly light, and as such you may find it worth the effort to bring them along with you. Of course, most are available in Senegal if you forget them, but sometimes at a higher price and/or lower quality.

## IN-COUNTRY LIVING EXPENSES

### ROOM & BOARD

#### **Rent**

**\$0-\$400/€0-€260 per month**

*You have the option of staying in Tostan housing for no fee.* As Tostan has two main offices, an international office in Dakar and the national office in Thiès, there are two spaces dedicated to volunteer and employee housing, one in each of these locations. In addition, Tostan has offices in each region in Senegal where we work, which also have rooms in which volunteers stay while on field visits. In all of these locations, volunteers have access to a kitchen with basic utilities and refrigerators. In the volunteer houses and regional offices, volunteers are provided with beds that always have sheets and mosquito nets. While visiting a village to complete evaluations or reports for Tostan, volunteers can expect a bed or mattress, which may or may not have sheets and a mosquito net. It is generally a good idea to bring a mosquito net with you when traveling.

Please note that while Tostan tries to provide basic but comfortable housing for all of its volunteers, due to limited space and depending on the time of year you may be coming, up to three people may share a room at one time. In addition, many volunteers can expect to be in transit between various Tostan locations depending on the scope and details of their projects. We do the best we can to manage housing space and maintain a relatively comfortable living space. However, we respect that some volunteers would like certain creature comforts that are beyond Tostan's ability to provide; you are welcome to find your own housing, at your own cost and convenience. If you choose to do this, expect to spend up to \$300/€250 per month for a furnished, one-bedroom apartment in a good neighborhood in Dakar, and \$100-\$125/€75-€100 in other cities.

Finally, please note that **some infrastructural difficulties cannot be erased by Tostan**. Thus, volunteers must be prepared for frequent – sometimes regular – power and water outages for hours, or even days, at a time, even in main cities and in Tostan housing. In addition, hot water for bathing is not standard in Senegal. Volunteers must be prepared for “refreshing” (i.e. cold!) showers on a daily basis.

#### **Food and Drink**

**\$20-\$50/€15-€40 per week**

The price of food depends greatly on your eating habits and needs, as well as the city in which you are living. Remember that while working in the office in Dakar and Thiès, lunch is prepared by the cook and is eaten communally. Volunteers based in other Tostan offices receive a monthly allocation for lunches during week-days.

Some sample prices for common food items in Dakar:

Bread	\$0.50-\$1/€0.40-€0.75 per loaf
Peanuts (groundnuts)	\$2/€1.50.
Sandwich/hamburger/chawarma	\$1-\$5/€0.75-€4
Fresh fruit and vegetables	\$0.20-\$1/€0.15-€0.75 per piece
Canned vegetables	\$1-\$3/€0.75-€2.50
Eggs	\$1-\$2/€0.75-€1.50 per dozen
Milk or yogurt	\$1-\$2/€0.75-€1.50
Cheese	\$2-\$6/€1.50-€4.50
Can or bottle of coke	\$0.25-\$0.75/€0.20-€0.60
Can of beer	\$1/€0.75

Box of pasta	\$1/€0.75
Bottled water	\$1/€0.75 per bottle

*Note on Alcoholic Beverages: As the population in Senegal is predominantly Muslim, the consumption of alcoholic beverages is not as common or as acceptable as in the U.S. or Europe. If you plan on drinking while in Senegal, please be aware of the differences in availability and acceptability of alcohol.*

## OTHER COMMON EXPENDITURES

### Transportation

- **Taxi:** In Dakar, taxis can be anywhere from \$2-\$6/€1.50-€5 one-way, depending on where you are going in the city and how well you negotiate the price. This sounds cheap, but it is expensive to use every day—using a taxi only three times per week (at \$2/€1.50 each way) would cost over \$600/€450 a year. Outside of Dakar taxis are at a set price of around \$1/€0.75 each way.
- **Public transportation** (“Car Rapide”): \$0.30/€0.25 each way
- **Inter-city travel:** “Sept-Places” vehicles (station wagons with 7 seats). A seat costs between \$4/€3 and \$40/€25 each way based on distance. When volunteers are traveling to the field for work, Tostan covers the cost of transportation.

### Personal Items (costs vary):

- |                         |                                      |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ▪ Decent shampoo        | \$5-\$7/€4-€5 per bottle             |
| ▪ Decent conditioner    | \$5-\$7/€4-€5 per bottle             |
| ▪ Soap                  | \$2-\$3/€1.50-€2.30 per bar          |
| ▪ Toilet paper rolls    | \$3/€2.50 for pack ; \$2/€1.50 for 4 |
| ▪ Deodorant             | \$4-\$7/€3-€5                        |
| ▪ Western-style haircut | \$10-\$20/€7-€15                     |
| ▪ Men’s haircut         | \$2/€1.50 (clippers only)            |
| ▪ Toothbrush            | \$2/€1.50                            |
| ▪ Sanitary Pads         | \$2+/€1.50 for 10                    |

### Going Out (cost varies)

- |  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| ▪ Restaurant in Dakar and Thiès (w/ taxi ride) | \$10-\$25/€7-€15  |
| ▪ Restaurant in other cities (w/ taxi ride)    | \$6-\$15/€4-€12   |
| ▪ Dancing/Night Clubs                          | \$6-\$25/€4-€17   |
| ▪ Cover charge                                 | \$5-\$10/€4-€7    |
| ▪ Alcoholic drinks                             | \$2-\$10/€1.50-€7 |
| ▪ Non-alcoholic drinks                         | \$1-\$5/€0.75-€4  |

## IN-COUNTRY COMMUNICATION COSTS

### Cellular Phones

**\$70-\$200/€50-€150**

Although not required, Tostan highly recommends purchasing a cell phone upon arrival or bring one along (tri-band, SIM card enabled).

A new phone can cost up to \$200, but good basic models run between \$25/€18 and \$100/€75. You should be able to sell the phone when you leave and recuperate at least half of your money. SIM chips (your phone number), cost between 1,000 CFA (US \$2/€1.50) and 2,500 CFA (US \$5/€4). Per-minute rates vary depending on when and who you call. Incoming calls and text messages do not cost anything to receive, including calls from overseas. Credit is available at local boutiques and gas stations to refill your minutes.

If you have a GSM phone, you may be able to use it in Senegal if the appropriate steps are taken. Since GSM phones use a SIM card, you can replace the original SIM card with a Senegalese one upon arrival. Be sure to check with your provider on how to disable the current phone number and prepare your phone to accept a new SIM card without locking the phone.

### **Independent Interpreter**

**\$40/€30 per week**

Since Tostan operates in the local languages of the communities in which it implements its programs, language barriers sometimes cause communication problems in villages. While doing field visits and projects for Tostan, Tostan provides volunteers with the translators necessary to complete reports. Those volunteers seeking to do independent research should be aware that certain circumstances may make it necessary to personally hire a local translator. In Tostan's experience, rates are very reasonable and well worth their cost. Please contact us directly for further cost estimates and information.

### **International Communication**

**Cost varies**

Calling out of Senegal from cell phones and fixed lines is easy but very expensive (\$0.60 per minute or more). The internet telephone service **Skype.com** is a great way to chat (both computer to computer, and computer to land-line/cell phone), though usage is dependent upon the connection speed. Volunteers have found that they can call landlines in the United States for \$0.02/min. using prepaid "SkypeOut" services. There are also many international phone cards available online, though the cost and quality of service vary.

### **Internet**

**\$0.60-\$3/€0.45-€2.30 per hour**

An hour at a cyber (internet) café in Dakar and Thiès costs 300-500 CFA (US \$0.60-\$1/€0.45-€0.75). In smaller towns, it ranges from \$1/€0.75 to \$3/€2.30 per hour. High speed internet is available in the offices in Dakar, Thiès, and Kololi (The Gambia), and in the volunteer house in Thiès. In the Dakar office and the Thiès office and house, the internet connections available are wireless. Volunteers are asked to limit internet use for non-professional goals to non-office hours and break times.

### **Traditional Clothing**

**\$10-\$40/€7-€30**

The traditional fabric in West Africa is beautiful, and getting clothing made at the tailor is relatively inexpensive. For between \$15-\$20/€12-€15, you can have an entire outfit made, skirt, top, and headdress for women, pants and shirt for men. In the villages, Tostan normally requires traditional dress or at least culturally appropriate attire.

### **Laundry**

**\$3-\$10/€2.50-€7**

Laundry must be done by hand and Tostan pays for someone to do laundry in every volunteer residence. You may certainly do your own laundry, but it is often easier to let this person do it for you.. They are generally much more experienced and efficient with hand washing, and it provides them with a source of extra income.

## IMPORTANT TOSTAN CONTACT INFORMATION

### **Tostan Volunteer Coordination Department** (Dakar, Senegal)

Valentina Pomatto, Coordinator Volunteer Program

Email: [volunteer@tostan.org](mailto:volunteer@tostan.org)

Cell Phone: (00) 221.77 399 07 59

Emergency Phone: 221-339-517-887

Skype Contact: [volunteer\\_tostan](https://www.skype.com/people/volunteer_tostan)

### **Tostan Dakar Office**

Mailing address: **Molly Melching**, Executive Director

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### **U.S. Embassy Dakar, Senegal**

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Website: [www.usembassy.state.gov/dakar/](http://www.usembassy.state.gov/dakar/)