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December 2010

Dear Tostan Friends and Supporters,

I'm overjoyed to announce that in the past two weeks, hundreds of communities in two regions of Senegal where Tostan works have publicly declared their abandonment of [female genital cutting](#) (FGC) and [child/forced marriage](#)!



The first declaration occurred in the department of Kolda in southern Senegal on November 28th where over 700 communities pledged their commitment to the rights of women and girls through a vibrant celebration featuring music, dance, and theater. Tostan Executive Assistant, Caitlin Snyder, took part in the declaration and wrote about the event and her conversations with community members. [Click here](#) to read her report.

This significant event was followed by a declaration by 91 villages in Kaolack, Senegal on December 5th.

Communities in the department of Kolda gather to publicly declare their abandonment of harmful traditional practices. This monumental declaration, involving more than 3,000 people, brings Senegal one step closer to its goal of total FGC abandonment by 2015.

These public declarations represent the tangible results of Tostan's [Community Empowerment Program](#) (CEP)—most notably the possibility for lasting social change when

communities themselves take the lead in development. I can think of no better news to share as we celebrate the holiday season and welcome the New Year!

One final note, please consider donating to Tostan this season to help us reach even more communities in 2011! Scroll down to read how your donation before January 1st will be doubled!!

Happy Holidays!



Molly Melching
Executive Director, Tostan

Support Tostan This Holiday Season!



A generous donor has agreed to match as much as \$250,000 in donations that we receive before the New Year! Don't let this incredible opportunity to

support our work in Africa pass you by! Also, if you make a donation in the name of a loved one, you can pick one of our [beautiful greeting cards](#) to send to them along with a personal message.

Give the gift of empowerment this holiday season!
[Click here to donate!](#)

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton
Praises Tostan

Tostan Volunteer in The Gambia Shares Excitement of Village Visit



Check out Tostan's blog for the second installment of Tostan volunteer Katie Seward's travelogue! Katie blogged about her experiences visiting

three Mandinka villages in The Gambia where Tostan's CEP is scheduled to begin. In the second installment, Katie describes her journey to Touba Wuli, where villagers shared not only their hospitality, but their hopes for a better future through education and economic opportunity.

[Click here](#) to read her account!

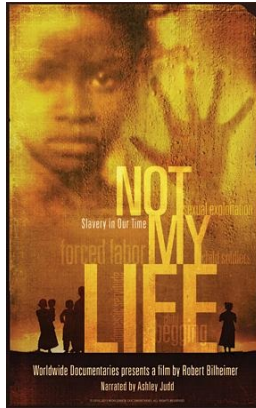
Tostan's Approach to Social Change
Featured in *Not My Life*



In a message on November 25th, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, Secretary Clinton emphasized the importance of involving men in global efforts to eliminate gender based violence and discrimination. Clinton cited Tostan's program as

exemplary in its method of involving the whole community in discussions of health and human rights, leading to community-led decisions to end harmful practices and protect women's rights.

[Click here](#) to read the full statement!



Tostan is featured in *Not My Life*, a documentary film about modern human trafficking set to premier in early 2011!

[Click here](#) to read more about Tostan's involvement in the film.

[Click here](#) to watch the trailer.



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

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