



February 2011 Newsletter

Dear Tostan Friends and Supporters,

February 7th marked Tostan's 20th anniversary! Reflecting on this important milestone, I am struck by how much our programs have evolved due in large part to the leadership our community partners take every day by adapting Tostan's programs to their own development needs and goals.

[Click here to read our 20th anniversary announcement.](#)

We are currently implementing the [Community Empowerment Program](#) in eight countries, through which Tostan has supported communities in undertaking challenging development projects ranging from [cell phone literacy](#) to [solar power](#).

Along the way, I have been delighted to see our approach to community empowerment [recognized](#) as an innovative approach to sustainable social change. We are taking all of 2011 to celebrate our community partners, our dedicated staff, volunteers, and interns, and our global network of supporters. We're also redoubling our efforts to reach thousands of additional communities in the next 20 years.

Looking to the future, it is our hope that the CEP will continue to empower new



Molly Melching celebrates the 10th anniversary of the declaration for the abandonment of FGC in Malicounda Bambara.

communities with the education and skills needed to ensure a bright future.

Below you will find the latest news from Tostan's offices. Thank you for your ongoing support!

Warm wishes,



Molly Melching
Executive Director, Tostan

ANN! Encourages Action, Features Tostan February 6th: A Day for FGC Awareness



In January, Tostan was featured on [Action Now Network!](#) ANN is a social networking resource that presents global issues and organizations that are making a difference and aims to inspire dialogue, collaboration, and social mobilization.

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



February 6th marked the annual day for the abandonment of [female genital cutting](#) (FGC). This day serves as a time to recognize the contributions of organizations around the world working to promote understanding about the harmful consequences of this practice and to encourage collaboration among these groups.

[Click here to read more on Tostan's commemoration of this day.](#)

Advocate Inspired by Recent Public Declaration



Julia Lalla-Maharajh,
"Associate"

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"passionate advocate" for the abandonment of FGC and founder of the [Orchid Project](#), recently visited



several communities where Tostan's [Community Empowerment Program](#) is in place. Her experience talking with community members and witnessing the excitement at [Sare Ngai's public declaration](#) left her energized, ready to continue working towards positive social transformation.

You can also follow us on [Facebook](#), check out photo albums on [Flickr](#), and watch Tostan films on [YouTube](#).

To learn more about Julia Lalla-Maharajh's experience, read these two excellent articles in [The Daily Beast](#) and [The Huffington Post](#).



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

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