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March 2011 Newsletter

Dear Tostan Friends and Supporters,

On March 8th, Tostan celebrated the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day! Members of the Tostan team and I visited Liberté VI Women's Correctional Facility in Dakar for an energetic day-long event hosted by Tostan's [Prison Project](#). The event recognized the hard work of women prisoners who are transforming their futures by participating in Tostan's [Community Empowerment Program](#) (CEP).

Due to societal stigmas surrounding imprisonment, many incarcerated women face ostracization once they are released. The CEP addresses this issue by providing training in skills such as literacy, numeracy, and project management as well as human rights and responsibilities. This new knowledge gives the women both the confidence and skill set necessary to successfully reintegrate into society.



Tostan staff dressed in matching outfits at the International Women's Day Celebration at Liberté VI Women's Correctional Facility in Dakar.

That day, everyone at the celebration encouraged the women to find hope for the future. As Tostan continues its work to create sustainable social change, we can look to these women as examples of courage, dignity, and perseverance.

[Click here to read more about the International Women's Day Celebration.](#)

Please scroll down to read the latest news from Tostan's offices. Thank you for your constant support!

Warm wishes,



Molly Melching  
Executive Director, Tostan

### Special Recognition from Google!



In honor of International Women's Day, Google highlighted Tostan and other organizations that are effectively working to improve the health, education, safety, and economic security of women and their communities. Google encourages viewers to support the empowerment of women by donating to the featured

organizations.

[Click here to view Google's International Women's Day page.](#)

### Tostan at the World Social Forum



Tostan staff and  
volunteers are part

### Positive Change Occuring in Latmingué, Senegal

On February 27th, 58 villages in Latmingué, Senegal declared their abandonment of [female genital cutting](#) (FGC) and [child/forced marriage](#). This event embodied the collaborative efforts of the communities to positively change their futures.

Aissata Ba, coordinator of the [Community Management Committee](#) (CMC) in the village of Bossolel Fulbe, explained, "...the declaration itself is an awareness-raising tool. It gives the other villages the courage to also abandon [harmful practices]. The public nature of the declaration gives the meaning of the event greater sincerity."

[Click here to read more about the public declaration in Latmingué](#)

[Click here to read more on the effectiveness of public declarations](#)

Check out Tostan's Photo Albums on Facebook!



volunteers spent an exciting week, February 7-11, at the [World Social Forum](#) in Dakar, Senegal.

Throughout the week Tostan engaged in conversations

with other grassroots development organizations and community leaders. Will Schomburg, Tostan Communications Assistant in Dakar, wrote about his experience at the event on the Tostan blog.

[Click here to read Will's post.](#)

Photos from public declarations and other Tostan events are regularly posted on our [Facebook page](#). These albums allow the Tostan team and individuals in the communities with which we work to visually connect with our supporters worldwide.



You can also stay up-to-date on Tostan's work by following us on [Blogger](#), [Twitter](#), [Flickr](#), and [Youtube](#).



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To find out more about upcoming events and ongoing projects, please visit our [website](#).

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

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