Dear Tostan Friends and Supporters,

April was a busy and exciting month for all of us here at Tostan. On April 14-16, I attended the Skoll World Forum in Oxford, England, where, alongside eight inspiring social entrepreneurs, I was presented with the 2010 Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurship. I accepted the award on behalf of the communities throughout Africa with which we work and Tostan staff worldwide. What an incredible moment that was, being recognized for our organization's community-led approach. You can read more about the award ceremony here and even watch videos of the event. I was so grateful to the Skoll Foundation for their support that I surprised international audiences with a short traditional dance, bringing a piece of Africa all the way to Oxford.

At the end of the day, it is truly the African...
At the end of the day, it is truly the African communities that should be recognized for their work as they stand up for human rights and boldly lead their own development. Just last week, another 330 communities in Senegal declared their decision to abandon female genital cutting (FGC) and child/forced marriage.

Scroll down to read more.

Best wishes,

Molly Melching
Executive Director, Tostan

The Bignona Departmental Declaration

On Saturday, April 24, 330 villages of the Bignona department of Casamance, in south-western Senegal, publicly announced their decision to abandon the traditions of female genital cutting (FGC) and child/forced marriage. The fourth departmental declaration in Senegal, this declaration represents a milestone in achieving Senegal’s goal of total abandonment of FGC by 2015, and a landmark in Tostan’s work in the region.

Read more about the declaration here.

National Talibé Day: Celebrating Children’s Rights in Senegal

April 20 was National Talibé Day in Senegal, honoring the young boys known as talibé who can be seen in urban areas of Senegal carrying large tin cans and asking for food and money. Tostan representatives attended a celebration and community discussion in the area of M’bour, Senegal, one of many events across the country bringing awareness to the plight of talibé.

Click here to learn more about National Talibé Day and about Tostan's Child Protection Program.
The Inter-parliamentary Conference on Female Genital Cutting

On May 3 and 4, representatives from the African Union and the United Nations along with government representatives from 28 African countries attended an Inter-parliamentary Conference in Dakar, Senegal. The aim of the conference was to reflect upon the past successes in protecting human rights in Africa and to find a common approach for continuing to encourage the total abandonment of female genital cutting (FGC). A new resolution to be drafted and presented to the United Nations will call for a continent-wide ban on the practice.

Click here to read more about this event.

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