



1 November 2012

Dear Tostan Friends and Supporters,

I was moved when I heard the story of five-year-old Aja, who attends Tostan classes with her mother, Isatou, in Bajon, Koto, The Gambia.

Aja told us, "I go along with my mum every week...learning is my favorite thing!" Her mother shared that even at such a young age, Aja inspires the entire community with her desire to learn about subjects ranging from literacy to health to human rights. This young changemaker was highlighted in our blog series, [Spotlight on Girls](#), in support of the first ever [International Day of the Girl Child](#) on October 11.



In the countdown to the International Day of the Girl Child, we teamed up with our partners and supporters to talk about a key theme of Tostan's work — when communities become empowered through knowledge of their human rights, they are better able to empower and amplify the voices of girls.

Aja speaking about human rights and health at an inter-village meeting in her community

[Read more International Day of the Girl stories like Aja's on our blog](#) and [in a guest post by Tostan on our partner Girls Not Brides' website](#).

With your support, we will continue to build understanding of human rights through our program and, in turn, empower communities to help girls reach their full potential.

Warm wishes,



Molly Melching

Executive Director

PS. I had a great conversation with [TakePart.com](#) earlier this month on the importance of girls' education and, specifically, how men play a key role in promoting this right for girls. [Read the full interview!](#)

From Grain to Market: Female Detainees Plant Seeds for the Future

Tostan CEP participants in three Senegalese prisons in Dakar, Rufisque, and Thiès learned how to make and sell local cereals during a special training led by Tostan's Prison Project.

This income-generating skill allows female detainees to become financially self-sufficient as well as reintegrate back into their families and communities.



[Learn more about the cereal training and the Prison Project.](#)

New Book on Molly Melching and Tostan Announced

However Long the Night: One American Woman's Journey to Help Millions



Sweden: Partnerships and a Special Gift!

Earlier this month Molly Melching traveled to Sweden to meet with our sister organization [Tostan Sverige](#) (Sweden) and other Swedish partners. During the visit, Molly and Anne Charlotte Ringquist, Founder of Tostan Sweden, met with Gunilla Carlsson, the Minister for International Development Cooperation for Sweden, [to discuss the important role of women in development.](#)



During the trip, Tostan also received a generous gift of 1,500,000 SEK (200,000 USD) from the [Swedish Postcode Lottery!](#)

Female Genital Cutting: Impact and Abandonment

Our partner, [Orchid Project](#), has created an informative



of African Women and Girls Triumph tells the story of Molly Melching and Tostan. *However Long the Night* will be the debut book of a newly announced publishing partnership between the Skoll Foundation and HarperOne featuring entrepreneurs who have created large-scale impact on the world's most daunting problems.



infographic showing the effects of [female genital cutting](#) (FGC) on a girl throughout her lifetime. Through CEP discussions on human rights and health as well as participation in social mobilization events, [entire social networks choose to abandon FGC](#).



[Check out Orchid Project's new infographic.](#)

[Learn more about the book release on our website.](#)

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