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September 2011

Dear Tostan Friends and Supporters,

September has been an eventful month for us as we hosted our annual Tostan Leadership Retreat. This year, over 75 team members gathered in Thies, Senegal from 10 countries in Africa, Europe, and North America for a week of leadership training and strategic planning. As Tostan continues to grow, we aim to not only partner with additional communities and invest in new initiatives, but also to build a leadership structure



Tostan team members outside of the CCDD Training Center in Thies, Senegal

that can sustainably support our growth. At this year's retreat we worked collaboratively to develop strategies that will enable us reach our goals laid out in our [2010-2015 Strategic Plan](#).

Of course, even as we were meeting in Senegal to plan Tostan's future, exciting news continued to roll in from across the organization--please scroll down to read the latest updates from our offices.

On behalf of all of us at Tostan, thank you as always for your generous support in making us what we are today and helping us grow in the future.

Warm wishes,



Gannon Gillespie  
Director of Strategic Development,  
Tostan

### Building a Foundation for the Future in Guediawaye, Senegal



A successful community fund, increased birth registration and school enrollment, and the courage to continue to set goals for the future are just a few of the changes

Guediawaye, a suburb of Dakar, Senegal, experienced as a result of participating in Tostan's [Community Empowerment Program](#) (CEP).

[Click here to read what community member Nogoye Dieng says is one of the greatest successes of the CEP.](#)

### Outstanding Supporter Carlyn Ring Inspires Giving



Using her creative talents, long-time supporter Carlyn Ring makes handmade

### Tostan Participants Featured in TrustLaw's Child Marriage Report



In a unique multimedia report on child marriage by [TrustLaw](#), three Tostan CEP participants share their experiences with child marriage and the change they are effecting in their

communities to raise awareness about the negative effects of this practice.

[Click here to read Astou Gueye, Maimouna Diallo, and Fatou Diakhate's stories.](#)

### Molly Needs Your Vote

Thanks to a nomination by Julia Lalla-Maharajh from the [Orchid Project](#) and a successful first round of judging, Tostan Founder and Executive Director Molly Melching has been selected as one of five top finalists for the *Guardian* International Development Achievement Award! The final result, though, is up to



necklaces and sells them at arts and crafts fairs to raise funds for Tostan.

you! Public voting for the winner is going on now until October 2nd!

[Click here to vote for Molly and please encourage your friends and family to vote too!](#)

This is not all she does, though. Wherever she sells her necklaces, Ring also shares stories of Tostan community members and inspires people to support sustainable community empowerment in Africa.

[Click here to read more about this outstanding supporter's unique approach to giving.](#)



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