



February 2013

Dear Tostan Friends and Supporters,

February 6th marked the international day for the abandonment of [female genital cutting](#) (FGC). On this important day, we announced our latest estimates into [what will be needed for country-wide abandonment of FGC in Senegal!](#)

According to our research, we have estimated that 340 new communities in Senegal will need to implement the [Community Empowerment Program](#) (CEP) to lead to abandonment of the practice by 2015.

We shared this news and our community-led approach with audiences in the US when Bacary Tamba, Tostan's National Coordinator of the Diaspora and Regional Coordinator of Ziguinchor, Senegal, presented at the U.S. State Department in Washington, DC and the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Alongside organizations such as UNICEF, the African Union, and No Peace Without Justice, Bacary explained the cultural context of the practice of FGC in West Africa as well as the challenges and successes he has seen at the community level as villages make the decision to abandon on their own. [Read more about the message Bacary shared at these events on the importance of human rights education in promoting FGC abandonment.](#)



Participants at the regional declaration for FGC abandonment in Ziguinchor, Senegal bid adieu to FGC.

The excitement around FGC abandonment that we witnessed this February 6 shows that positive

social change is being supported worldwide. Thank you for celebrating with us and raising awareness of communities who are leading movements for social change.

Warm wishes,



Molly Melching

Executive Director

P.S. I also had the opportunity to talk about abandoning FGC with other champions of human rights, including UK Minister Lynne Featherstone, UNFPA Executive Director Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, and others in a Google+ Hangout, [which you can watch here](#).

The CMC of Simbaya creates a way to bring education to all children in their village

Challenges with accessibility and overcrowding at the local school in Simbaya, a village in western Guinea, led their [Community Management Committee](#) (CMC) to develop a creative solution. The CMC built their own Community Mentoring Center that now makes education available to all children in their village.



[Read the full story on our blog to find out how this](#)

Tostan Supervisor, Lamin Fatty, uses participatory filmmaking to tell stories of peace

Lamin Fatty, Tostan Supervisor in The Gambia, recently participated in a [two-week filmmaking workshop](#) that provided him with new skills in participant-led filmmaking to share with communities to tell their stories of social change in their own voices.



[Learn more about the highlights of Lamin's experience with participatory filmmaking and the](#)

[village has been transformed by their community-led development efforts.](#)

Family mediation through Tostan's Prison Project allows detainees to rebuild their lives

[Tostan's Prison Project](#) team works hard to mediate and rebuild relationships between detainees participating in the Tostan program and their relatives. With new income-generating skills and a family support network, former detainees are able to reintegrate into society.



[Learn how family mediation helped former detainee Fama Sall.](#)

['Stories for Change' workshop.](#)

End Slavery Now features Tostan's work to protect children through a guest photo essay

Tostan partner [End Slavery Now](#) recently featured a guest photo essay by Tostan on our work to promote the protection of children. Looking specifically at the issue of forced child begging in Senegal, the photo essay shares how the Tostan program's [Child Protection Module](#) addresses this problem at its source by engaging rural communities in child protection programs that build awareness around the moral, social, and legal norms that affect children.



[View Tostan's recent guest photo essay on End Slavery Now's website](#) and [learn more about the Child Protection Module.](#)

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

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