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Summer 2011

Dear Tostan Friends and Supporters,

The movement for FGC abandonment is accelerating! Since the beginning of May, 587 communities in four countries across Africa have declared their abandonment of [female genital cutting](#) (FGC) and [child/forced marriage](#)! This immense progress renews my belief that harmful traditional practices like these can end in one generation. Through perseverance and courage, these communities embraced their human rights and laid the foundation for a strong, empowered future.

To celebrate with us by learning more about these inspiring events, click the links below.

[May 8, Senegal](#): Historic declaration of communities in and around the city of Mbour

[May 29, Senegal](#): 119 communities declare abandonment in Niaming, Senegal

[June 5, Senegal](#): Landmark declaration in the department of Ranérou, Senegal

[June 5, Guinea](#): Two years after the last public declaration in Guinea, 197 new communities declare abandonment



Adolescents from Ranérou present a skit on problems caused by child/forced marriage.

[June 11-12, The Gambia](#): Communities from around the country gather for first national public declaration in The Gambia

[July 3, Djibouti](#): 92 communities declare abandonment at first ever declaration in Djibouti

Your support helps make our work with communities possible, so thank you! Scroll down to read the latest news from Tostan's offices.

Warm wishes,



Molly Melching  
Executive Director, Tostan

## "Too Young to Wed: The Secret World of Child Brides"



In June, [National Geographic](#) featured a striking article on [child marriage](#) entitled "Too Young to Wed: The Secret World of Child Brides." This article, though

haunting, provides an excellent glimpse into the realities of girls married at the young age of 12, 8, 5, and even younger, discusses the social norms that encourage this practice, and briefly highlights [Tostan's human rights-based approach](#) as a positive way to change this practice.

[Click here to view the full National Geographic article and photos.](#)

## Tostan Featured in the Financial Times!

On June 24th, the [Financial Times](#) featured a full length article about Molly Melching and Tostan. This article wove together the story of how Molly came to Senegal and how Tostan's respectful approach stood out from the beginning as a unique take on development.

[Click here to read the FT article.](#)





Molly in Senegal in early 80s.

## Have a Question? Let Tostan Answer It!

As members of Tostan's global community, we value your questions and thoughts and encourage you to express them. As we receive your questions we will answer them on our blog in a new series called [Tostan FAQ](#), which is authored by Tostan staff.

You can post your questions to any of our social media outlets as seen in the box to the right so that you can become a part of the dialogue about Tostan.

Our first post answers a frequent question: [why does Tostan use the term FGC instead of FGM?](#)

## Visually Connect with Tostan Partner Communities

By viewing Tostan's stunning photos sent from the field in Africa on [Flickr](#) and [Facebook](#) you can visually step into a community that partners with Tostan as they declare their abandonment of harmful practices, participate in community clean-up projects, perfect literacy skills through SMS messaging, and more!

[Click here to check out four new Facebook photo albums](#) so that you can see the communities you support.



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