

# Tostan

## Dignity for All

Medlemsbrev nr. 1  
vinter 2014

### Några axplock från TOSTAN året 2013

#### Januari

Tostan rankas för andra året i rad som en av 100 topp NGOs i världen. Framgång för Tostans Community Empowerment Program(CEP) och barns skolgång i västra Guinea.

#### Februari

Ett modifierat CEP blev lyckosamt i Senegals fängelseprojekt och förenklade många kontakter med familjerna utanför fängelset.

#### Mars

Tostan lanserade en ny modul, Reinforcement of Parental Practices Module,( RPP), som avser befordra små barns tidiga utveckling och inlärning.

#### April

I april lanserades Molly Melchings biografi *However Long the Night*. Tostan International fick ny logga och ny hemsida.



#### Maj

PBS News Hour uppmärksammade Tostans framgångar i arbetet för social förbättring och mot kvinnlig omskärelse. Generational Change in Three Years kampanjen började.

#### Juni

I Guinea, Mali, Senegal och Gambia samlades byar för att offentligt deklarera att de tar avstånd från kvinnlig omskärelse och barn- & tvångsäktenskap.

#### Juli

Med hjälp av mobiltelefonerna förstärks läsfärdigheterna i Senegal. *However Long the Night* hamnar på Bill Gates läslista.

#### Augusti

Tostan startade en ny bloggserie mellan medlemmar som deltar i Tostan programmet. Senegals familjeminister säger sig tro på fullständigt upphörande med FGC år 2015.

#### September

En bedömning av utbildningscentret gjordes på nätet av medlemmarna och Tostan började utnyttja online teknologi för utvärderingar och stöd.



#### Oktober

Tostanmedlemmar samarbetade med NGO Community Voice International med inspelningar av sin egen music för att samla pengar till freds kommittéerna.

#### November

Tostans RPP grupp diskuterade i workshop med religiösa ledare från 66 senegalesiska byar Islam och de små barnens utveckling.

#### December

Tre filmer med berättelser om hur byarna i Senegal utvecklats - gjorda av medlemmar själva - hade premiär på dagen för de mänskliga rättigheterna. Dramatisk sänkning av barnadödligheten i Mali i samarbete med NGO Muso.

## Besök i Gambia och Senegal

Under januari månad har personal från Tostan Sverige besökt Tostanbyar i Gambia och Senegal för att se hur utbildningsprogrammet fortskrider och hur deltagare upplever att deras byar har förändrats efter Tostans program.

Du kommer att få se och höra mer från besöken på vår facebooksida ([www.facebook.com/tostansverige](http://www.facebook.com/tostansverige)) i samband med den internationella dagen mot kvinnlig omskärelse den 6 februari.



Många byar vittnar om att fler barn går till skolan efter att föräldrarna har deltagit i Tostans program.

På bilden: Barn i byn Changally Chewdo, där programmet genomfördes 2008-2010. Foto: Björn Westerdahl.

## Tostan Sverige är unikt - över 90 procent av en gäva till Tostan Sverige går till verksamheten i Afrika.

(Källa: "Tostan förvaltningsberättelse 2010". <http://tostan.se.idefix.kontrollpanelen.se/press/publikationer/dokument>)

**Stöd Tostans arbete - bli medlem** i Tostan Sverige på bankgiro 5317-2896  
(årsavgift 100 kr, för studenter 50 kr). Bli **månadsgivare** på Pg 90 00 47-2



Vill du veta mer om Tostans arbete besök oss på [www.tostan.se](http://www.tostan.se) & [www.tostan.org](http://www.tostan.org)

## Brev från Molly Melching

Hello everyone,

I had one of those wonderful experiences this weekend that makes me realize that no matter how great the challenges, I will remain dedicated to seeing our Tostan education program reaching millions more in Africa. I thought I would share this unexpected weekend moment with you.

As most of you know, Tostan has been piloting a new education module in Senegal to help parents, grandparents and other primary child caregivers to reinforce positive parental practices that will better prepare their young children for learning in school and life in general. Participants in 232 communities have now gone through the first phase of the program and have learned about how the brain develops and how important it is to positively interact with their babies and young children.

On this beautiful sunny Saturday morning - January 4, 2014, I went down to the beach to buy fresh fish for dinner. The area is located near a village called The Somone and after I bought some fresh fish, I handed them over to the fish cleaner to scale and clean, then sat down next to some children to wait until she had finished. As I had some time before me, I pulled out one of our children's books from the new module and started reading in Wolof to the young children sitting next to me. They were surprised and delighted and one boy who obviously was attending school tried to read along with me. Soon more children and three adults had also gathered to see something so rare - a colorfully illustrated book being read in their own language - and by a white woman! As the young boy was excited and seemed intent on reading, I let him continue alone by showing him first the picture, asking him to identify the animals, describe what was happening, and then try to read the text under the picture. Soon everyone was clapping after each caption as he was able to read more and more fluently.

Then the fish cleaner came over to hand me the bag of red snappers. When she saw the boy was struggling with one part of the text, she immediately

jumped in to help him finish the sentence he was reading. Everyone looked up in surprise as no one imagined that the fish cleaner could read.

"Have you been to school?" I asked in Wolof. "Not to French school," she answered, "but I have been to Wolof school and I know that book. You know, I have that book at home and read it to my grandchildren."

I then realized she was attending the Tostan Reinforcement of Parental Practices (RPP) module in the nearby Somone village. My sister Diane and friend Anne Charlotte who were with me came over to see what was happening.

Without prompting, the fish cleaner looked at us intently and said "Did you know that the best time to teach children is from zero to three? Yes, zero to three when they are babies! I didn't know that myself, but that is why it is very good to read to them, to sing all kinds of songs and just talk to them all the time. I talk to my grandchildren while I am doing chores around the house and just explain what I am doing."

I translated what she said into English and answered that all three of us "toubabs" thought what she said was really interesting and important.

"Well," she answered, "it's all about the brain. The brain is developing and neurons are connecting especially from zero to three. You need to stimulate the brain - talk to babies all the time—even before they can walk, before they can talk. By you talking to the baby you help to develop the child's brain and prepare the baby for learning later on. Your child will be more successful if you do that you know. We are all talking to babies now in my house because of what I learned." She checked to make sure I had understood the word "neuron" in Wolof and actually started explaining what a neuron is to me, but luckily I had participated in the development of the module so knew it already! It was so exciting to realize what an accurate understanding she had of the class information.