

Speakers' Bios for Child Marriage Technical Update

Malick Diagne is the Deputy Director of Tostan. As a Senegalese who has lived in the United States and worked in NGOs for more than twenty years, Malick has used his experience to reinforce the organizational structure of Tostan through a systematic process of decentralization, delegation, and empowerment. He has trained staff in all departments, reinforced internal controls, and computerized Tostan's accounting system. He has presented the Tostan program and philosophy at numerous international seminars. Malick received a BA from the University of Dakar and his Masters in International Studies with a concentration in Finance from Ohio University. He is fluent in French, English, and Wolof.

Saranga Jain is a Research Associate on the Reproductive Health & Nutrition Team at the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) where she works on adolescent health, child marriage, and nutrition and gender issues. Previously she worked as Fundraising Coordinator with Uganda Orphans' Foundation, and with the Ugandan Ministry of Education and the U.S. Peace Corps training rural teachers and conducting research on corporal punishment practices. Saranga has a Masters of Public Policy in International Policy & Development from the Georgetown Public Policy Institute.

Kathleen Kurz leads ICRW's work in the field of reproductive health and nutrition, focusing on adolescent reproductive health and HIV/AIDS; and on the linkages among nutrition, food security, agriculture, and gender. In her work at ICRW, Dr. Kurz has directed and participated in research projects in population, health and nutrition, specifically on micronutrient malnutrition and food security, adolescent nutrition, adolescent reproductive health, child health and nutrition, and unmet need for family planning, all in the context of gender and women in development. Most of her research is concentrated in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. She has published numerous papers in journals and also co-authored a booklet on the girl-child for AWID and UNICEF. Dr. Kurz holds a Ph.D. in Human Nutrition and an M.A. in International Nutrition, both from Cornell University.

Molly Melching is the founder and Executive Director of Tostan, a nongovernmental organization headquartered in Senegal, and has more than 30 years of development experience in Africa. Molly's expertise is in developing educational materials for use at the village level, and she has created two original basic education programs for women and adolescent girls and their communities in national languages of Senegal and Guinea. The results of Tostan's work have been recognized on an international level and numerous films and articles have appeared on the Tostan experience in over 20 countries. Recognized for her expertise in non-formal education, human rights training, and social transformation issues, Molly is especially known for her innovative work in ending Female Genital Cutting in Africa. In 1999 she received the Humanitarian Alumni Award from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and in 2002, the Sargent Shriver Distinguished Award for Humanitarian Service. Tostan was also a semi-finalist for the Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Award in 2000 and 2005.

Margaret Neuse is Director of the Office of Population and Reproductive Health, Bureau for Global Health, USAID.

Rashida Parveen is currently the Sector Specialist of the Adolescent Development Program of BRAC in Bangladesh and has been with BRAC for almost 18 years. In her current position, Rashida supervises and guides field operations, curriculum, and capacity development units, and ensures BRAC's smooth liaison with other organizations, in addition to being in charge of the budget, monitoring and productivity of the program. She has also been active in planning and designing the BRAC Education Program and has published many books for children, teachers, and adolescents. Outside of BRAC, she was invited by UNICEF/Kenya to be a consultant in developing their curriculum for Non Formal Primary Education in Sudan and has also worked for the International Department of Niagara College in Canada. Rashida received her Post Graduate in Human Resources Development from Niagara College in Ontario, Canada; her Diploma on Curriculum Development from Leeds University in the UK; and a Masters in Arts from Rajshahi University in Bangladesh, India.

Mahdere Paulos is currently the Executive Director of the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association in Addis Ababa. She has practiced law since 1996 and for the next decade worked with EWLA in a variety of capacities-- as everything from a volunteer legal aid officer in its legal aid clinic, to an active member of the organization representing women in court on a pro bono basis, to a trainer for paralegals and others groups, to Board Member. She was named its Executive Director in April 2005. In addition, she has worked for the International Committee of the Red Cross in Addis Ababa, and has held various positions in many High Courts in Addis Ababa, including the Labor Division, the Civil Division, and the Criminal Division, where she served as a judge adjudicating "various grave criminal offences." Mahdere holds a Degree in Law, from Addis Ababa University.