

## SAFE MAA - LOITA

### EVALUATION REPORT “ENDING FGM/C IN THE LOITA HILLS, KENYA, PROJECT BY S.A.F.E. KENYA, FUNDED BY THE J A CLARK CHARITABLE TRUST APRIL 2014 TO MARCH 2017”



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*JUNE, 2017*

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT:**

The Report starts with Acknowledgement, Explanations of abbreviations and Acronyms, Purpose and objectives of the evaluation and background information. There after the report is organised in Sections One to Four. Section One is the demographic details of those interviewed and the Executive Summary of the Report plus quotes from key informants. Section Two is Analysis and Interpretation of Key Informants and Section Three is Analysis and Interpretation of the 200 residents of Loita interviewed for the report. Section Four are recommendations and the conclusion.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:**

This exercise was a joint effort between an external development consultant and S.A.F.E. staff members in Loita and Mombasa including the Executive Director, funded by the J A Clark Charitable Trust. The Loita staff members collected the data from 200 Loita residents while the Mombasa team helped analyse the data. The Executive Director did all the logistics and drove us to and from Loita. I must admit I enjoyed working and the stay in Loita. Thank you all. May the team spirit live forever.

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1. FGM/C                | Female Genital Mutilation/Cut  |
| 2. ARP                  | Alternative Rite of Passage  |
| 3. TBA                  | Traditional Birth Attendant  |
| 4. Cut                  | Circumcised  |
| 5. Un cut               | Not circumcised  |
| 6. Kisasa               | Typically type 1 circumcision, the removal of the clitoris                             |
| 7. Traditional cut      | Typically type 2 circumcision which includes the removal of the labia and clitoris     |
| 8. Traditional chief    | A Maasai cultural position responsible for solving disputes, it is a lifelong position |
| 9. Administration chief | A government employee who implements government policies                               |

## **PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS EVALUATION: The Project**

The purpose and objectives of this exercise was to find out the following:

- If the Loita Maasai knows what SAFE Maa is doing in the area?
- What methods/approaches SAFE Maa use to stop FGM/C?
- If SAFE Maa's work on trying to stop FGM/C has had any impact
- If there are other organizations working to stop FGM/C
- Get general comments and suggestions on how best SAFE Maa can improve their approach.

## **METHODS:**

The following methods were used to collect the data: A questionnaire which was prepared and tested with input from SAFE Maa staff members. The methods were one on one interviews and focus group discussions with key informants.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Massai society is comprised of 'age sets', each set abides by rules which govern their position in society, relationships, and occupations. The age sets differ according to gender. For boys to graduate to adulthood they go through Moranism. During their time as Morans, boys learn how to become the future leaders of the community, in this respect they are protectors of the culture and strive to improve it whilst maintaining tradition. It is a private and special time for men and a cherished aspect of Maasai culture. When this stage has finished, they graduate to become Junior Elders.

Traditionally, female circumcision is an aspect of the ceremony that all girls have to go through in order to graduate to womanhood and become eligible for marriage and childbirth. Circumcision is meant to cleanse a girl. Alongside circumcision a chain, blue shuka and the pouring of water is used to complete the ceremony which is carried out by a circumciser (TBA) from the community.

This tradition has been upheld by both men and women because of the importance of marriage to a girl's family. In the Maasai society, the function of the daughter is to be married so that her family will be able to receive a dowry. Men will refuse to marry a girl if she is left uncut, depriving the family of the uncut girl of an essential income.

There are also other myths and misconceptions surrounding women who are uncut which have kept the tradition alive. Some believe that an uncut woman will be promiscuous. Some also believe that if a woman is left uncut, her clitoris will continue growing for her whole life, making it essential to remove it.

SAFE Maa began their FGM/C abandonment campaign in 2007, following the success of their highly popular HIV/AIDS awareness programme. In 2007, 100% of Loita Maasia girls were undergoing traditional, type two circumcision. Discussion on the topic was taboo and the idea that change would occur seemed impossible by the community. Indeed, when SAFE Maa male project manager approached the community elders to ask permission to begin the programme, he was laughed at, they were bemused why a man would want to get involved in something that was clearly a woman's issue.

This evaluation looks at the changing attitudes and practices of the community.

**EXTERNAL EVALUATION:**

SAFE Maa, in partnership with the J A Clark Charitable Trust, undertook an external evaluation of the SAFE Maa FGM/C abandonment programme. The results of which were to inform the team on their impact and progress thus far, as well as to help determine future strategies.

This exercise was carried out in May 2017 in Loita. Data was collected from key informants and non key informants. Data was collected from key informants through focus group discussions and one on one discussions. The key informants included: staff members of SAFE Maa (male and female SAFE Maa staff members' focus group discussions were held separately), Traditional Chief, Administrative Chief (appointed by the government), a

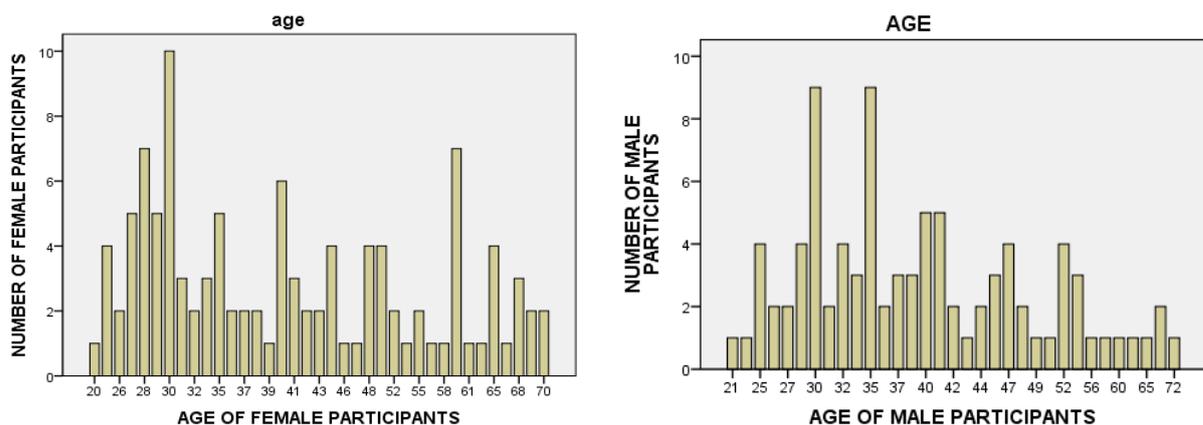
Moran who is in the performing group and his friend who wishes to join, female circumcisers, a young married couple (the girl is uncircumcised), the mother of the husband, a nurse at a local health centre, two village elders in charge of security and Rebecca (a British lady working and living in Olorte sub location area of Loita with her family and implements development projects through her organization “Red Tribe”). A total of 30 (23 Female and 7 male) key informants were interviewed by the consultant. A questionnaire was prepared with input from all staff members including the executive director of SAFE Maa (see attachment). The prepared questionnaire was administered to 200 Loita residents. Analysis of the data from key informants and non key informants informs this report.

## SECTION ONE:

### Demographic information of the non key informants:

The exercise involved interviewing male and female informants. A total of 200 people were interviewed using a prepared questionnaire (see attachment). Out of the 200 interviewed, 51% were female and 49% were male. 69% of those interviewed live in an easily accessible location while 31% live in more remote places.

### Distribution by Age:



The mean age of the female participants was 41.95 while that of the male was 39.51. The modal age for the women was 30 while that of the male was 30 and 35.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Only 1 person out of the 200 interviewed did not know what SAFE Maa said about FGM/C. Over 84% of those interviewed agree that there is an attitude change towards stopping FGM/C in Loita unlike the period before SAFE Maa started their intervention. Now people are thinking FGM/C is harmful and bad and should therefore be stopped. People are debating publically about stopping FGM/C, something some residents previously thought could never happen. Behavioural change has also taken place with a number of uncircumcised girls getting married. The Government Chief said he knew of 50 uncircumcised girls, Philip, the man who married an uncircumcised woman said he knew of three other uncircumcised girls who are still in school. The Traditional Chief has not circumcised his daughters. The nurse said, she and her family have agreed that her two

daughters should not be circumcised. Six of the ten circumcisers interviewed have stopped performing the Traditional Cut and have moved to performing “Kisasa”. These circumcisers are secretly partnering with mothers and daughters to stop FGM/C. The women believe they can stop FGM/C because they are more persuasive and patient than the men who use force. It was generally agreed that for FGM/C to stop both men and women should be involved. The Morans in particular should be sensitised to accept marrying uncircumcised girls and talk about the same in public. There have been cases of Morans marrying uncircumcised girls thinking they were circumcised and divorcing them when they find out that they are not.

90% attributed the change of attitude and behaviour to SAFE Maa. The performances in public places by SAFE Maa and SAFE Morans has helped reach out to many people and has contributed greatly to the change of both attitude and behaviour. The workshops have helped people with facts enabling them to discuss with family members, neighbours and friends the dangers of FGM/C. Other organizations trying to stop FGM/C in Loita are The Christian Churches, TASARU, Entesekera Health Centre, Entershata CBO, the government, the chiefs, school children and the Radio.

Asked when they think the Loita Maasai will stop performing FGM/C, the Key Informants gave a range of between five to 10 years. The Traditional Chief said, FGM/C will stop when all his age mates die (he was born in 1949), if more children are educated, if intermarriage takes place and is encouraged (a thing not common in Loita) and organizations like SAFE Maa should continue their work.

57% strongly agree that a woman will not be cleansed if she has not undergone FGM/C. 49% strongly disagree to the statement that if a woman is not cut she will be promiscuous. 58% agree that FGM/C harms their daughters. 42% strongly agree that women can stop FGM/C, 52% strongly agree that only men can stop FGM/C and 73% strongly agree that if the Morans demand for ARP (Alternative Rite of Passage) then people will agree. 61% strongly agree that people from their community have married uncut girls. 80% strongly agree that SAFE Maa’s approach of singing about FGM/C in Maasai songs in public places has been very effective and 84% strongly believe that change is coming in Loita.

#### **COMMUNITY FEEDBACK - QUOTES FROM KEY INFORMANTS:**

**John (A moran in the SAFE Moran Performing group):** “I will be happy to marry an uncut girl and my parents have no objection to it”

**Traditional Chief Mr. Samuel Masarie:** "After interacting with SAFE Maa, I learned the effects of FGM/C, so I changed my thinking, I used to tell people to stop FGM/C as part of my duties as a government officer but now I know why. My wife has been to SAFE Maa conferences and has also helped me to understand the effects of FGM/C”

**Mr. Samberu Siloma (A member of the Peace and Security Committee in his local community):** “SAFE Maa has made me change and not any other organisation”

**Florence Simpano (female nurse in one of the clinics):** “I was cut myself because I believed this was the correct rite of passage, now I feel as though I was wasted. I feel bad because the most important part of my body was removed”

**Rebecca Marais (British citizen who works and lives in Loita with her family):** “SAFE Maa is a “Very culturally sensitive group”

**Male SAFE Maa staff members:** “We are proud as a team because there are uncut girls and it is through our efforts.”

## **SECTION TWO:**

### **2. DETAILED ANALYSIS and INTERPRETATION OF DATA COLLECTED FROM KEY INFORMANTS:**

The consultant carried out these interviews using selected questions from the questionnaire. Methods used were focus group discussions and one on one interviews.

#### **2.1 Traditional Birth Attendants (TBA):**

A focus group discussion was held with 10 women who are traditional birth attendants (TBAs). The same women carry out circumcisions. Six of the ten said they perform “Kisasa” while four only perform the ARP. Those who are still practising “Kisasa” said they only do so if the girl insists. They said the girls are influenced by their peers and demand to be cut even after the TBA educated them about the effects. The women said things have changed a lot because of the education provided by SAFE Maa. Some of their sons have married uncut girls, however others insist on marrying a cut girl. Those who insist on marrying cut girls are influenced by their peers who have already married cut girls. Some of the TBA’s sometimes team up with mothers and the girls to secretly not cut the girl but the father is made to believe that circumcision has taken place. The girl is even taught how to walk like she is cut and stay indoors until she “heals”. They said they do this because some of the fathers insist that their daughters are cut even when the girl does not want to. Some Morans have been known to end a marriage when they realize the girl is uncut while others opt to live with it in secret. All the women interviewed said they were cut but they do not want their daughters to be cut because they have seen the effects and complications cut women experience. When a girl is cut, the pelvis does not open easily, the TBA is then forced to cut another place which they cannot stitch, a problem rarely faced by uncut girls. The women knew of other organisations like Entasekera Health Centre who are also trying to stop FGM/C. The difference they said is in the approach. A person has to go to the health centre to hear the information while SAFE Maa reaches out to the people in the different villages and events. FGM/C will not be stopped soon because of the strong culture attached to it but the women urged SAFE Maa to continue doing what they are doing and with time FGM/C will stop. The women said they had the power to stop FGM/C and they are doing it secretly because they are persistent unlike the men who like using force. The TBA/circumcisers/mothers said they

worry a lot about their daughters getting pregnant and dropping out of school. That as women they own nothing, in fact they are owned by their husband. "It is interesting to note that the women do not worry about the cut for their daughters".

**When asked to comment about the different approaches SAFE Maa uses they said the following:**

**Workshops** are good because more detailed information on FGM/C is shared. Armed with these facts the women gain confidence to answer questions and persuade girls, boys and husbands to stop FGM/C.

**One on one** offers an opportunity for a wife to share with the husband and sons and answer questions during such discussions.

**Performances (Songs and dance in Maasai language):** The Maasai love songs so this is a very effective approach. Songs and dancing is part of Maasai culture. The Maasai love to sing and dance and therefore listen to the messages from the songs. The Morans sing and dance as part of their role in the Maasai culture so to use them to pass messages with what they can do best is a great way. The women requested SAFE Maa to continue with these methods but make them more frequent to bring an end to "Kisasa" to support the women as they try to secretly stop the cut altogether.

**Traditional Chief Mr. Samuel Masarie:** Chief Samuel was born in 1949 and is chief of five Maasai clans both in Kenya and Tanzania. As a traditional chief he makes frequent travels around the Loita Maasai villages in Kenya and Tanzania to perform his duties mainly resolving disputes. Chief Samuel served as an administrative chief for 22 years employed by the government. He is retired from his government role but remains a traditional chief of the five Maasai clans for life. The chief has heard of SAFE Maa and knows that SAFE Maa creates awareness on HIV/AIDS and now works towards stopping FGM/C. SAFE Maa does this through songs and dance performed by the team.

**"After interacting with SAFE Maa, I learned the effects of FGM/C, so I changed my thinking, I used to tell people to stop FGM/C as part of my duties as a government officer but now I know why. My wife has been to SAFE Maa conferences and has also helped me to understand the effects of FGM/C"** said the former double Chief. This is a great change of attitude from a traditional chief who is one of the custodians of the Maasai culture. The chief has one uncut daughter married and the others are in the university. He said he carried out all the rituals and did a small cut on a leg for the girls to shed blood as a symbol of the cut to all his girls. It is interesting to note that the chief still has to spill blood to believe that his daughters have been cleansed. Morans who have gone to school have no problem marrying uncut girls. Chief Samuel said he knows the circumcisers, mothers and the girls sometimes team up not to perform FGM/C on the girls but hide this from the father since fathers do not inspect the girl after the traditional ceremonies. This information tallies with what the TBAs said. He does not believe that uncut women are promiscuous, he believes it was a way of promoting FGM/C. The chief said the Maasai culture will not be in any way weakened if FGM/C is totally stopped. Chief Samuel lamented that Christian churches are destroying the Maasai culture. For example, they are trying to get rid of "the Leibons" terming them as "Witch doctors" when in fact they are traditional healers. The Leibons are part of a good culture the Maasai should preserve but these days they are not given the respect they deserve.

Asked how the culture of FGM/C will be ended, the chief said this will happen when Maasai children go to school, again if all his age mates die and if there are inter marriages,

which is not common with the Maasai in Loita. FGM/C will stop if the morans agree to marry uncut girls which he said is already happening.

**Chief Francis Suguroi:** He is 40 years of age and has been a government administrator for nine years. He is implementing the anti-FGM/C government policy and is glad that SAFE Maa is doing the same. The chief has been to SAFE Maa workshops and as an administrator has also seen the negative effects of FGM/C. He has witnessed cut women who have died during delivery, deaths that could have been avoided. SAFE Maa has a good approach reaching out to the Maasai in their villages. This has contributed to the change in behaviour from the traditional cut to “Kisasa”. A great deal of Maasai have changed to “Kisasa” except the very old, the chief said. This agrees with what Chief Samuel said. Chief Francis knows a number of girls who are not cut and although it takes a long time, they eventually get married. The churches too have played a vital role in this change of behaviour.

If the chief enforces the government policy of no FGM/C, the Maasai will do the cut secretly. This statement was echoed by the Traditional Chief and the TBAs. Force will make the Maasai do the cut secretly which is not sustainable. For a permanent change, the public debates and the approaches SAFE Maa use helps the community to understand the negative effects thus end FGM/C. The Chief does not think uncut girls are promiscuous. He has four daughters and he has agreed with his wife not to cut any of them. He said that men are the final decision makers, but to stop FGM/C the decision should be from both men and women. Give FGM/C ten years and it will no longer be part of the Maasai culture. Chief Francis attributes 80% of the change to SAFE Maa’s work and 20% to churches. SAFE Maa reaches out to all people where as churches only reach their faithful. The chief did not agree that a girl is unclean when uncut.

**Samberu Siloma** is a 47 year old male and a member of the Peace and Security Committee in his local community: Samberu said he has moved to ARP. One of his uncut daughters is married to a Loita man and everybody knows the girl is uncut. **“SAFE Maa has made me change and not any other organisation”** said Samberu. Samberu said he enjoys having sex with uncut women because the woman enjoys sex too. FGM/C will end in about five to ten years, this time frame is similar to that of Chief Suguroi. Samberu attributes all the changes to the efforts of SAFE Maa.

**Florence Simpano** is a 37 year old female nurse in one of the clinics. She is a Maasai from another area but is married to a Loita Maasai. Florence thinks FGM/C will end because she knows about 50 girls in her village in Loita who are uncut. Florence attributes this change to SAFE Maa, churches and schools. **“I was cut myself because I believed this was the correct rite of passage, now I feel as though I was wasted. I feel bad because the most important part of my body was removed”** said Florence. Florence has two teenage daughters and has agreed with her husband and son and the girls themselves that they will not be cut. She says the Maasai culture will not be destroyed if girls are uncut. All rituals should be performed except the actual cutting. Florence is confident that her daughters will still be married even when they are uncut. As a nurse she has seen how easy it is for the uncut girl to give birth and is a great crusader of not cutting girls. She believes, SAFE Maa and the Full Gospel Church have played a big part in educating people against FGM/C. She also believes uncut girls are not promiscuous, this is the behaviour of

an individual and has nothing to do with a cut. Florence thinks men can stop FGM/C if they agree to marry uncut girls.

**Rebecca Marais**, is a British woman living and working in Olorte area of Loita. Rebecca through her organization “Red Tribe” implements development projects in the area. She feels that SAFE Maa is a **“Very culturally sensitive group”** such that even the traditional Maasai agree to change. She says the Churches are messing with the Maasai culture as a whole replacing it with Western culture which Rebecca feels is wrong.

**Philip and Joyce Konyati (married couple):** **Joyce** is uncut and had a huge church wedding. Joyce said she was uncut because she was trained by SAFE Maa and the Full Gospel Church. Her church going friends who are saved like her supported her. Philip, the husband of Joyce said he married an uncut girl because there is nowhere in the bible where it says girls should be cut. FGM/C he said is simply a bad culture. His decision to marry an uncut girl was influenced by SAFE Maa and his church. Philip said he knows of three uncut girls who are still in school. He is of the opinion that Morans should marry uncut girls. Many girls know FGM/C is harmful but they agree to it because they want to be married. Joyce and Philip do not mind if Joyce worked for SAFE Maa as a role model.

**Norminseyeki Anne Konyati** is 45 years old and is the mother of Philip who married Joyce the uncut girl. Anne is a widow but even the uncles of Philip agreed to the marriage. Anne used to perform the traditional cut then moved to “Kisasa” but has now stopped. She no longer does “Kisasa”. Anne wants to promote ARP because her son married an uncut girl and she is very happy about it. She has a daughter who underwent “Kisasa” and feels bad about it. It was a while ago SAFE Maa changed her thinking and practice she said.

**SAFE Maa Female Staff Members:** The female staff members are proud of the fact that women are now able to publicly speak out against FGM/C. The female staff members work closely with the women circumcisers and feel that this is the key to the achievements so far seen. One staff member was happy that three girls were not cut in her village because of her efforts. Men, women and the whole community are now openly talking about FGM/C. The ladies felt that additional methods such as drama, short plays, use of role models and films could be adopted to strengthen the efforts.

**Male SAFE Maa Staff Members:** The men feel proud that they are the pioneers and are happy they got the courage to talk about FGM/C and are the first staff members of the first organisation to talk about FGM/C successfully. They have successfully kick started the debate on FGM/C. As Loita Maasai men, it was not easy to talk about FGM/C let alone stopping it, but they are glad they got the courage. **“We are proud as a team because there are uncut girls and it is through our efforts.”** SAFE Maa work is being talked about in public meetings and some Morans are excited about joining the team. **“I was for the cut until I attended a SAFE Maa workshop and learnt of the effects”** said one of the staff members. Some staff members were afraid because they thought they would be a laughing stock among their peers. Friends thought they were mad; that they married cut girls but now want to mislead the other morans. The male staff members felt it would be good to have another group of Morans, organize exchange visits to places outside Loita where they could exchange ideas with members of other organizations that are trying to stop FGM/C. They noted that the school clubs are doing a great job because girls and boys

are involved together. A newsletter could be started and students could write essays that get published in this newsletter. The newsletter could then be circulated in all the schools and winners recognised annually.

**John**, part of SAFE Moran feels that FGM/C is spoiling the girls for no reason at all. When they started singing and dancing in public places other morans laughed at them but are now glad to be associated with them. **“I will be happy to marry an uncut girl and my parents have no objection to it”** said John. John was accompanied by a young Moran who wants to be in the singing and dancing group.

## SECTION THREE:

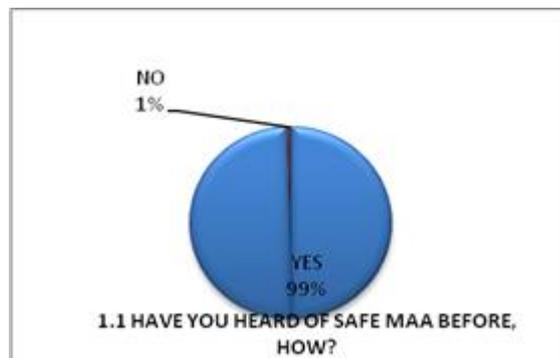
### DETAILED ANALYSIS and ENTERPRETATION OF DATA COLLECTED FROM NON KEY INFORMANTS:

The questionnaire was divided into three main sections. Section one was from 1.1 to 1.15, section two from 2.1 to 2.10 and section three is a stand alone. 200 non key informants were interviewed using this questionnaire.

Below is the analysis and interpretation of the data collected using the questionnaire. The data is analysed and interpreted question by question:

#### Section 1:

##### Question: 1.1 “Have you heard of SAFE Maa before?”:



99% of those interviewed have heard of SAFE Maa. This means SAFE Maa has become a household name in Loita and has made its mark which will not be forgotten for many generations to come. SAFE Maa is not a stranger anymore and can confidently focus on how best to stop FGM/C in Loita.

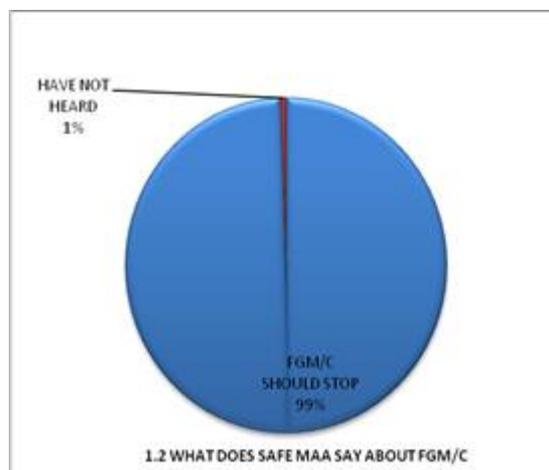
### 1.1 “Have you heard of SAFE Maa before? How?”:



The vast majority have heard of SAFE Maa through performances. 67.5%, 57% and 53% have heard of SAFE Maa through one on one discussion, friends or family and workshops respectively. Almost all the interviewed people have heard of SAFE Maa through more than one means.

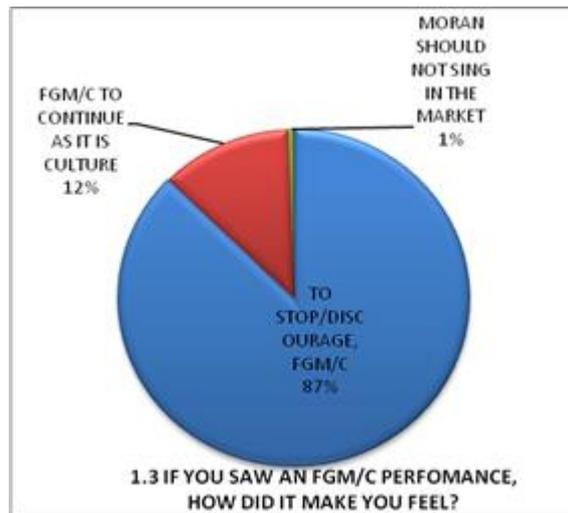
The SAFE Maa team performances are the main mode of how SAFE Maa reaches out to the community. From this analysis it shows that this method reaches out to a majority of the people. Performances should therefore be enhanced and performed more frequently in all the villages in Loita. Perhaps more dancing groups can be brought on board to increase performances at different places. SAFE Maa should continue organizing workshops and invite key stakeholders who are able to convince every Loita Maasai to stop cutting their daughters. Workshops offer an opportunity to share in depth information on the effects of FGM/C. Each “ambassador” from a workshop can prepare a plan on how they will target individuals and families to discuss one on one what they have learned from the workshop. Performance, Workshops and One on One should never be abandoned even if new methods are adopted because they have proven that through them many people in Loita have been reached.

### Question: 1.2 “What does SAFE Maa say about FGM/C?”:



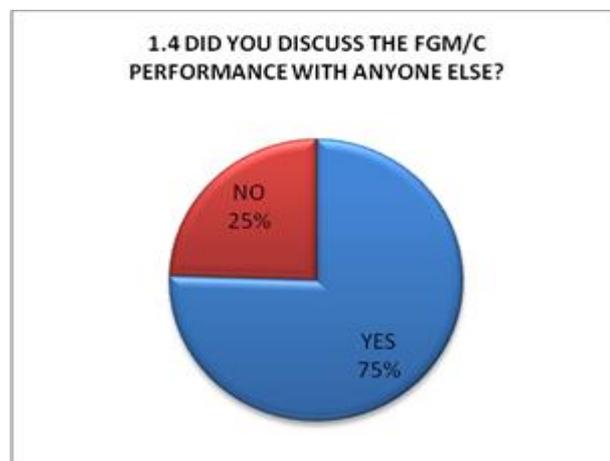
All except one of the interviewees have heard SAFE MAA say FGM/C should stop. This implies that almost everybody in Loita has heard what SAFE Maa is advocating for mainly to stop FGM/C. The level of knowledge of what SAFE Maa is advocating for in the community is very high. SAFE Maa should now concentrate on moving people from knowledge level to behavioural change, that is not performing FGM/C on girls, the ultimate goal of SAFE Maa.

**Question: 1.3 “If you saw an FGM/C performance how did it make you feel?”:**



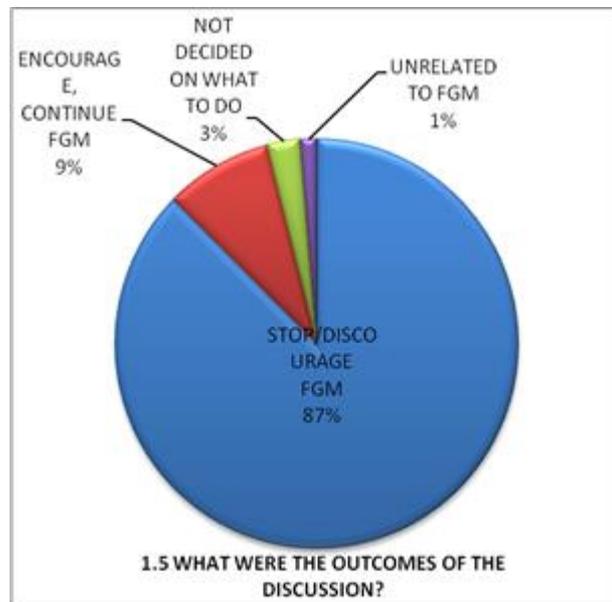
87% were of the opinion that FGM/C should stop after watching a SAFE Maa performance as compared to only 12% who still felt FGM/C should continue. 1% felt performances should not be done at market places. SAFE Maa has to come up with alternative ways of how to reach out to the 12% who have not been convinced by performances. Perhaps one on one discussions and workshops could be enhanced to bridge this gap. SAFE Maa could also think of other methods. Staff members interviewed suggested some additional methods: Exchange visits by the staff members, films and introduction of a newsletter in the schools. If funds permit some of these methods could be implemented.

**Question: 1.4 “Did you discuss the FGM/C performance with anyone else?”:**



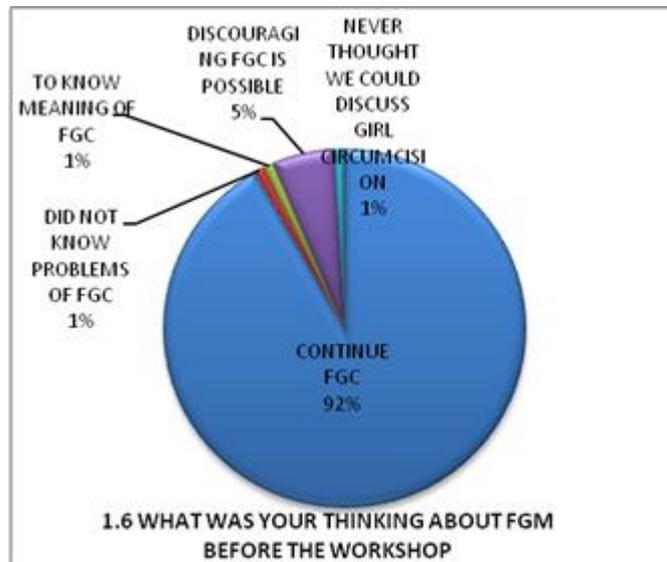
The fact that 75% discussed with others after watching a performance shows that performances interest the viewers a lot and are prompted to share. This is an added advantage to SAFE Maa because the message gets to be spread to more people after each performance. Perhaps this is why a large portion of the group interviewed has heard about SAFE Maa and knows what SAFE Maa is advocating for. SAFE Maa could urge people to share the information after every performance. For example, after every performance one Moran could have a chorus saying "Usinyamaze, ambia wenzako vile ulivyo ona na kusikia kutoka kwetu leo" (do not be silent, share what you have seen and heard from us today). This will be said in the Maasai language of course. This deliberate effort could perhaps encourage the 25% who did not share to do so.

**Question: 1.5 "What were the outcomes of the discussion":**



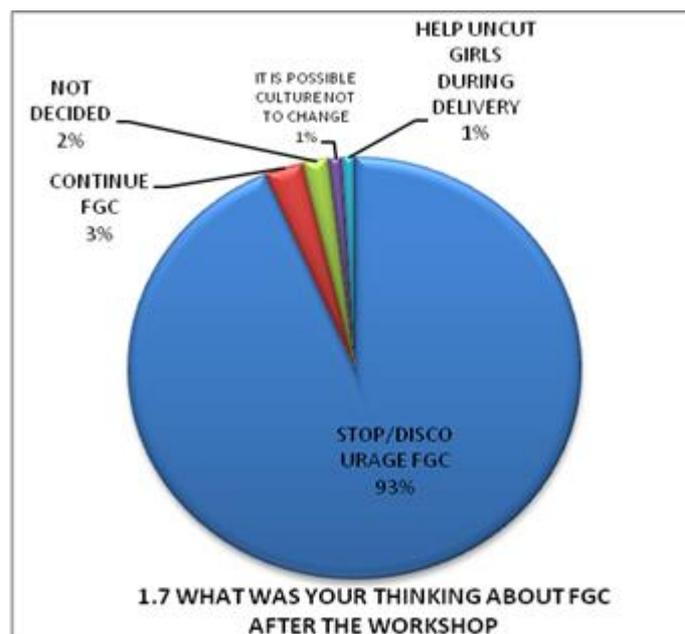
After discussing performances with others only 9% still felt FGM/C should continue, 3% were not decided, and 1% discussed issues not related to FGM/C but 87% were of the opinion that FGM/C should stop. This is a great shift of attitude from FGM/C should continue to FGM/C should stop. The change of attitude came about after watching performances, a great indication that performances are an effective way of reaching out to the Loita Maasai and is greatly shifting attitude from Yes to FGM/C to No FGM/C and enabling the people to talk about stopping FGM/C; something that some people thought could never happen. SAFE Maa should however, not ignore the 9% who still felt FGM/C should continue. More performances and other methods should be done to change this thought.

**Question: 1.6 “If you attended a workshop what was your thinking about FGM/C before the workshop”:**



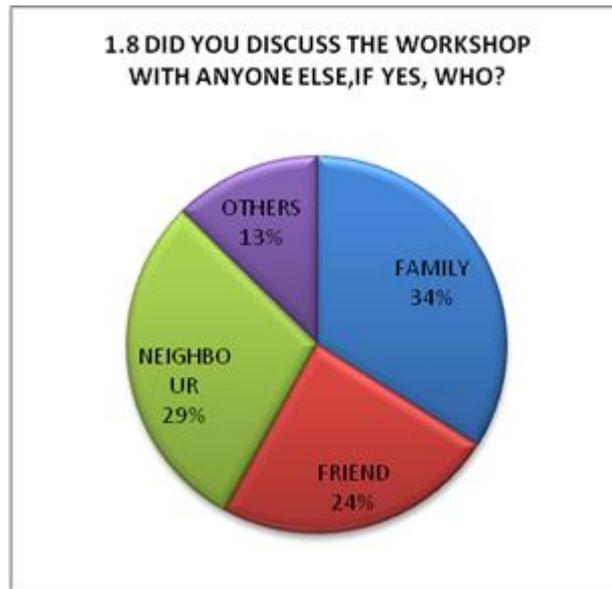
54% said they had attended a workshop while 46% said they have not. More workshops could be organised in more different villages as a measure of reaching out to more people. Before workshops 92% thought FGM/C should continue, after workshop 93% thought FGM/C should stop. Workshops have proven to greatly change attitudes of many. This is perhaps because in workshops in depth information is shared and discussed. These workshops also are a platform where discussions on ending FGM/C are triggered. For the workshops to have trickle down effects, each workshop participant could be made to come up with a plan of how they would share what they have learned from the workshop.

**1.7 “What was your thinking about FGM/C after the workshop?”:**



Even after workshops, 3% felt FMG/C should continue. 2% were undecided while 1% felt it was impossible to change that cultural practise and the other 1% just wanted the uncut girls to be helped during delivery as they are sometimes abandoned by elder women if they are known to be uncut. SAFE Maa has done a great job changing the attitude of the 93% through workshops; however, they should use other strategies to convince the unconvinced. This is because those unconvinced could influence others and delay the process of change.

**Question: 1.8 “Did you discuss the workshop with anyone else if yes, who?”:**



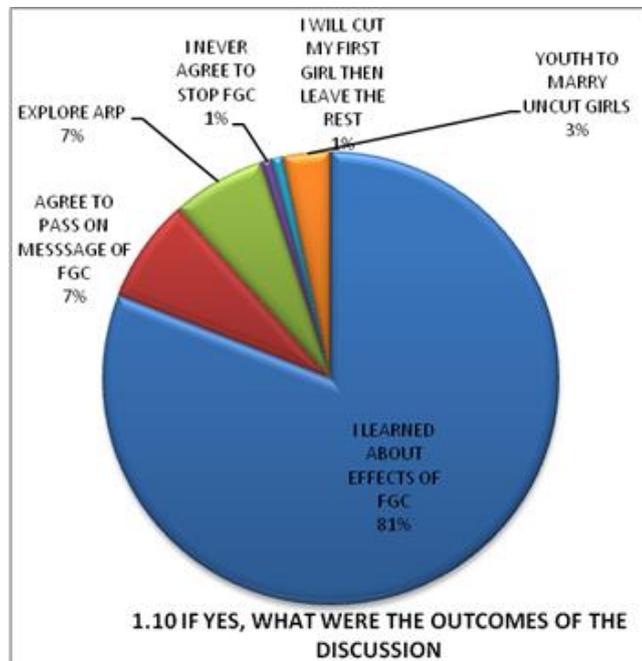
34% discussed the workshop with family members, 29% with neighbours, 24% with friends and 13% discussed with others. More workshop participants feel confident to discuss the workshop mainly with family members, neighbours and friends. At least however everybody did discuss it with somebody. This is a good way of reaching out to those who did not participate in the workshops. The trickle down of information is essential to convince all Maasai in Loita to stop FGM/C. A deliberate effort could be made during workshops to promote the spreading of information, to encourage participants to discuss the issue with as many people as possible.

**1.9 “Have you ever met with a SAFE Maa member to discuss FGM/C?”:**



63% of those interviewed have met with a SAFE Maa member of staff and had a one on one discussion on FGM/C, while 37% have not. 37% however is high. Plans and organized efforts to carry out one on one discussions should be put in place. Staff members and volunteers could come up with a day or two in a week where they walk around the villages discussing with individuals. As part of a workshop, one day could be spent by participants walking around sharing the acquired information. After a performance, the Morans could also take time to share on one on one what they have been performing about.

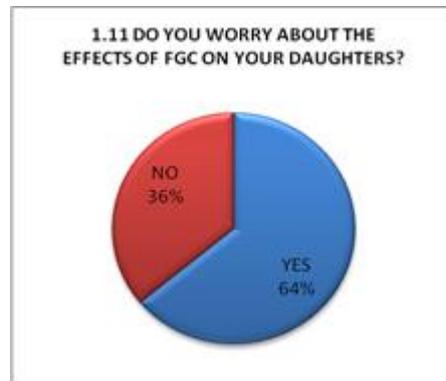
**1.10 “If yes, what were the outcomes of the discussions”:**



81% learned about the effects of FGM/C, things that they did not know before. 7% agreed to explore ARP. 3% felt that if the Morans (young men) agreed to marry uncut girls, FGM/C would stop. It is good therefore that SAFE Maa is using the Morans to perform in public and to say they are ready to marry uncut girls. If this continues to happen, then the whole community will agree with time. 7% agreed to share the information with others. A

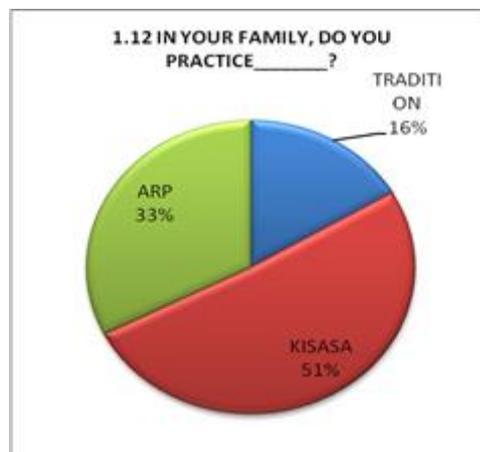
change of attitude takes time and always there will be those who take longer to change. SAFE Maa is not done yet until FGM/C becomes history in the Loita Maasai.

**1.11 “Do you worry about the effects of FGM/C on your daughters?”:**



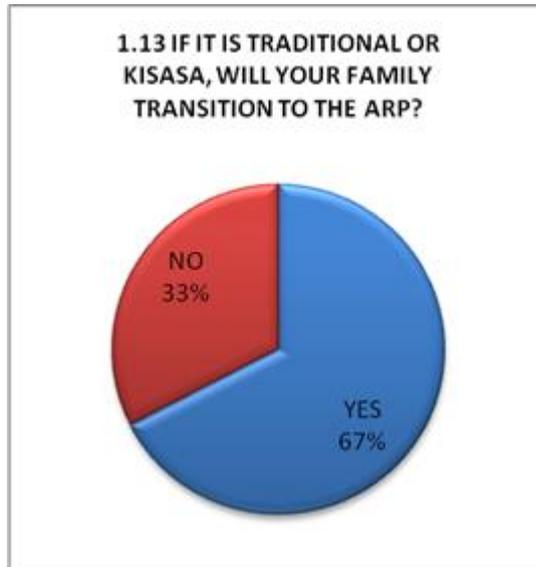
36% said they did not worry about effects of FGM/C. This may be because they have already decided not to cut their daughters, or their daughters have already been cut or because they do not have daughters. However, this 36% could also indicate that those who have moved from the traditional cut to “kisasa”, no longer worry about the effects as they believe there is no danger in practicing “kisasa”. This means that more needs to be done to sensitise of the community on the benefits of the ARP over “kisasa”.

**1.12 “In your family, do you practice traditional, “kisasa” or ARP (Alternative Rite of Passage)?”:**



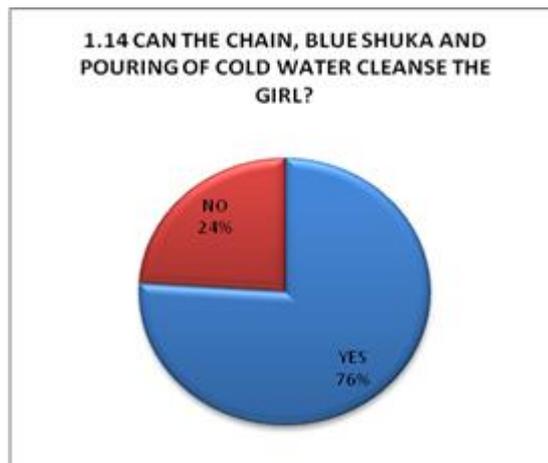
51% practise “kisasa” and 16% still practise the traditional cut. This comes to 67% who still cut compared to 33% who have stopped cutting and are now practising the ARP. While it is great that 33% have stopped cutting, it is still low compared to the 67% that still cut (16% traditional and 51% “kisasa”). It is a good success story of a good behavioural change that more of those interviewed 51% are now doing “kisasa” however, FGM/C is still mutilation even when it is “kisasa”. The change of behaviour has nevertheless started. SAFE Maa can now focus on how to convince these 51% and the 16% who are performing the traditional cut to shift to ARP. Behavioural change just like that of attitude takes time to change.

**1.13 “If it is traditional or “kisasa” will your family transition to the ARP?”:**



67% performing Traditional and “Kisasa” have said YES to transition to ARP. The challenge to SAFE Maa is how to move the YES into action. It is often easy to say YES to something, but to take action is another thing all together. SAFE Maa should now stress on ACTION. The YES should translate to behaviour change of cutting to ARP. SAFE Maa should also work closely with the 33% who said they will not by coming up with strategies to convince them to also say YES and translate the YES into practising ARP. That is the purpose and goal of SAFE Maa.

**1.14 “Can the chain, blue shuka and pouring of cold water cleanse the girl?”:**

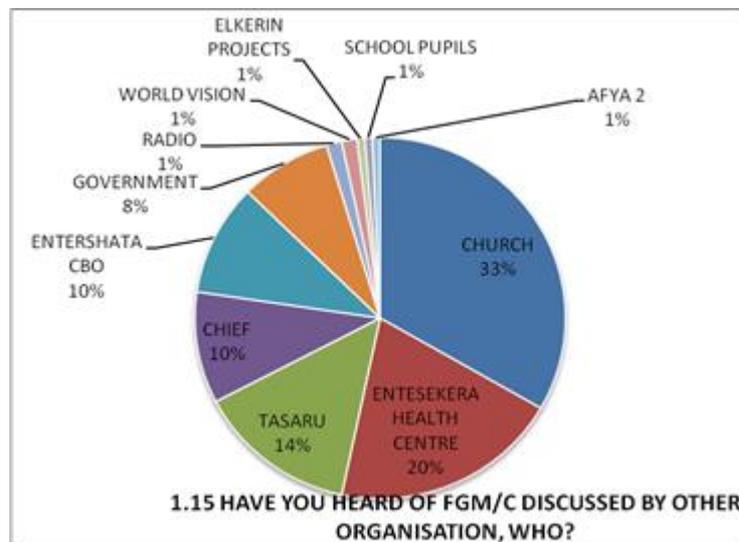


The chain, blue shuka and pouring of water are the all part of the traditional ceremony that sees a girl graduate into adulthood, in addition to circumcision. This is very interesting that 76% are saying the chain, blue shuka and pouring of cold water alone are enough to cleanse a girl. These 76% are in a sense saying the ARP symbolizes a cut and they do accept it instead of cutting their daughters.

**1.15 “Have you Heard of FGM/C discussed by other organisations”:**



Other organizations are also working with the Loita community to stop FGM/C this is why at least 57% have heard the issue discussed by other organizations other than SAFE Maa. These organizations/ individual’s efforts are however limited given that 43% have not heard from them, compared to only 1% not having heard of SAFE Maa.



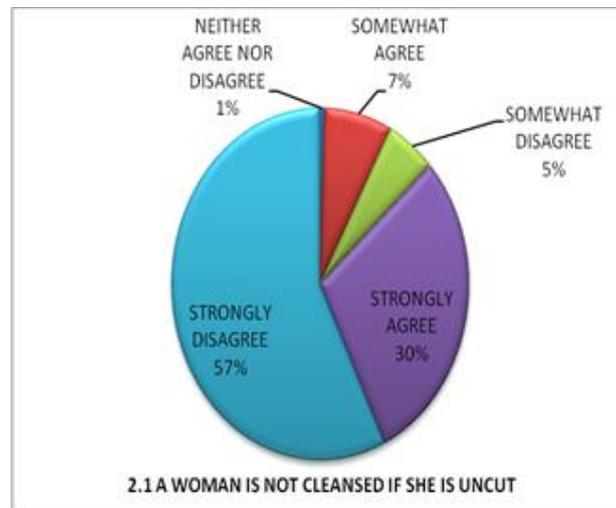
The major players are: Christian churches, Entesekera health centre, TASARU, and Entershata CBO and Chief. Other players include Government, World Vision, Elkerin projects, school pupils and radio. Radio programmes if funds permit could be used to reach out to more. School children do share information on FGM/C. Since these are the upcoming adults and future custodians of the Maasai Culture, it would be great to find ways of how to deliberately reach them in large numbers through the “Stop FGM/C” clubs in all schools where students are educated and become ambassadors to reach out to other children and even adults especially their parents. 10% have heard from Chiefs (government officers). It means the chiefs have been very active educating the Masaai to stop cutting their daughters. Perhaps they talk about FGM/C during public meetings

“Barazas”. It is a great thing that SAFE Maa is already working closely with these chiefs including even the Traditional Chief. SAFE Maa could come to an agreement with the chiefs that the chiefs talk about FGM/C at every Baraza and where possible to also invite a SAFE Maa member. Perhaps those who said they have been convinced and will stop FGM/C were also as results of the additional efforts by these organizations. Since SAFE Maa is one of the largest players in the bid to convince the Loita Maasai to stop FGM/C, partnerships could be formed. All the players could come up with strategies of how to jointly stop FGM/C. The young man I interviewed who married an uncut girl said his decision was partly contributed by their church. The uncut girl and the mother in law said the same thing. The couple and the mother in law are saved Christians. The challenge with the faith based organizations is that they tend to term everything the Maasai does as a sin and left alone could destroy the uniqueness of the Maasai culture. The need therefore for combined efforts is essential. Combined efforts will increase the number reached and at the same time avoid destroying the good side of the Maasai culture.

**Section 2:**

Statements were written down and the person being interviewed had to respond by saying: “Strongly Agree, somewhat agree, strongly disagree, somewhat disagree or neither agree nor disagree. The statements checked knowledge, attitude and behaviour change. Below is a detailed analysis and interpretation of each question.

**Question: 2.1 “A woman is not cleansed if she is uncut”:**



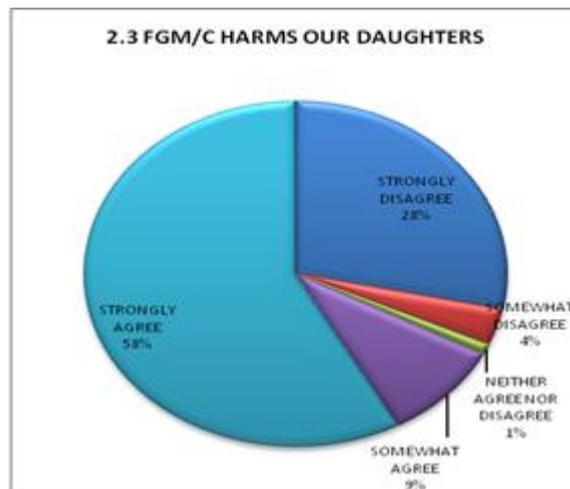
**“A woman is not cleansed if she is uncut”:** 57% Strongly Disagree to this statement. This plus the 5% who somewhat disagree brings the percentage to 62% of those who disagree. This is a good percentage and shows a positive change of attitude. Before SAFE Maa’s intervention, a bigger percentage would strongly agree to this statement. SAFE Maa should however note that 30% of those interviewed strongly agree. 30% plus the 7% who somewhat agree brings the total to 37%. This is a high percentage to ignore. Attitude change takes time and SAFE Maa should thus not tire of putting extra efforts and strategies to bring this percentage down.

**Question: 2.2 “A woman will be promiscuous if she is uncut:**



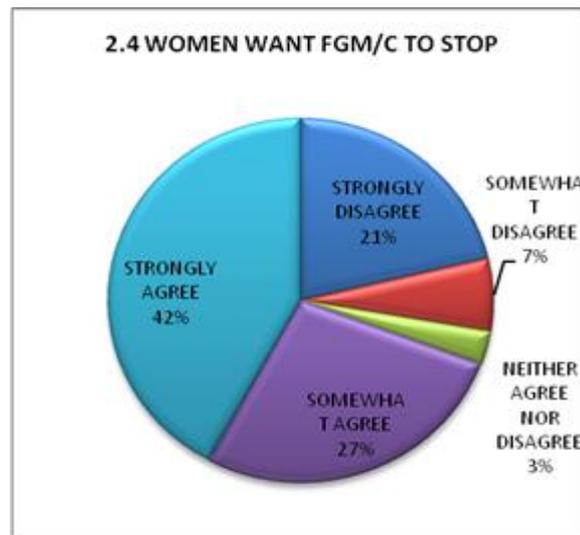
**“A woman will be promiscuous if she is uncut”:** 49% strongly disagree and 2% somewhat disagree, bringing the total of 51% of those who disagree. 35% of those asked do strongly and somewhat agree to this question. To convince them otherwise will take time just like with any attitudinal change. Some of the key informants interviewed said even a lot of the cut women are promiscuous, that this is an individual’s behaviour and has nothing to do with either being cut or not. Men use this propaganda to control women and also to advocate for the cut. This is one of the gender imbalances in the Maasai culture. It is also interesting to see that almost half of those interviewed do not agree to the statement indicating a move toward a change of attitude which can easily be move to a behavioural change.

**Question: 2.3 “FGM/C harms our daughters”:**



**“FGM/C harms our daughters”** 58% strongly agree and 9% somewhat agree. 28% strongly disagree and 4% somewhat disagree. They may have possibly disagreed because they don’t plan to cut their daughters or have no daughters or maybe they did not understand the question. The responses to this question match the responses to question 1.11 ‘Do you worry about the effects of FGM/C on your daughters?’

**Question: 2.4 “Women want FGM/C to stop”:**



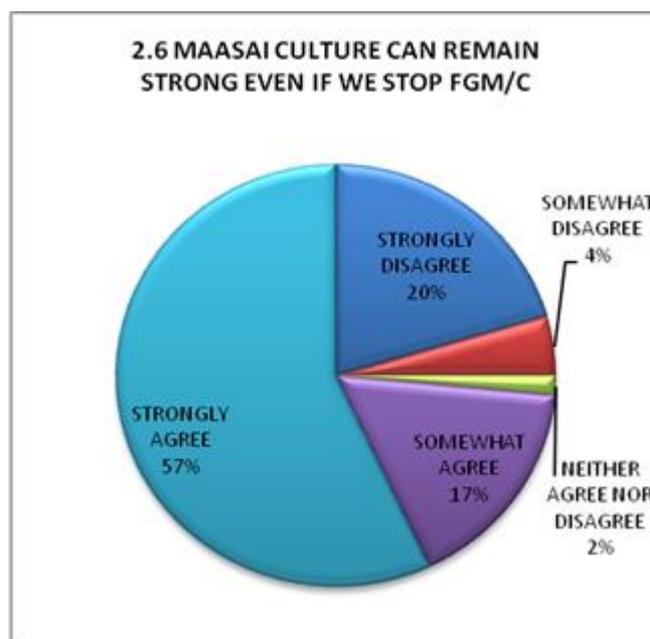
42% strongly agree that women want FGM/C to stop and 27% somewhat agree. The women live with the effects of FGM/C and have firsthand experience. Some of the TBA’s who are also circumcisers said they have stopped performing even “Kisasa” while others are secretly not performing any cut. The Traditional Chief knows the secret battle the women are waging against FGM. However, 21% strongly disagree and 7% somewhat disagree that women want FGM/C to stop. This totals to 28% (56 people out of 200) those that disagree. It is surprising to note that, among these 28% who disagree, 54% (30 people) of them are women and 46% (26 people) are men. Some girls due to peer pressure demand to be cut. While others are forced by parents because the parents fear that if the daughter is uncut she will not get married. An unmarried woman is not respected in the Maasai community. A cut and a marriage is the pride of every Maasai woman, so the Maasai women have been made to believe. Good marriage prospects attract dowry (wealth) to the girl/women’s family and any parent of a daughter would do anything to get their daughter married. This explains why a number of people still disagree to the statement that women want to stop FGM/C. The secret efforts by the traditional birth attends have not been noticed by all until they become public.

**Question: 2.5 “I believe change is coming”**



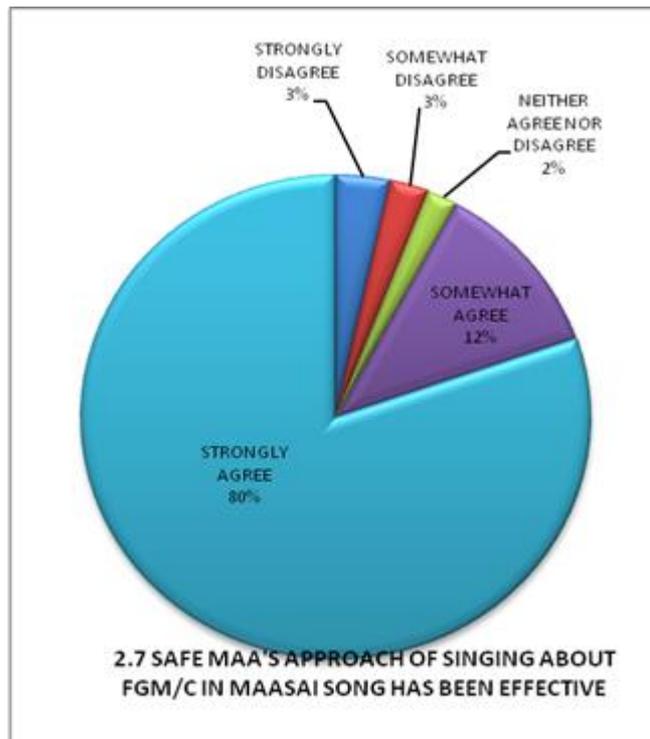
A wind of change is coming in Loita and that is why 84% strongly agree to the statement, 6% somewhat agree and only 6% strongly disagree and 2% somewhat disagree while only 2% neither agree nor disagree. It is of a great importance that many have realized there is a wave of change coming. It is a little easier to convince someone who knows a change is happening. A change in attitude towards FGM/C is being noticed by a large number of people in Loita. Some Maasai have already changed their behaviour and have stopped cutting their daughters, young men are publically saying they are ready to marry an uncut girl with some already married to an uncut girl through huge public church weddings with support from the parents and other members of the community. Now the Maasai are mainly talking about the Kisasa having transitioned from the traditional cut, a few have transitioned to ARP. A change of attitude and behaviour is taking place.

**Question: 2.6 “Maasai culture can remain strong even if we stop FGM/C”:**



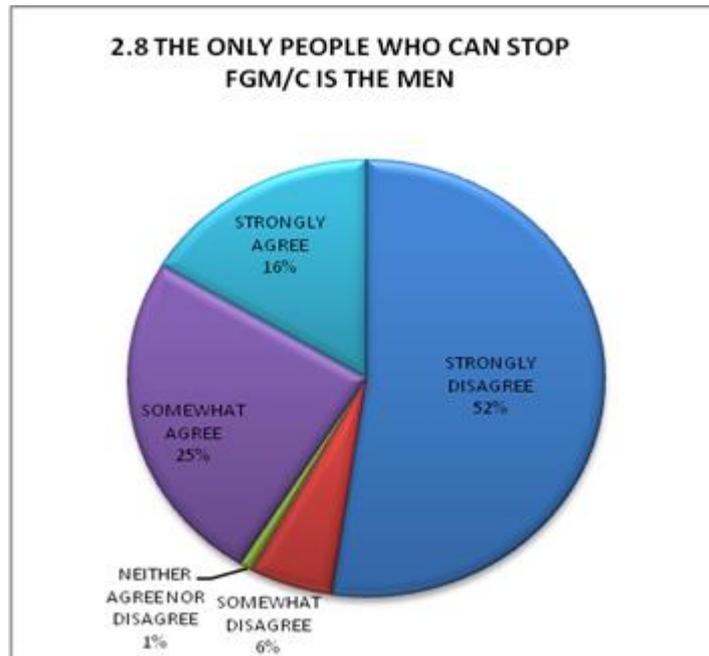
57% strongly agree, 17% somewhat agree and only 20% strongly disagree and 4% somewhat disagree. This is a strong indicator that the Loita Maasai accepts the fact that stopping the cut will not in any way compromise their strong cultural heritage. It all points out to a change of attitude, confirming that culture is dynamic.

**Question: 2.7 “SAFE Maa’s approach of singing about FGM/C in Maasai song has been effective”:**



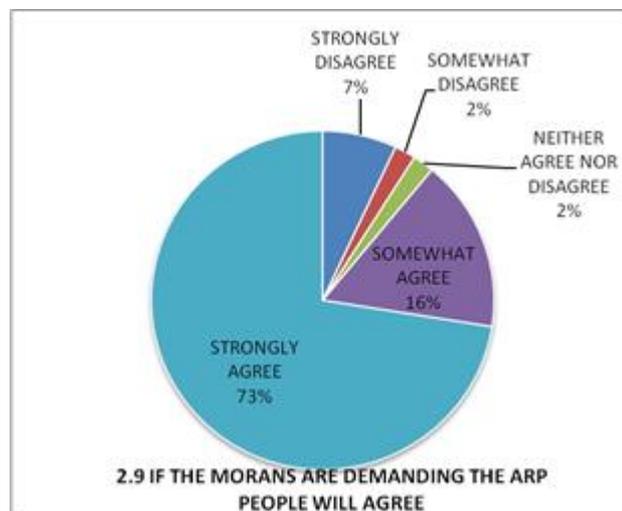
80% strongly agree to this statement. 12% somewhat agree. This means SAFE Maa’s approach of performances (Maasai songs and dances in public places by the team) is a great effective approach for SAFE Maa to have come up with. It is an approach that has been accepted by many and has helped to change a lot of people’s attitude and behaviour. Some of those interviewed said, SAFE Maa is a culturally conscious organization, others attribute the change of attitude and behaviour achieved so far mainly to SAFE Maa. The birth attendants said the Maasai love to sing and dance so for SAFE Maa to use the Morans to perform is the best way to reach the heart of many of the Maasai.

**Question: 2.8 “The only people who can stop FGM/C are the men”:**



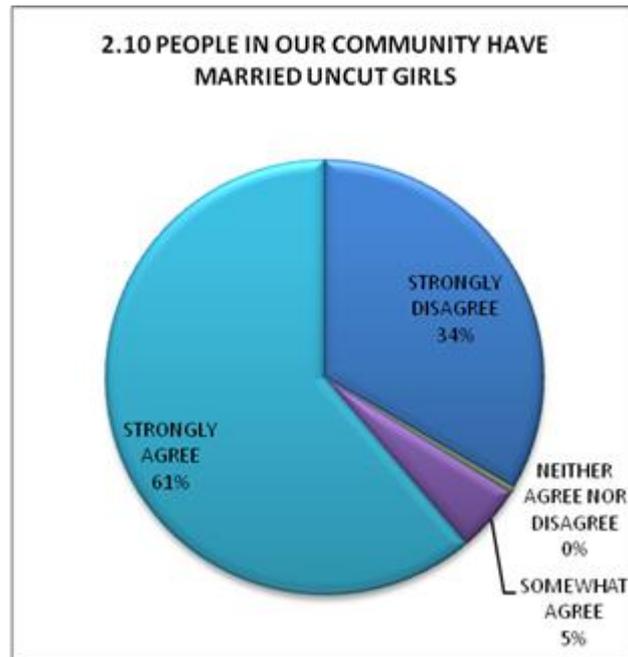
52% strongly disagree that only the men can stop FGM/C, but still 16% agree to this statement and 25% somewhat agree. This only shows that all people in Loita should be targeted: the women, men, morans, children in school, both traditional and government leaders. All should be involved to stop FGM/C. In as much as the men seem to be the custodians of the Maasai culture, they alone cannot stop FGM/C, in fact some of the women (circumcisers) through a focus group discussion said they can stop FGM/C and they have been doing that in collaboration with the mothers and the girls. The father who cannot inspect the girl is made to believe the daughter has been cut. The daughter is even taught on how to walk like she is in pain and spend days to “heal” to convince the father that indeed she has been cut.

**Question: 2.9 “If the Morans are demanding for ARP, people will agree”:**



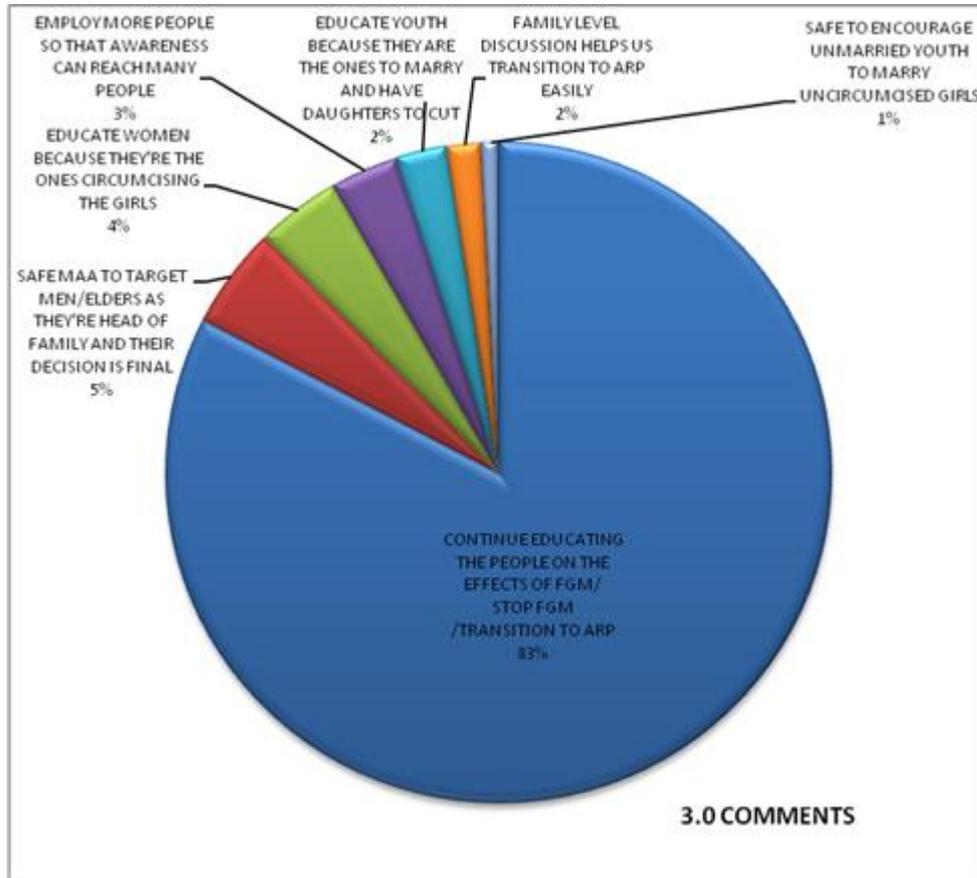
73% strongly agree and 16% somewhat agree to this statement. 7% strongly disagree and 2% somewhat agree. This translates to the fact that Morans have an upper hand to stop FGM/C perhaps this is because, the women are cut so as to be married, if the morans agree to marry uncut girls, the pressure for the cut from parents will reduce because their daughters will get married anyway. This also shows marriage is a strong institution in the Maasai life and parents would go to any length to get their daughters married.

**Question: 2.10 “People in our community have married uncut girls”:**



The fruits of SAFE Maa’s efforts are witnessed when 61% strongly agree, 5% somewhat agree. People know of uncut girls who are married even those not cut in secret. A wave of change is going on and people know about it even though they might not agree to it. “If you do not change with time, time will change you” people say.

**Question 3: “Any other comments”:**



This question was mainly to collect views and comments of those interviewed. These details will help SAFE Maa on how to enrich their approaches and implementation plans. The diagram below gives all the comments. 83% urge SAFE Maa to continue education people on the effects of FGM/C.

## SECTION FOUR:

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

From this exercise it is evident that SAFE Maa has achieved a lot. To finalize the “Journey” a few things need to be put in place or enhanced:

The choice of approaches is good and has been accepted by all. It has also proven to be successful. What needs to be done is to enhance each approach. Create more Moran groups to sing and dance in different villages including those in deep rural areas. In a rural village, morans from that area could be trained and then go back to perform but be monitored once in a while. This will reduce travelling costs and the morans will be performing at home. After each performance the Morans could spend time talking to individuals. They could also end the show by urging people to share what they have heard and seen during the performance.

Organize frequent workshops: Workshops can be time consuming, however have proven to be one of the best methods to share facts on effects of FGM/C. All workshop participants could come up with plans on how they will reach others. This is a deliberate effort to encourage one on one discussion and to make workshop participants strong ambassadors of change.

Some of the additional approaches stated by the staff members should be adopted. A newsletter and public recognizing efforts of the children who write good essays on stopping FGM/C is a great approach. This approach will play two roles: One it will encourage children to not to drop out of school. Then two, the children are the adults of tomorrow, and will be playing a great role in stopping FGM.

Exchange visits of staff members and some community members could be organized. It will motivate staff members to perform even better while the community members will feel proud and support the efforts to stop FGM/C. (Exchange visit mean identifying other organizations in other Maasai areas and visiting these organizations and holding talks with the staff members, this way SAFE Maa staff members will learn from others and they too share their experiences).

The need to work with all partners in Loita should be initiated. Individuals like Dr. Maria, organizations such as the clinics and World Vision could be brought together for dialogue meetings. This will not only lead to a common understanding of what not to stop thus preserving the rich cultural heritage but will also bring the players together as a team and support each other. “Together We Can”. Division will only prolong the process of change.

Community members who have transitioned to ARP could be used as role models and ambassadors of change. Joyce and Philip the husband have no objection to this. The Traditional Chief and others could become ambassadors of change. Some Morans, apart from those in the performance group could be enrolled to engage in a different approach like the One on One.

SAFE Maa could build a small guest house and encourage outsiders to visit Loita. These visitors should pay for staying in the guest house and a cultural exchange with the Maasai. Funds realized from these activities could cover some of the costs incurred by SAFE Maa. This will reduce donor dependence and hence make SAFE Maa move towards sustainability. The guest house and cultural visits will create jobs to some of the youth in Loita.

**CONCLUSION:** SAFE Maa is doing a great job.

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**PHOTOS:**



**Photo 1:** John, a Maasai Moran in the Performing group



**Photo 2:** Government Chief Francis Suguroi left and Margaret on the right.



**Photo 3:** Traditional Chief Mr. Samuel Masarie on the right