“The Fire Is Coming”
Maasai HIV Education Video
Using Cultural Wisdom for Behavioral Change

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Utilizes culturally relevant stories, songs, analogies, proverbs, and elders that speak of Maasai cultural wisdom.

Presents familiar scenes, themes, and sounds that appeal to the target audience.

Use of unscripted orators and actors familiar with the relevant themes.

Created in partnership with community-based organization that was highly-motivated to bring HIV prevention messages to their people.

In their words…”If we do nothing, HIV will wipe us out.”
Challenging Social Norms that Put Maasai at Risk for HIV

- Young men circumcised with a common blade
- Warrior identity includes sexual promiscuity
- Sexual initiation of pre-pubescent and early pubescent girls as necessary for sexual maturation and marriageability
- Female circumcision with early marriage to older man
- Polygamous marriage as norm
- Ongoing “secret” sexual partnerships between married women and warrior boyfriends
- Offering of sexual hospitality to male visitors
- Multiple concurrent sexual partnerships
- Sexual relations within marriage focused on reproduction
Embracing Social Norms that Build Community Solutions

• Maasai shared wisdom through storytelling, songs, and proverbs. There are stories that nearly all Maasai know.
• Maasai are very proud of their tribal identity and are highly motivated to save their people and traditions.
• Maasai are collective rather than individual decision makers. Elders in the community and family determine what will be done.
• Maasai decision-making is lasting and definitive.
• Maasai are great orators.
• Maasai elders love to speak to “their” people.
Methodology

• Based on the underlying “Freirian” principle that people are motivated to undertake behavior change when they, themselves, identify the problem, contrive, and self-impose the solutions.

• Identification of the cultural behavior change process for the Maasai. A modified Precaution Adoption Process Model created a foundation for the SBCC tool.
Precaution Adoption Process Model (PARM)
Stages of Change Continuum

1. UNAWARE
2. AWARE but UNENGAGED
3. CONCERNED but UNDECIDED
4. DECISION to ACT
5. ACTING
6. MAINTAINENCE
Precaution Adoption Process Model (PARM)
Stages of Change Continuum (Modified)

1. UNAWARE
2. AWARE but UNENGAGED
3. CONCERNED but UNDECIDED
4. DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION
5. DECISION to ACT
6. DISSEMINATION OF DECISION
7. ENFORCEMENT/MAINTENANCE
Methodology

• Searched for cultural stories that “spoke” to the identified and current “step” in the behavior change continuum.

• Located respected elders and political leaders that could speak to “their people”.

• Dramatized ”spread” of HIV as typical within the Maasai community

• Created a cultural analogy to explain the effect of HIV on the body.

• Preparation of a post-video discussion that facilitated the need to act.
Post-Video Discussion

"Now that we know...what are we going to do?"

- Training for Facilitators
- Discussion guides that lead to community conversations, with particular focus on decision making for the protection of the family and community
- SHOWD questions for discussion
  - What did you See?
  - What was Happening?
  - Does it happen in Our place?
  - What will we do about it?
  - What will happen if we Don’t do anything?

- HIV counseling and testing offered when possible
Results showed significant differences between the HIV-related:

- Knowledge ($t[12]=1.85$, $p > 0.05$),
- Attitudes ($t[16]=2.77$, $p>0.05$),
- Practices ($t[8]=2.89$, $p<0.05$)

In the program area as compared to the comparison community.
Thank You!

Please feel free to contact me at holly.freitas@efca.org!