



# **SUNGO**

## **Community Consultations on proposed key legislation**

**Constitution, land and titles, judicature**

**25 May to 15 October 2020**

**Funded by Oxfam in the Pacific**



**RAISING PACIFIC VOICES**

REINFORCING PACIFIC CIVIL SOCIETY

## **Acknowledgements**

SUNGO wishes to acknowledge the support of Oxfam in providing invaluable funding to carry out a series of forums across Samoa related to legislation of key interest to civil society in Samoa

### **List of acronyms used in the report**

EC Executive Council SUNGO (Board)  
CEO Chief Executive Officer SUNGO  
CBC Capacity Building Coordinator  
ICO Information and Communications Officer  
RO Research Officer  
AO Administration Officer  
FO Finance Officer  
PA Programme Assistant  
AAO Administrative Assistant



**Consultation Meeting**

## 1: Convening SUNGO CSO Forums

### Objective:

The purpose of the consultation forums that were conducted by the Samoa Umbrella for Non-Governmental Organizations was to present the people of Samoa (represented by the 16 districts selected) with the understanding and evidence of how the three amendment bills proposed by government will affect their human rights, cultural values, and life in the future. In respect to human rights and the importance of voicing the opinion of individuals, SUNGO provided the opportunity for the people of Samoa to express their views regarding the three amendment bills and to identify whether they support or oppose the legislation.. The statistics collected from these consultation forums will help SUNGO draft a proposal to the Government of Samoa based on the collective community view. It is SUNGO's responsibility to advocate to the government in accordance to the voice of the community.

The Oxfam Report proposed that SUNGO host one forum with 100 participants to discuss issues of concern especially in relation to pending legislation.

### Action taken

Given the significance of the three amendment bills proposed by the Government in relation to the constitution, lands and titles court, and judicature, this objective was seen as high priority by the Executive Council. In order to consult widely across Samoa, activity was expanded from one forum to a series of sixteen forums held in both Upolu and Savai'i. SUNGO managed to cover sixteen districts involving ten on Upolu, five on Savai'i, one on the island of Manono. Through these sixteen forums, a total of 1116 people attended.

Island	Male	Female	Not known	Total
Upolu	272	266	136	674
Savai'i	215	101	2	318
Manono	73	49	2	124
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>1116</b>

Those attending were given the opportunity to express their opinions about the three amendment bills without any influence from SUNGO members. As depicted in the analysis most people rejected the bills because they believe this legislation would put their families and heritage in jeopardy. For example, family members would end up fighting for a matai title under the influence of other people who were not direct descendants of a matai title. Serious concern was raised about the real motive and political intent behind these amendment bills.

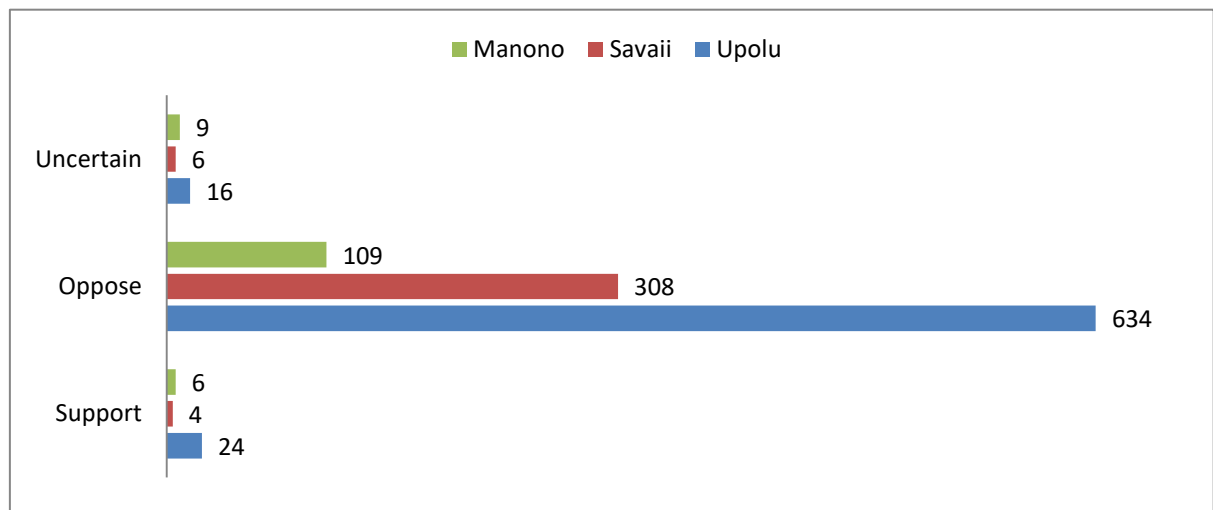
The views of those attending were obtained via a questionnaire in which the two options provided were to tick the box for either 'Agree with the amendments' or 'Disagree with the amendments'. The same form included a question to participants whether they support the work of SUNGO. The general observation supported by the data and analysis, was that more than 94% of people rejected the amendment bills. Everyone who participated was very supportive of this SUNGO initiative and understood the repercussions of these bills for Samoan families.

## 2: Analysis of the SUNGO Community Consultations

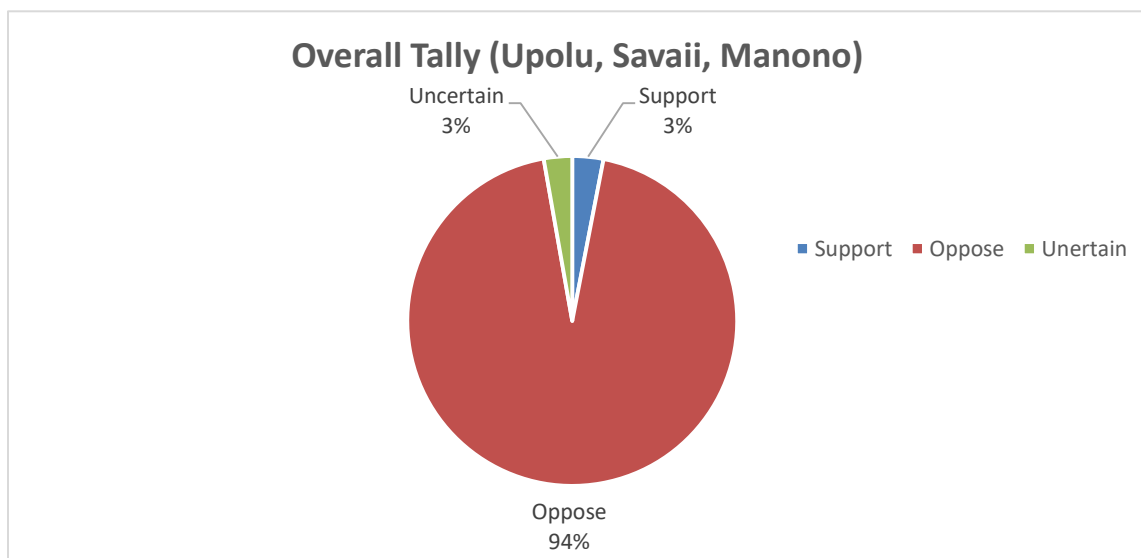
### 2.1 Overall tabulation of Savaii, Upolu and Manono:

Refer to graph(s): **Figure 1, Figure 2 and Figure 3**

**Figure 1**

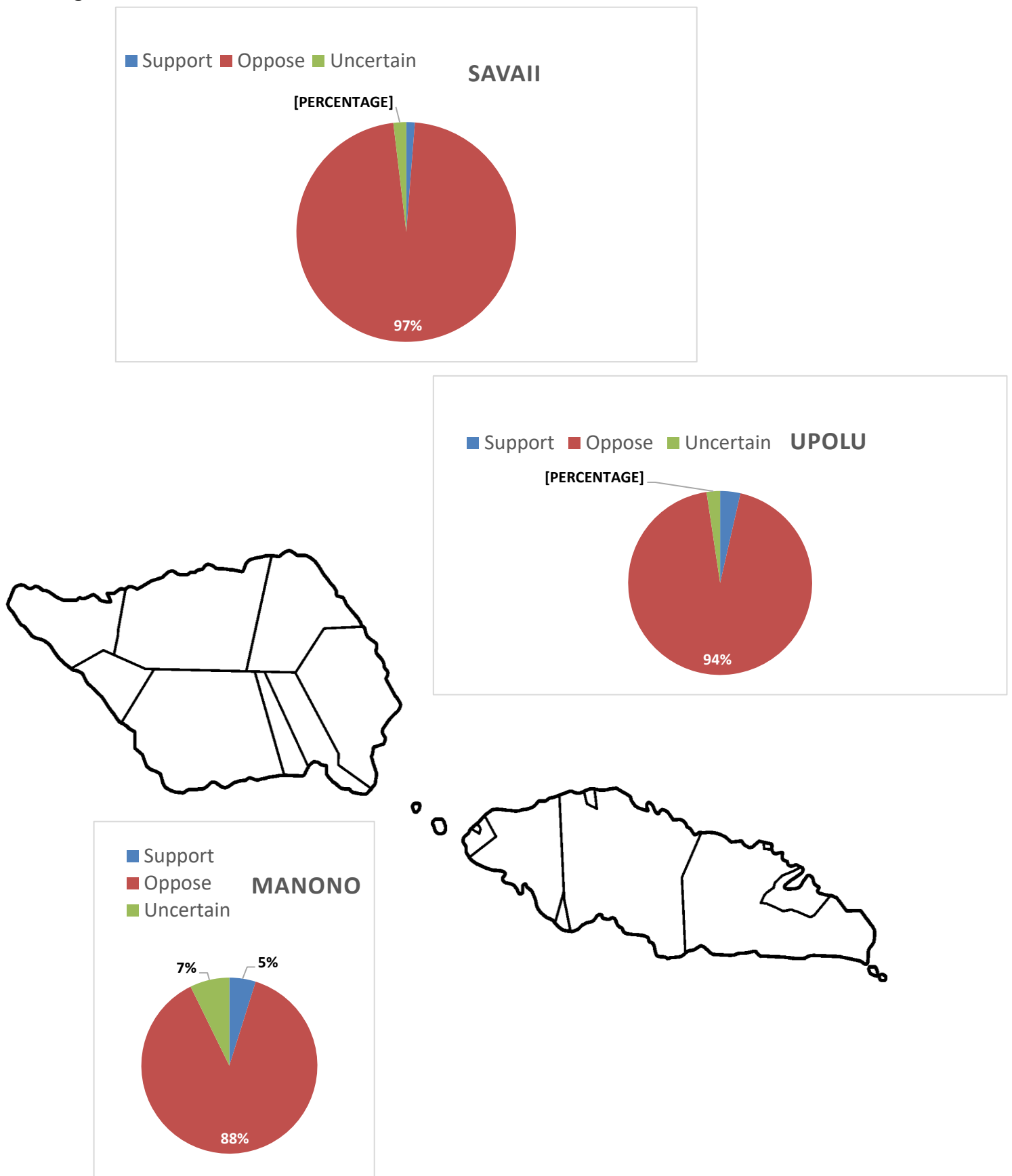


**Figure 2**



**Figure**

Figure 3



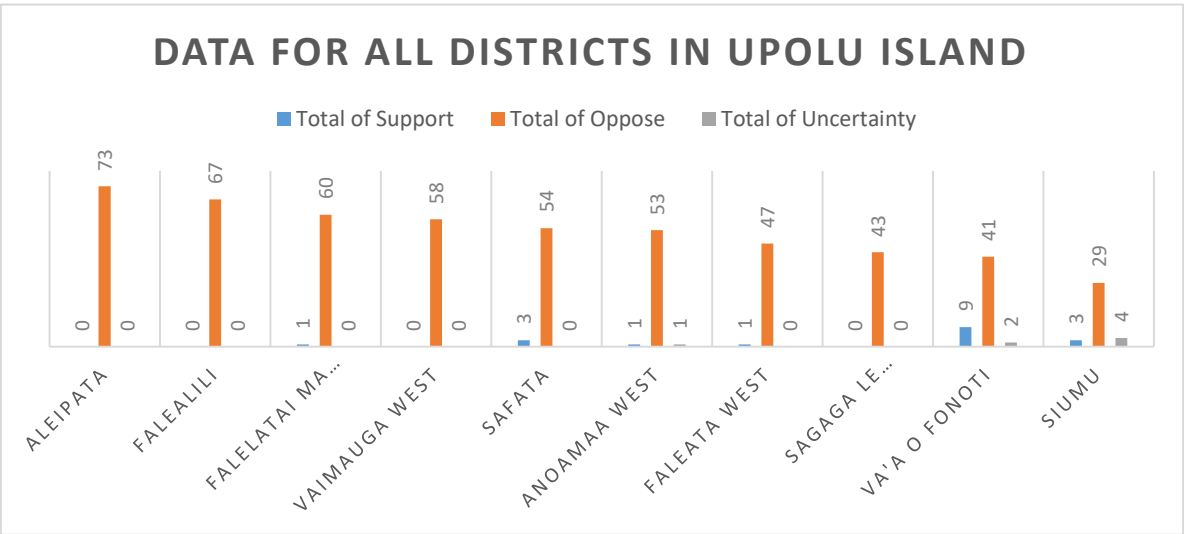
Throughout the consultation forums performed by SUNGO’s Executive Members and Staff within the selected 16 districts, the majority voted to oppose the three amendment bills proposed by government with 94% of participants voting to oppose, 3% voting in support, 3% still uncertain.

The statistics collected from these consultation forums showed strong opposition from those attending to these bills, given the consequences to their lives. SUNGO will need to present these statistics to the Parliamentary Committee on the advice of its members.

2.2 Data for Upolu Island

A total of 10 districts in Upolu were selected by SUNGO to conduct consultation forums. A total of 674 people took part in voicing their opinions about the three bills. The overall result was that almost everyone in these 10 districts voted to oppose. See graph below for reference. (Figure 4)

Figure 4.



In Upolu, almost equal numbers of males and females participated with a total of 272 females and 266 males taking part in voicing their opinions.. Of the responses received, the largest number of participants in Upolu were from the age group 50 to 59. See graph(s) below for reference, **Figure 5** and **Figure 6**. **Note:** there is missing data for the Upolu age groups for 16 people, representing 3%.



Forum Held Under COVID restrictions



Figure 5.

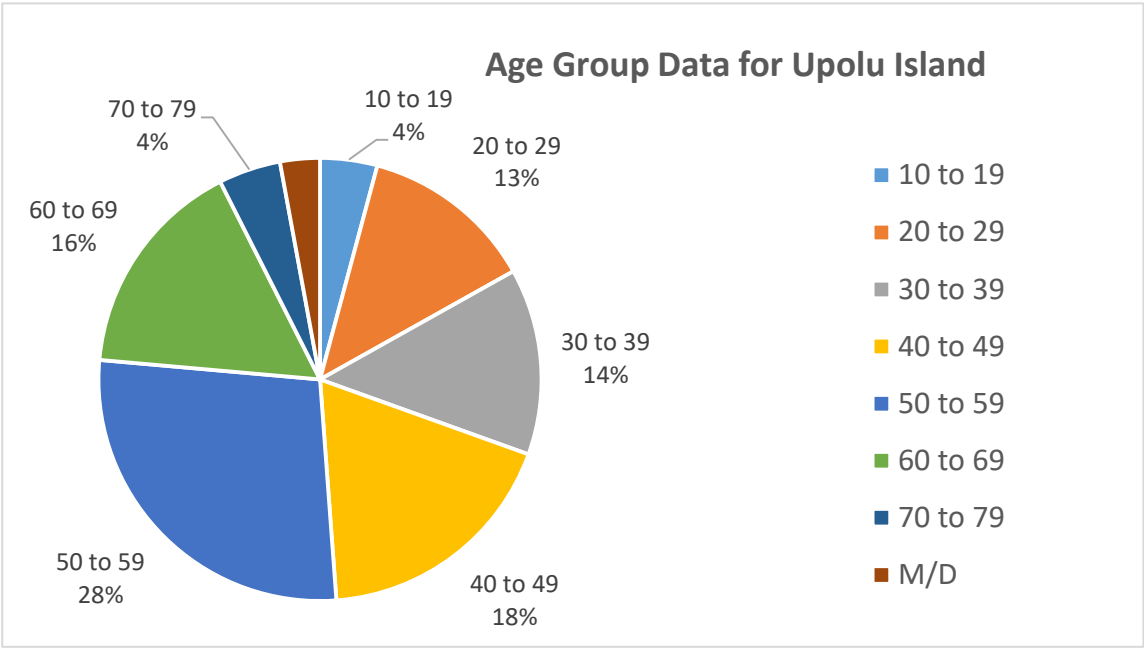
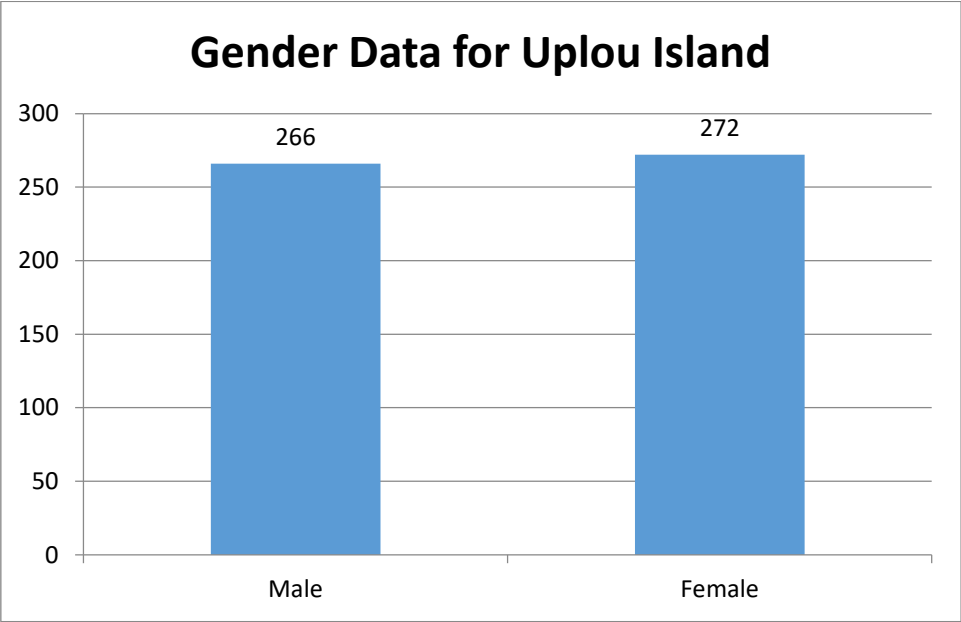


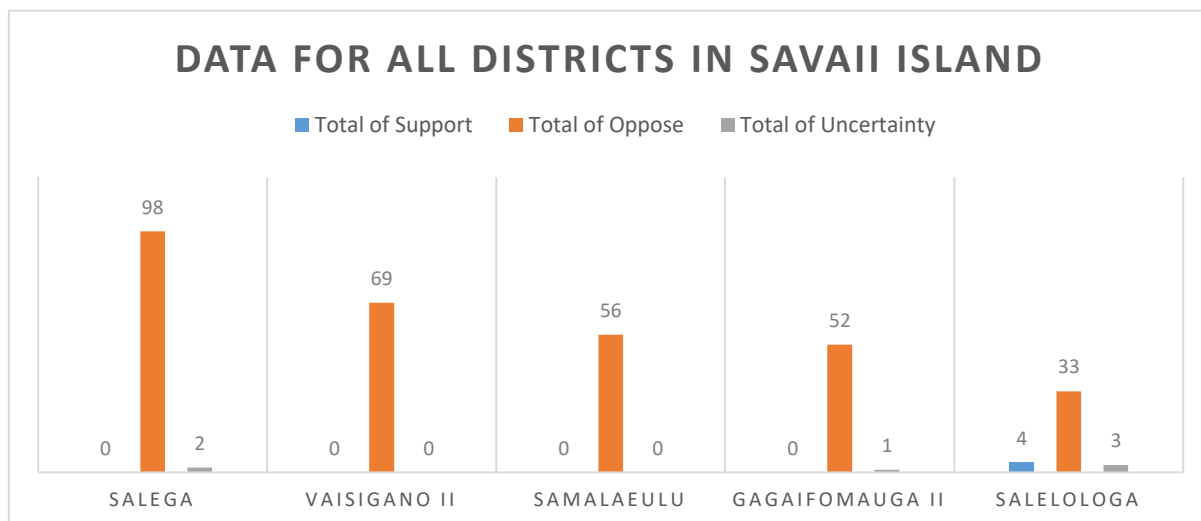
Figure 6.



## 2.3 Data for Savaii Island

Five districts in Savaii were selected by SUNGO to conduct consultation forums. A total of 318 people took part in voicing their opinions about the legislation. Overall almost everyone in these 5 districts voted to oppose. See graph below for reference. **(Figure 7)**

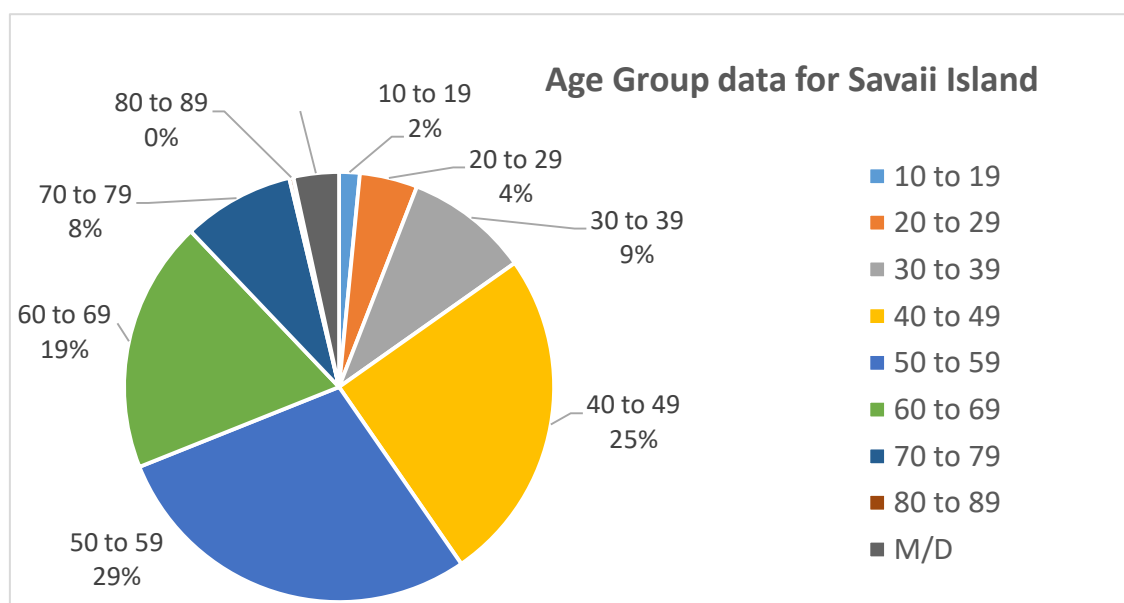
**Figure 7**



In Savai'i more males than females took part with a total of 101 females and 215 males taking part in voicing their opinions. Of the responses received, the largest number of participants in Upolu were from the age group 50 to 59. See graph(s) below for reference. **(Figure 8)**

**NOTE:** There is missing data for the Savaii age groups for 11 people. This represents 4% in the graph below.

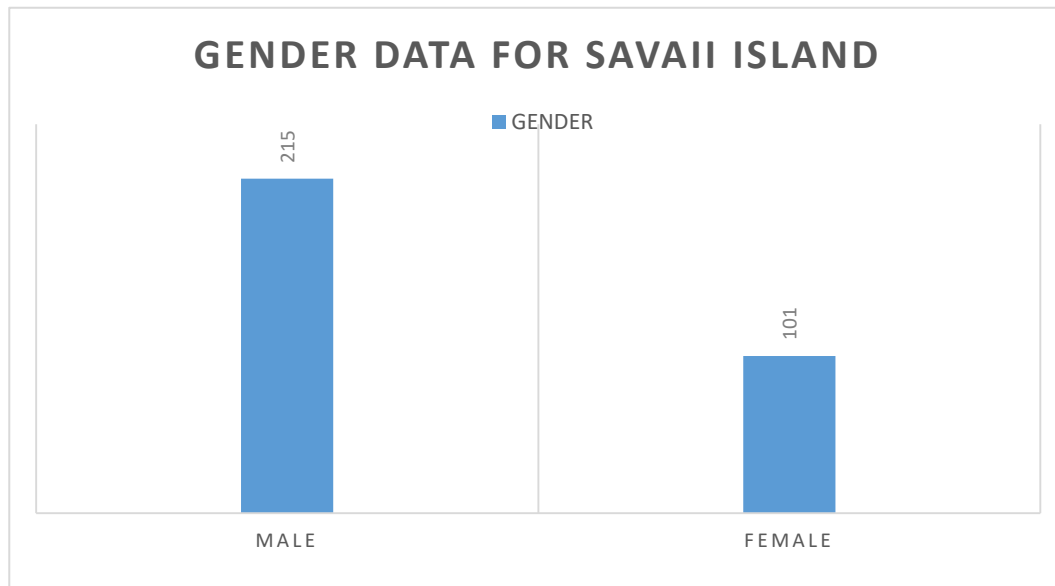
**Figure 8**



**NOTE:** M/D represents "Missing Data"



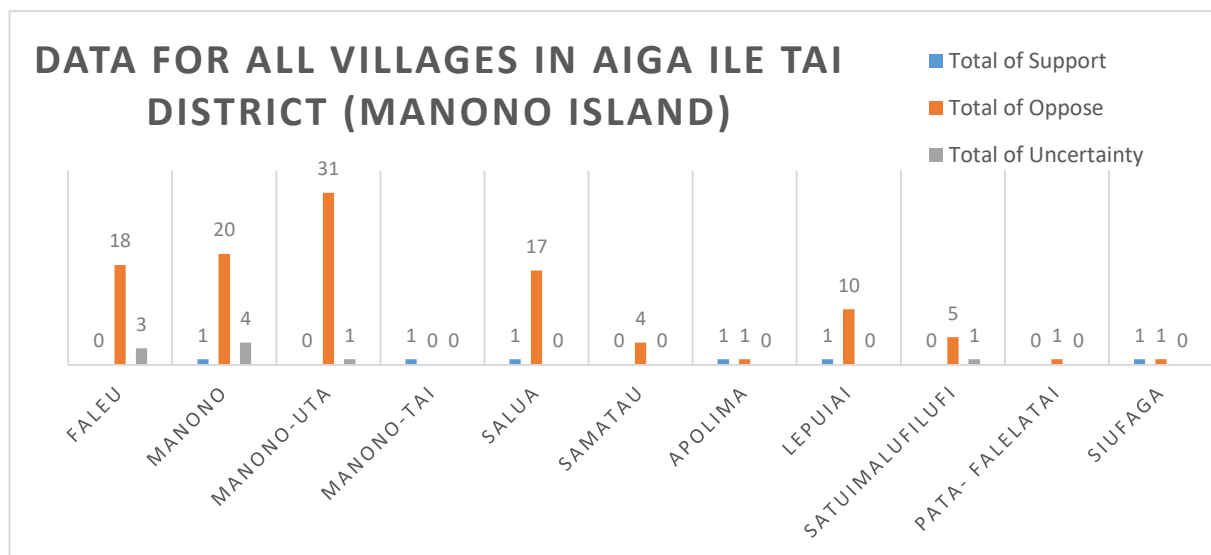
**Figure 9**



## 2.4 Data for Manono Island (District)

A total of 11 villages in the district of Manono were selected by SUNGO to conduct consultation forums. A total of 124 people took part in voicing their opinions about the legislation. Overall almost everyone in these 11 villages voted to oppose. See graph below for reference. **(Figure 10)**

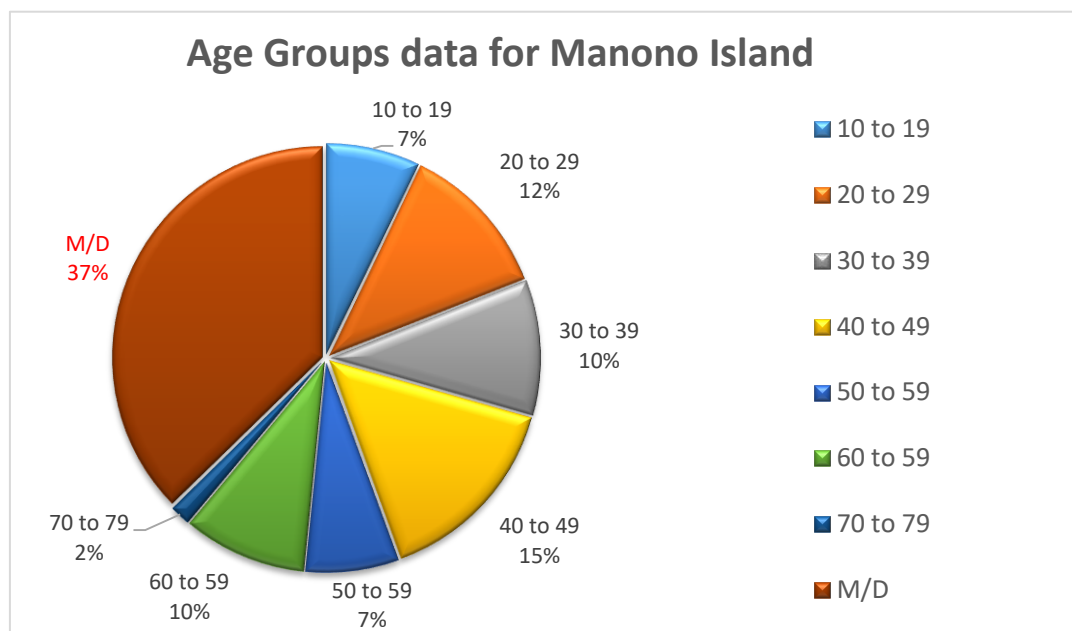
**Figure 10**



In Manono more males than females took part with a total of 49 females and 73 males taking part in voicing their opinions. Of the responses received, the largest number of participants were in the age group 40 to 49. See graph(s) below for reference. **(Figure 11,12)**

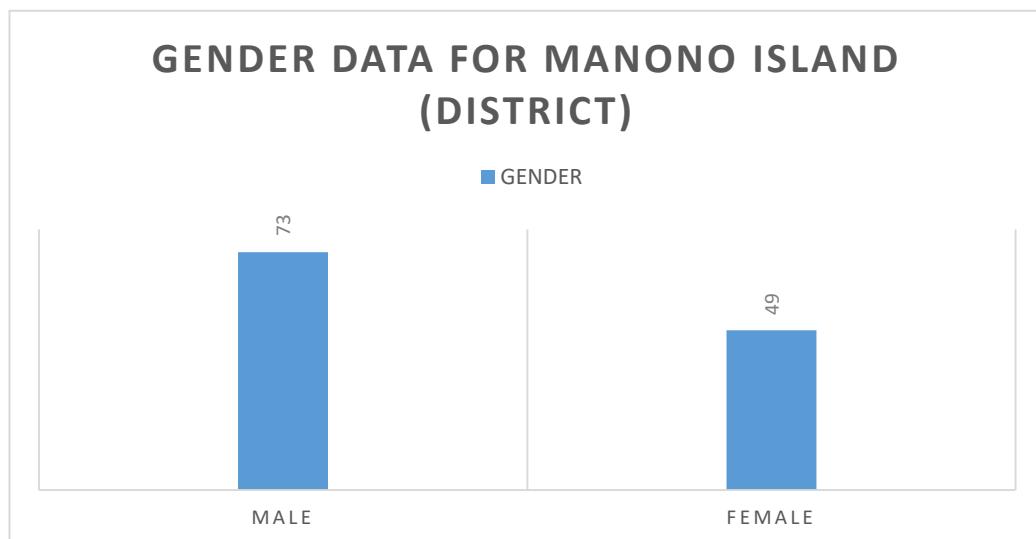
**NOTE:** The age group data is missing for 47 people at the Manono forum. This represent 37% in the graph

**Figure 11**



**NOTE:** M/D represents “Missing Data”

**Figure 12.**



### 3: Evaluation

#### What went well:

- Some of the districts that were visited by SUNGO and conduct consultation forums were very cooperative. SUNGO would have never completed its consultations without the collaboration and support of its member communities, village chiefs, church ministers and matais of each family.
- Whether to agree/disagree or uncertain, delivering our member communities and local residents with the information they need to understand about the 3 amendment bills is our number one priority. The statistics the organization collects represents the voices of the people.

#### What could be improved:

- There were some districts visited by SUNGO to conduct consultation forums were not cooperative through the collection of details.
- There were misunderstanding between SUNGO and Government representatives (Pule Nu'u) regarding how the organization conducts consultation forums and not attaining official authority from the Ministry of Women and Social Development.
- SUNGO was falsely accused of public manipulation and violation of people's freedom of expression.
- There were consultation forums conducted within some districts did not go as planned accordingly to its agenda. Some districts exceeded the targeted number of 80 per district causing disruption of monetary supply and sudden changes in providing a suitable alternative to solve the issue.
- Some age group data was missing

### 4: Recommendations

- SUNGO requires extra help in collecting the data to avoid missing and misleading details.
- The organization must consider full review and planning of monetary supply before deploying to specific areas to conduct consultation forums.
- SUNGO must provide pre assessment for employees and specific teams to understand what the main goals, targeted audiences are and information required to be obtained.
- All data must be reviewed before departing the targeted area.
- Some forums could have be planned better.

Name of the contact person for the action:

**Fuimaono Vaitolo Ofoia**



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**CEO**  
**SUNGO**

**15 October 2020**