Methodology for pre-testing Rock Point (RP) 256 Comic Book, Volume 6

Introduction
The Young Empowered and Healthy (Y.E.A.H) Initiative is a multi-channel communication campaign by and for young people that combines mass media, person-to-person dialogue and community media to empower the young people adopt healthy life choices. Y.E.A.H produces Comic Books to reinforce the messages in the radio serial drama, RP 256. Volume 6 appears in pencil sketches so it can be pre-tested before producing the final copy for dissemination.

Objective of the pre-test
To establish whether volume 6 of the comic book conveys messages that are complete, clear, understandable, acceptable, believable and convincing.

Target
The comic book will be pre-tested among eight groups of boys and girls aged 15 - 24 years living in urban and peri urban areas who are HIV positive and aware of their status and those unaware of their HIV status. The distribution of FGDs in each of the pre-test locations will be as follows:

a) Females (15 –18)
b) Females (19-24)
c) Males (15 –18)
d) Males (19-24)

Pre-test locations
Focus group discussions will be conducted in Mbarara, Luweero and Lira districts. A total of twelve FGDs will be conducted. The pre-test will be conducted in urban areas (within the town/municipal councils) and peri urban areas (within a radius of 10 kms from the town center). The discussions will be conducted in English.

Note: Feedback from Kampala and Jinja districts will be solicited from YAGs.

Pre-test process
A team of research assistants with experience in pre-testing behavior change communication (BCC) materials will be oriented to the pre-test methodology and guided on how to conduct focus group discussions (FGDs) with participants.

The research team will take the comic book along with them to the pre-test sites. The book will be distributed to the participants after the formal introduction of the pre-test exercise. Participants will be given at least fifteen minutes to read
through and comprehend the messages. Questions will be asked after participants have read the entire book.

Each group of research assistants (RAs) in a region will have four people: two males and two females. The female researchers will moderate the groups of females while the male researchers will moderate the FGDs among males.

**Sample size**

Each FGD will consist of 10 – 12 people. A total of twelve FGDs will be held in Luwero, Lira and Mbarara districts.

**Procedure:**

**Greet the participants as follows:**

Good morning/ afternoon. My name is __________________ and my colleague is __________________. We work for Communication for Development Foundation Uganda, (CDFU) - an organization that provides communication services aimed at social and behaviour change. We are here on behalf of Young Empowered And Healthy (Y.E.A.H), an initiative of the Uganda AIDS Commission. Y.E.A.H utilizes a multi-channel communication campaign by and for young a person that combines mass media, person-to-person dialogue and community media to empower the young people adopt healthy life choices. The Initiative develops comic books to reinforce messages in the radio program *Rock Point 256*.

Y.E.A.H is in the process of producing *Rock Point comic book volume 6*. We would like to get your opinion on whether it is appropriate and how it can be improved. As such, we value your contribution very greatly.

The discussion will last about two hours. We are here to share views and there is no right or wrong answers. Everyone is encouraged to say what he or she feels about the comic book.

**Note to the Research Assistants:** At this point hand out the comic book. Tell participants that you give them 15 minutes to read and comprehend the comic book. After most people have read through, ask volunteer/volunteers to read aloud after which you will ask questions. Tell them your role is to guide the discussion and not to give your opinion.
PRE-TEST GUIDELINES

Top page
Ask participants to look at the front page of the comic book and ask them the following questions

1. Looking at the top page, what do you see?
2. What does it tell you?
3. What do you think about the lay out?
4. Is there anything unclear on the top page?
5. If yes, what, and how can we make it clearer?
6. What suggestions for improving the top page do you have?

Questions about the entire comic book

1. What are the key messages from the comic book?
2. Does the comic book tell a flowing story? What story does it tell?
3. Do the cartoon gestures, postures and portrayals depict the messages in specified cases within the comic book? Explain
5. Identification of any conflict in the message delivered within the book; is there any conflicting message in the book? If so what? Why do you say it is conflicting? What does it conflict with? How can we reconcile the conflicting messages?
6. Assessment of character suitability of the cartoon characters within the book; who are the main characters in the comic book? How well do they fit the roles they were given in the book? If well, how? If not why?
7. Does the mood and setting fit the contexts in the comic book? Do the settings in the comic book fit what happens in those settings? Does the set up of the story in the comic book fit the main message?
8. Is the Artwork clear? Are the cartons used in the comic book clear? If not, what is not clear? How should it be improved? Are the words in the bubbles readable?
9. What do you think of the layout in general? (I.e. is the comic book easy to follow and understand?)
10. Is there anything offensive in the comic book? If so what?
11. What kind of questions can be developed to stimulate discussion at the end of the comic book? Probe for the specific questions.
12. Do you find the comic book interesting? Why? If not, probe for how it can be made interesting.
13. What suggestions do you have to make this comic book better?