

IN THIS TOGETHER PHASE ONE  
BULLETIN BOARD FOCUS GROUPS 3, 4, 6, 8  
MODERATOR SCRIPT

FOCUS GROUPS 3 AND 8: SEXUALLY INEXPERIENCED FEMALES  
FOCUS GROUPS 4 AND 6: SEXUALLY EXPERIENCED FEMALES

*Note: This is a template as questions may evolve based on the content of the discussions.*

*Day 1: The main goal is to examine issues of program design in order to confirm program components.*

**DAY 1: QUESTIONS ABOUT TEXTING BEHAVIOR AND PRIVACY**

**Welcome to our online discussion!**

We are Isaac and Emmanuel. We will be moderating our discussion over the next 3 days.  
Welcome!

In this focus group, we will ask for your thoughts on different parts of a sexual health and HIV prevention program that we are developing. Today, we will be talking with you about how you use sms messaging and how much privacy you have/want to have about your texts and texting habits. Tomorrow and the next day, we will talk about ways you prevent HIV; so, things like sex, relationships, and condoms.

As you can probably see, you are one of many other young adult women who are taking part in this discussion. You all live in Uganda (*following text included in Focus Groups 3: have used sms messaging for the past 6 months, and plan to continue to do so*). And, you are doing what you can to help curb HIV in Uganda because you are here. You all have a many things in common so we anticipate a lively discussion!

Here is some basic information about how the next 3 days will go:

**Please look at the entire list of topics for the day. Please answer all the questions if you can using the “REPLY TO THREAD” button. You can also reply to other people's remarks.**

Also:

1. Each day, two sets of questions will be posted: one set at 8 AM and the other at 1 PM.

2. You can also reply to other people's comments. To do so, just below the comment you are responding to, there are three buttons, click the first button (an arrow), type your comment, and click post quick reply.
3. Please drop by and check this Board *at least* twice per day (more if you want to!). Throughout the day, we will be reading your posts, responding, and asking follow-up questions. We will keep it short but please check back and answer any follow-up questions we might add during the day.
4. If you have any problems at all with using this Board, or have questions, please let me know or contact the technical help line at: 0758889260 or isaac@iskuganda.com
5. You will receive 5,000 shillings in data if you participate in all 3 days. **Participation means posting in both the morning and afternoon session's each day.**

Okay, let's get started!

## **Day 1, Session 1**

### **Let's break the ice**

Before we get into a discussion about how you use sms messaging, let's start with some general questions.

- To break the ice - tell us your favorite hobby!
- What answer from someone else here do you like and why?  
(Question worded as follows in Focus Groups 6 and 8) What is your favorite answer from someone else here? Why?

*(Following text included in Focus Group 3: (Please look at the entire list of topics for the day. Please answer all the questions if you can using the "REPLY TO THREAD" button. You can also reply to other people's remarks.*

*When you are finished answering this thread, click the back button to find the next thread for you to respond to))*

*(Following text included in Focus Group 4, 6, and 8: As a reminder: Please click on each topic and answer every question you see there. When you are finished answering the questions in one topic, click the back button to find the next topic and questions.*

*Also reply to other people's remarks – it will make the discussion more fun!)*

### **Texting habits**

Thanks for sharing a little bit about yourself! Now let's move on to talk a little bit about your experiences with texting.

- How many SMS texts did you send and receive yesterday?  
How do you know the number of messages are you guessing, estimating, or counting?
- Talk about how your texting changes based upon where you are or what you are doing?  
(Question worded as follows in Focus Groups 6 and 8) How does your texting change based upon where you are or what you are doing?

### **SMS messaging privacy**

- When and why might someone see messages you have on your phone?
- What advice would you give to someone wanting to keep their messages private?  
(Question worded as follows in Focus Group 8) What do you do to keep other people from reading SMS messages you want to keep private?

### **Getting personal SMS messages**

- What would you do if you got a personal sms message at a bad time, like when there were people around that you didn't want to read the message?
- Please comment on someone else's advice here too: What recommendations do you think would be the most helpful in keeping someone's messages private?

### Likes about receiving healthy sexuality sms messages

Let's talk more about the program that we are developing. Our idea is to send young Ugandan men and women like you sms messages that will give them the skills and information they need to make healthy sexual decisions and reduce their risk for HIV. The program would last about 6 weeks and we would send several messages per day.

We will get into more detail about the program idea later but first, we have some general questions for you:

- Can you tell us what you *like* about the idea of getting sms messages that talk about healthy sexuality and ways to help prevent HIV and other STDs?
- What do you *dislike* about the idea of getting sms messages that talk about healthy sexuality and ways to help prevent HIV and other STDs?
- How many sms messages a day would be willing to get from a program like this?
- What times of day would be best to receive sms messages?

### Thank you! Instructions for the next session

Thanks for your time so far...you are doing a great job. Please log on again this afternoon any time after 1 PM for your next session. You will go to the section titled "**Day 1, Session 2**".

## Day 1, Session 2

### Welcome Back! Instructions for this afternoon

Please be sure to go to the sections from this morning and do a quick check to see if there are posts (questions) that you missed.

Also, we may have asked additional questions of some of you on this morning's boards in response to your initial answers. **Please go back and look through to see if there is a question for you.**

And, **do not forget to talk to each other.** You can ask someone else for clarification or for examples, share your thoughts about their comments, or add new ideas that came to you as you were reading their answers. This will really help our research too -- having better, more meaningful conversations helps us better understand what together you are telling us.

Ok! Let's get started....

### Experiences with healthy sexuality programs

*(This thread appears second to last in the session in Focus Group 3)*

- What healthy sexuality / HIV prevention programs have you attended before?
- What information / messages have you found *helpful* to you in making healthier sexual decisions (like using condoms, or not having sex when you do not want to). These might be messages from the web, things you have heard on the radio, or programs at school.
- What sexual health program or messages have you found to be particularly *unhelpful*?

### Finding information about sex

- Where do you look for information about sex? Please list specific websites or resources you use.
- What kind of information about sex tips would you find useful?

*(Questions asked in Focus Groups 3 and 4)*

- What kinds of tips would you want to help you have good sex or be a good lover?
- How would you feel about getting sms messages that have detailed sex tips?

*(Question asked in Focus Groups 6 and 8)*

- How would you feel about getting tips about how to have good sex or be a good lover?

### Thoughts about the HIV prevention program - what could go wrong?

*(This thread appears first in the session in Focus Group 3)*

Ok, let's go back and talk a bit more about the HIV prevention program that we are developing.

- Imagine you were taking part in the program. What do you think might happen if someone saw messages on your phone that included words like "penis" or "HIV"?
- What are things that we need to be thinking about and planning for, to help young people like you who are taking part in our program avoid situations that might make them feel awkward? How about situations that might make them feel unsafe?

- What other concerns do you have about the HIV prevention sms messaging program we have been talking about here?

### **Responding to program messages**

Again, imagine that you are a participant in the HIV prevention program we are developing...

Over the 6 weeks, most of the messages will be sent and all the person needs to do is read them.

A couple of times during the program (about 10 times), we will ask people in the program to reply. People would be charged the normal sms charges that apply when you send an sms to someone.

- What are your thoughts?
- How would this affect your interest in taking part in the program?
- If you were someone in this future program, do you think you would respond to the program sms message?  
*(Question worded as follows in Focus Groups 6 and 8)* If you were someone in this future program, would you be willing to pay for the SMS to respond to the program sms message?

### **Thank you! Instructions for the next session**

Ok - that is all of our questions for today. Thanks so much for your thoughtful responses - they really help.

If you have answered them all, please remember to check back later to see if we have further questions for you or to comment on other people's responses.

Tomorrow, we will talk about relationships, dating, and sex. Questions will be online by 8 AM, so we will "see" you then! You will go to the section titled "**Day 2, Session 3**".

## **Day 2, Session 3**

### **Welcome Back! Instructions for today's sessions**

Welcome back! Glad to see you checking in. Yesterday was great. We really enjoyed reading all your comments. We are getting fantastic information and appreciate your detail.

Please also be sure to go to the sections from yesterday and check to see if there are posts you missed. Please answer all the questions if you can using the "REPLY TO THREAD" button. You can also reply to other people's remarks.

When you are finished answering this thread, click the back button to find the next thread for you to respond to.

We have followed up with several of your posts. Please take a quick look to see if there are any follow-up questions for you to answer from yesterday. You can also ask others what they mean or ask for ideas and clarification. Thanks!

Now, on to the next set of questions! Today's questions will focus on your thoughts and experiences with relationships, sex, using condoms, and things like that.

### **Current relationship status**

*(This thread titled "Current status" in Focus Groups 3 and 4)*

Question: Are you currently in a relationship?

Please reply:

1. Yes -- I am in a committed relationship
2. Yes -- I am dating someone / people
3. Yes -- I am with someone but it is complicated
4. No -- I have never seen or dated anyone
5. No -- I have been in a relationship before but I am not with anyone now

**Pick one option, and reply with your response below.**

### **Relationship experiences**

- What is the most important thing you look for in a dating / romantic partner?
- How do you meet people who you might want to hook up with or have a relationship with?
- How common do you think it is for people of your age to have more than one boyfriend at the same time?
- How common is it for people of your age to play sex with a casual partner when even they have a boyfriend?

*(Question asked in Focus Group 8)*

- What does a healthy relationship look like to you? What about an unhealthy relationship?

### Giving gifts

Question: If a gift is given, is sex expected in return?

Please reply:

1. Definitely yes, sex is expected
2. Maybe yes, sex is expected
3. Neither yes nor no
4. Maybe no, sex is not expected
5. Definitely no, sex is not expected

Pick one option, and tell us why you choose that option.

### Making decisions about playing sex

*(Questions asked in Focus Groups 3 and 8)*

- What do you think are some of the good things about waiting to play sex?
- What are some of the drawbacks about waiting to play sex?
- What are some reasons that young adults choose not to play sex?
- Whatever your experience has been, what are *\*your\** reasons for not playing sex?

*(Questions asked in Focus Groups 4 and 6)*

- Tell us a little bit about decisions to play sex. When a young man and a young woman play sex, how does it usually happen? Please take me through a "typical" experience-- from the time someone begins thinking about it to the time it happens.
- When you play sex, what is different between the times when it feels like you are planning to play sex versus times when it feels more like it "just happens?"
- What are the good things that you think about when you look back on your experiences playing sex?

*(Question asked in Focus Group 4)*

- How do you think alcohol or drugs affect your decision to play sex or not?

### Planning to play sex

*(This thread titled "The roles we play in deciding to play sex" in Focus Groups 6 and 8)*

- What role do you think **women** play in deciding when a couple is going to play sex?
- What role do you think **men** play in deciding when a couple is going to play sex?

*(Question included as part of this thread in Focus Groups 6 and 8)*

- How do you think alcohol or drugs affects one decision to play sex or not?

### Pressures to play sex

- How, if at all, are young adults pressured by their partners, friends, or other people to play sex? How do you think these pressures to have sex (or not) are different for women than for men in Uganda?
- How difficult is it for a **man** to say "no" to a **woman** who wants to play sex?
- How difficult is it for a **woman** to say "no" to a **man** who wants to play sex?



### Refusing sex

*(This thread included only in Focus Groups 4, 6, and 8)*

- What are things a **woman** could say to a **man** or do if *she* does not want to play sex and he does? How do you think he will react?
- What are things a **man** could say to a **woman** or if *he* does not want to play sex and she does? How do you think she will react?

### Thank you! Instructions for the next session

That is it for this morning's questions... please log back in this afternoon any time after 1 PM for your next session. You will go to the section titled "**Day 2, Session 4**".

## *Day 2, Session 4*

### **Getting free condoms**

Welcome back! You are doing a fantastic job.

As a reminder, please go back and make sure that you have answered all of the questions in the previous threads. Also we have posted some follow up questions in the threads. You will find them in bold. We would love your additional thoughts!

Ok, let's get started.

Question: Do you know where to get **free** condoms where you live?

**Reply with your response below.**

### **Using condoms**

*(This thread included only in Focus Group 6)*

How often do you use condoms?

Please answer:

1. Every time
2. Most of the time
3. Sometimes
4. Never

**Pick one option, and tell us why you choose that option.**

### **Making it easier to use condoms**

*(This thread appears third in Focus Group 3. Following text included in Focus Group 3: We know we have a lot of questions for you and you are really busy. Thank you so much for your time answering our questions -- your answers really matter.)*

- What do you think is the biggest challenge women face when trying to get men to use condoms?
- What pressures do you feel as a woman to use or to not use condoms? *(Following text included in Focus Group 3: (even if you have never had sex, you might still feel pressure))*
- What messages do you think would be helpful to send to young Ugandans like you to get them to start using condoms more often? How are these messages different for women and for men?

### **Reasons to not use condoms**

*(This thread appears first in Focus Group 3)*

- Why do you think some young adults who are playing sex do not use condoms? Please be as specific here as possible. Tell a story about a friend if that is an easier way to explain!
- How do you feel about condoms and using them? *(Following text included in Focus Group 3: (even if you have never had sex, what are your thoughts here?))*

- How do you decide when to use condoms and when not to use condoms when you have sex? How do you tell your partner your decision?  
(Question worded as follows in Focus Group 3) How do you think you would decide when or when not to use condoms - Would you talk about it as a couple, you just put it on , some other way...?  
(Question worded as follows in Focus Group 8) How would you decide when to use condoms and when not to use condoms when you have sex? How would you tell your partner your decision?

### Using condoms the right way

(This thread appears second in Focus Group 3. Following text included in Focus Groups 4, 6, and 8: We know we have a lot of questions for you and you are really busy. Thank you so much for your time answering our questions – your answers matter.)

- How many young adults do you think know how to put on a condom the right way?
- Where and how do people learn information on how to correctly put on a condom?

### Condoms and confidence

How confident are you that you could convince your man to use a condom?

Please answer:

1. Extremely confident – I know I could convince him
2. Somewhat confident
3. I am not sure
4. Somewhat unconfident
5. Extremely unconfident – There's no way I could convince him

Pick one option, and reply with your response below.

### Using condoms

(This thread titled "Convincing your partner to use condoms" in Focus Groups 6 and 8)

- What are things a **woman** can say to convince a **man** if *he* doesn't want to use a condom and she does?
- What are things a **man** can say to convince a **woman** if *she* doesn't want to use a condom and he does?

(Question asked in Focus Groups 3)

- How would you tell your partner that you want to use a condom?

(Question asked in Focus Groups 4 and 6)

- How have you told your partner that you want to use a condom and it went well? How have you told your partner that you want to use a condom and it has not gone well?

### Thank you! Instructions for the next session

That is all of our questions for today. We know these last couple of questions may have been challenging to answer. Thank you for your answers. They will help us write content for people who might be in unhealthy relationships.

Please remember to check back later to see if I have further questions for you or to comment on other people's responses.

*(Following text included in Focus Groups 3 and 4)* Tomorrow we will be discussing specific parts of the intervention that we are developing including "Text Buddies" - we will tell you more about what those are tomorrow.

The questions will be online by 8 AM, so we will "see" you then! You will go to the section titled **"Day 3, Session 5"**.

*Day 3: Objectives of this last day will be to present the SMS Buddy and Genie concepts and to document participants' reactions.*

### **Day 3, Session 5**

#### **Program name suggestions**

*(This thread included only in Focus Groups 3 and 4)*

You all have such great thoughts! Please remember to check back to yesterday's posts to see if we have further questions for you.

Today, we are going to talk about other parts of the program that we are developing to see what you think about them.

First, we would like your help to come up with a name for the HIV prevention program. Our ideas include:

- SMSenga
- TextSenga
- ITG (In this Together)
- What do you like the best and why?
- What do you like the least and why?
- Do you have ideas for other names that we might consider?

#### **Likes about the "SMS Buddy" idea**

Ok. Let's talk more about our program. When participants sign up to participate they will be paired with a "SMS Buddy". *(Following text used in Focus Groups 3 and 4: Each person enrolled in the program will be matched with another person in the program to sms back and forth with.)*

*(Following text used in Focus Groups 6 and 8: This person is someone else in the program to sms back and forth with.)* Buddies will not know each other face-to-face and will be from different parts of Uganda. The messages will be sent through the program) to protect each buddy's privacy. The idea is that the two sms Buddies, although they will not know each other face-to-face, will provide support to each other and talk about the things that they are learning in the program.

So, **imagine that you are a participant** in the HIV prevention program...

- What do you like *most* about the SMS Buddy idea? Would it be helpful for you? If so, how?
- What do you like *least* about this idea? In what ways would it not be helpful to you?
- If you were taking part in our future HIV prevention program, do you think you would sms your buddy? Why or why not?
- Just like with regular SMS conversations, you would have to pay to sms your buddy. How does that change your thoughts about the SMS Buddy idea?  
*(Question worded as follows in Focus Groups 6 and 8) Would you message your SMS Buddy if you have to pay to send them an sms?*

### Texting your SMS buddy

- If you were in the HIV prevention program, what kinds of messages would you send to your SMS Buddy?
- What would you want to know about your SMS Buddy? Are there characteristics that you think we should be thinking about to match the buddies on to make it easier to talk to each other?

*(Question worded as follows in Focus Groups 6 and 8)*

What would you want to know about your SMS Buddy? Should we match buddies, for example by sex, to make it easier for them to talk to each other?

- What are some sexual health topics that you think would be good ice breakers to help start the conversation with your SMS Buddy?

### SMS Buddy concerns and worries

- What concerns would you have if your SMS Buddy dropped out of the study early?
- Are there ways that you think the SMS Buddy might make it harder to stick to the sexual decisions that you have made for yourself?

### Suggestions to improve the SMS Buddy idea

- What would you do to improve the SMS Buddy idea?
- What other ways could we help young adults in the HIV prevention program talk and support each other?

### Thank you! Instructions for the next session

That is it for this morning's questions... please log back in this afternoon any time after 1 PM for your next session. You will go to the section titled "**Day 3, Session 6**". Thanks!

### Day 3, Session 6

#### Likes about the "Genie" idea

Ok, we are almost there. Thanks for your enthusiasm - it has been great to hear what you think about all of our program ideas! These are the final questions. Here we go!

This morning, we talked about the "SMS Buddy" idea. Another idea we have for the program is "Genie". To use this feature, young adults in the program would sms the word "Genie" to the program, and the program would send them back a list of topics (e.g., how to break up with a girlfriend, where to buy condoms). Then, they would sms the topic of their choice (e.g., how to break up with a girlfriend) to the program, and get back several informational texts about the topic they chose.

- What do you like *most* about the Genie idea? Would it be helpful for you? If so, how?
- What do you like *least* about this idea? In what ways would it not be helpful to you?
- If you were in charge of writing the Genie messages (the sms that would come back to you if you texted Genie), what three topics would you be interested in?  
(Question worded as follows in Focus Groups 6 and 8) What are three Genie topics that you would be interested in?
- Just like when you regularly sms, you would have to pay to sms the program to use Genie. How does this change your view of the Genie idea?  
(Question worded as follows in Focus Groups 6 and 8) Would you use the Genie if you have to pay to sms the Genie?

#### Writing your own Genie message

(This thread titled "Writing your own program sms" in Focus Groups 6 and 8) Here's your chance to help us write some of the sms messages we will send to young adults like you. We might even be able to use yours in the program!

- Please write one message for people who are waiting to play sex with men.
- Please write one message for people who are playing sex with men.
- Look at the messages other people wrote. Which one would work best for you? Why?

#### Badges

We also will have goals in the HIV prevention program. These might include things like talking to your partner about condoms, buying condoms, and carrying condoms. When you achieve a goal, you will earn a "badge."

The badge will be a graphic image that you can download. For example, when someone in the program says that she has gotten condoms, we will respond with a sms messaging that says "Great! Well done!" and link to a picture image of a badge.

Again, **imagine that you are a participant** in the HIV prevention program we are developing...

- Of the example goals above (buying condoms, carrying condoms, using condoms, getting tested), which one do you think would be most helpful in helping you make healthy sexual decisions and why?
- What other ways we can say "good job" that would make you feel recognized about your achievement?
- What additional goals do you think would be useful for young adults like you?  
(*Question worded as follows in Focus Groups 6 and 8*) What additional goals should we add that would be helpful in making healthy sexual decisions?
- Again, to earn your badge, you would need to sms the program to tell us you achieved the goal. This sms would cost money. How does that affect your view of the Badge idea?  
(*Question worded as follows in Focus Groups 6 and 8*) Would you respond to the badge question if you have to pay to sms?

### Final feedback

Finally, we would like to get some feedback from you about your experience over the last 3 days in this online discussion.

- In what ways do you think your views have changed (if at all) as a result of taking part in this Discussion?
- In what ways do you think your behavior might change (if at all) as a result of taking part in this Discussion?
- In what ways (if at all) has this Discussion changed your views or thoughts about having / not playing sex?
- In what ways (if at all) has this Discussion changed your views or thoughts about using / not using condoms?
- Finally, what device did you use to take part in the Discussion? Your phone, a laptop, computer, etc.? And, what, if any, problems did you have viewing / posting to the Discussion?

### Discussion wrap up

We have had such a great experience talking with all of you! We are sad to say our discussion is complete. You have been great and we appreciate the time and effort you put into the discussion over the last few days.

As a last request please take one final look over all the sections to make sure you didn't miss any postings and to see if there are other comments you would like to respond to. If you have participated fully and answered all the questions, you will receive your incentive in a few days' time.

*(Following text included in Focus Groups 3 and 4)* **Also, to help us improve the focus group discussion in future, do you think we should run it during week days or during the weekend?**

Thank you!