In Chapter 10, Kenia Regina Sanchez Ford profiles DKY FM, or de Calle FM (Of the Street FM), which broadcasts simultaneously on five community FM stations in Nicaragua and online. The programme uses a popular media approach, combining education and entertainment, with evidence indicating that little by little DKY FM is modifying attitudes, changing behaviours and improving adolescents’ and youths’ interpersonal communication skills. The result is more dialogue concerning women’s rights and autonomy, HIV/AIDS, sexual diversity and gender violence. In addition to radio, DKY uses Facebook and short message service (SMS) texting, as well as face-to-face networking in listening communities.

More information: www.col.org/LearningWithCM

COL’s Healthy Communities programme: www.col.org/HealthyCommunities
The Fundación Puntos de Encuentro (Meeting Points Foundation) is a Nicaraguan feminist non-governmental organisation (NGO) with 20 years of experience in communication for social change using two different but complementary strategies:

a) massive communication based on a blend of entertainment and educational activities, with popular education designed to promote reflection and dialogue in order to bring about change to public opinion; and

b) capacity reinforcement through participatory and experience-based methods that articulate and develop leadership and networking among different social actors in order to stimulate public initiative.

Radio is one of the main pillars of the massive communication approach. In Nicaragua, as in all Central America, radio is the most accessible and popularly consumed media. The advent of new technologies has favoured radio’s capacity to reach and positively impact several key population groups. Now, for example, youth, particularly adolescents, listen to radio on their mobile telephones, iPods and online.

**DKY FM’s focus: targeting youth**

DKY FM is the most recent of three major radio programmes that the Fundación Puntos de Encuentro has developed and run over the past 18 years, each based on the needs of different generations of youth. In October 2008, a consumer preferences study was conducted with adolescents and other youth, along with communication specialists and commercial and non-commercial media representatives. The result was DKY FM — or de Calle FM (Of the Street FM) — a new youth radio programme.

DKY FM is broadcast live simultaneously by five radio stations across the country, providing national coverage, and on its website. DKY FM’s radio studios are mobile, moving to find adolescents and other youth, male and
female, 13–24 years old, where they live. Target audience members take a leading role, becoming broadcasters for a day, transmitting from their own school, centre or other public space that has been turned into a radio studio.

DKY FM is designed to be fun and entertaining while at the same time educational. Its popular media approach is ultimately directed by adolescents and other youth from women’s movements, sexual and reproductive rights organisations, as well as the Nicaraguan chapter of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC). This diversity of knowledge and orientation contributes to DKY FM’s approach to subjects such as the rights of girls and women (including sexual and reproductive rights), power issues in relationships, sexual diversity and HIV/AIDS — all with a gender and generational perspective.

In a 2009 study of the new programme, CIET International surveyed over 5,930 people. The study found that, six months after DKY FM started, one in ten respondents between 13 and 24 years of age had already listened to the programme. In addition, three of every four respondents indicated that the following topics drew their attention: sexuality and identity (identified by 28 per cent of respondents); violence and abuse (25 per cent);

8 CIET International is a non-profit organisation doing scientific research at the local level involving professionals from different fields (e.g., epidemiology, social economy, planning, communication). For more information, go to www.ciet.org.
and sexual and reproductive health (18 per cent). Twenty-eight per cent of respondents identified other subjects as drawing their attention.\(^9\)

Thirty-eight per cent of audience members surveyed said that as a result of the programme they had taken initiative and talked with someone (e.g., a relative or friend) about pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or violence. Communication with relatives was greater for girls than for boys, whereas communication with friends was greater for boys (55 per cent versus 43 per cent for girls).

The evidence indicates that little by little DKY FM is modifying attitudes, changing behaviours and increasing the interpersonal communication of adolescents and other youth concerning women’s rights and autonomy, HIV/AIDS, sexual diversity and gender violence.

**DKY FM: radio and more**

DKY FM is more than a radio programme. Its overall strategy includes the following elements and activities:

- **a radio magazine** that fuses together different voices and speakers, including reflections, debates and opinions from and for adolescents and young people – The magazine maintains a fresh and youthful style, using humour and intimate conversations with adolescents and other youth, with regular segments such as *Feminine Version*, *Masculine Zone*, *Your Sexual Parts* and *The Un-Recommendation of the Week*.

- **a range of radio formats**, including sketches, jingles, dramatisations, articles and interviews

- **social networking using Facebook and mass SMS text messaging** in order to promote the programme, reinforce key messages and advice, and encourage debate and interaction

- **a network of youth correspondents in Central America**, made up of 20 journalists from across the region, who question, analyse, denounce and propose new ideas using short audio capsules depicting the situation of women and youth rights in Central America

- **promotional tours** that open up spaces for reflection and debate inside classrooms, public parks, markets, shopping malls and the streets, where doubts and myths on selected social issues can be clarified – For these tours, alliances are essential with regional and national delegations of education ministries, municipal offices, other local organisations, radio stations and adolescent and youth organisations. Promotional tours also enable participants and

\(^9\) The list includes family and spousal relations, human rights, social organisation and participation, drugs, alcohol, and commercial sexual exploitation.
facilitators alike to recognise prejudices, arguments, doubts and other unexplored issues raised by the audience and to take those topics up in the radio programme.

**What’s next for a model like this?**

Based on the success of these radio broadcasts, the foundation hopes to share the DKY FM experience and its distinctive “fun-educational” model with youth journalists, community radio broadcasters and a range of public and civil society organisations that are also betting on communication for social change as a strategy and a vehicle for Central America.

To extend and fortify this kind of work in Nicaragua, greater investment in communication strategies is needed so that programmes such as DKY FM can continue to influence public opinion in favour of women and youth rights. To this end, there is also a need to create a radio production centre for feminist and women’s organisations.

Along with building on the potential of the radio — given its mass reach and accessibility, its strength as a vehicle for creativity and its ability to build empathy and solidarity — DKY FM is also planning to open up more discussion spaces for young people in their classrooms.

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**Kenia Regina Sanchez Ford** is a 26-year-old living in Nicaragua. She is in charge of radio production for Fundación Puntos de Encuentro and is the producer of the DKY FM radio programme, the only youth programme with national coverage. Through DKY FM, Kenia organises campaigns that aim to reach adolescents and other youth on subjects such as HIV, sexual and reproductive rights, and gender issues. Kenia is a qualified specialist in HIV as well as Child Rights Communication. She is the founder and president of the HIV Journalists Network. Email: kenia.sanchez@puntos.org.ni

**Fundación Puntos de Encuentro** is a Nicaraguan feminist non-profit organisation using popular mass media strategies for social change communication. Along with DKY FM, the foundation also produces an educational television series and educational print materials and has an area for youth leadership reinforcement. Email: puntos@puntos.org.ni

For further reference, see:

- www.dkyfm.com