

## **Sexto Sentido (Nicaragua)**

### **Target population:**

Young men and women

### **Intervention:**

Puntos de Encuentro is based in Nicaragua and has as its mission to increase women's and young people's ability to take control over their own lives and participate in all levels of society. To achieve this mission, Puntos implements a multi-media / multi-method strategy called '*Somos diferentes, somos iguales*' (We're different, we're equal) which is aimed at Nicaraguan youth.

The *Somos Diferentes, Somos Iguales* (SDSI) strategy combines "edutainment" programs, social mobilization, and local capacity-building to encourage individual behavior change, interpersonal communication, social support, and collective action. SDSI promotes change in the overall socio-cultural context in which young people make decisions and negotiate their identities, relationships, and sexuality.

Puntos de Encuentro's initiative "does not present models of 'good' behavior to be adopted, but seeks to equip people with the capacity to make informed choices about their lives and the abilities that allow them to participate in the debates that affect their lives, promoting discussion of social norms in order to challenge them." This strategy underscores the recognition that traditional notions of 'change' tend to reinforce preconceived and dominant ideas regarding what is 'good'. In contrast, authors purport that divergence, rather than being seen as something negative, may be a crucial state in the process of promoting social change in which minority group views are reinforced. Eventually these minority views, they argue, may be able to co-exist with more traditional views, if not become the norm.

The main components of this strategy include:

- *Sexto Sentido*, a 'social soap' which is broadcast weekly on national commercial television, as well as cable stations;
- *Sexto Sentido* Radio, a nightly youth call-in talk radio broadcast live and simultaneously on 6 commercial radio stations;
- *Community-based activities, including: cast visits to schools*, youth leadership training camps, and information, education and communication materials;
- Coordination with journalists and media outlets;
- Coordination with a variety of organized youth and women's groups, including youth leaders in other Central American countries; and
- Ongoing monitoring and operations research.

### **Evaluation**

An impact evaluation of the second phase of *Sexto Sentido*, 'We're Different We're Equal' was carried out in partnership with PATH, Leon University and USAID's Horizons Project. The evaluation design included:

## Quantitative

Longitudinal study pre-, mid- and post-intervention with 4,567 men and women ages 13-24

## Qualitative

Focus groups and interviews

The results of the evaluation reveal that exposure to the SDSI project was widespread. The survey findings indicate that greater exposure to SDSI led to positive changes on a population level. The intervention resulted in:

- significant reduction of stigmatizing and gender-inequitable attitudes,
- an increase in knowledge and use of HIV-related services,
- and a significant increase in interpersonal communication about HIV prevention and sexual behavior.

Qualitative findings also indicate that SDSI played an important role in:

- promoting community-based dialogue on key topics,
- strengthening youth leadership,
- and fostering alliances between organizations.

The results further suggest that individual behaviors (e.g., consistent condom use in sexual relations) are not isolated from the environment in which people live, but rather are related to social contexts and processes.

## Resources

### **“7 things that men need to know to avoid a disaster in his relationships with women”**

A 16-page booklet in Spanish providing concrete steps that men can take to prevent violence in intimate partner relationships.

Available at:

<http://www.puntos.org.ni/sidoc/descargas/marketing/materiales/boletina/suplemento/de-hombre-a-hombre.pdf>

### **We need to be able to talk**

This manual and DVD in Spanish make up a methodological pack to be used for talks and in workshops on machismo and its direct link to HIV/AIDS and sexual violence.

The manual includes:

- Conceptual framework and views on machismo, HIV/AIDS and sexual abuse.
- Summaries of the special Sexto Sentido videos and a list of possible themes for group work.
- A methodological guide for workshops
- A questions guide to use with the special Sexto Sentido video
- Guidelines and information on how to avoid HIV/AIDS and sexual abuse, for people who are directly affected

Available at:

<http://www.puntos.org.ni/sidoc/descargas/marketing/materiales/Manual%20para%20Talleres%20-%20Necesitamos%20poder%20hablar.pdf>

A shortened English-language version is available at:

[http://www.puntos.org.ni/servicios/catalogos/actividadesdoc/docs/we-need-to-be-able-to-talk\\_352.pdf](http://www.puntos.org.ni/servicios/catalogos/actividadesdoc/docs/we-need-to-be-able-to-talk_352.pdf)

### **Swimming against the tide**

25 minute video with an episode of Sexto Sentido that explores the impact of ‘machismo’ on the everyday lives of young men and women: unplanned pregnancies, violent father, pressure to have sex, homophobia, sexual violence.

In Spanish at:

<http://www.puntos.org.ni/sstv/edicion.php?key=277>

### **Swimming against the tide: Looking for clues to prevent men’s violence in intimate relationships**

Book in Spanish about men’s violence in Nicaragua

[http://www.puntos.org.ni/sidoc/descargas/marketing/materiales/documentos/Nadando\\_contra\\_la\\_corriente.pdf](http://www.puntos.org.ni/sidoc/descargas/marketing/materiales/documentos/Nadando_contra_la_corriente.pdf)

(Extracted from the source)

<http://www.puntos.org.ni/>

### **Sources**

Bradshaw, S., et al., 2007. The changing nature of change: A Nicaraguan feminist experience. Unpublished.

Solórzano I et al, 2003, *Somos Diferentes, Somos Iguales: Un proyecto para promover los derechos de las y los jóvenes*, Algunos resultados y apuntes sobre impacto 2002-2003, Puntos de Encuentro, Nicaragua.

Bank, A (2002). Puntos de Encuentro: Developing an integrated multi-media/multi-method approach for individual and social change around gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health issues (PowerPoint and oral presentation). *Presented to the Technical Update of the Interagency Gender Working Group of USAID, Washington, DC, USA.*