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Hagamos Las Paces - Peer mediation in Colombia (and school materials)

PEER MEDIATION PROJECT IN SCHOOLS IN COLOMBIA "Hagamos las Paces" ("LET'S MAKE PEACE")

The website for "Amor por Medellín" the Foundation which implements Hagamos las Paces. <https://fundacionamorpormedellin.org> (<https://fundacionamorpormedellin.org>)
[Martina on Marbella TV describing the project \(https://vimeo.com/229281341\)](https://vimeo.com/229281341)

After 52 years of civil war in Colombia, the country and its population are in an active process of peace building. The Colombian Government has signed a Peace Accord with the rebel group FARC which was declined by the Colombian people in a referendum and a second, amended version, has just been signed in the middle of November of 2016. The international community is closely watching the efforts and Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

The project assumes that where a culture of war can be created within society, it must be possible to create a culture of peace. Children are the future of every country, of every society. Therefore one has to start with the youngest in society to create a sustainable culture of peace supported by values which promote peace and non-violence, human rights, international humanitarian law, democratic participation, violence prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts. The Rotary Club Medellín supports the project and seeks the help of other Rotary Clubs in other countries which is one of the core conditions to be eligible for a global grant from the International Rotary Foundation. The Rotary Club Marbella – Guadalmina has decided to support the project. It is considered that the overall political situation and the process of peace building in Colombia is an excellent base to be considered by the Rotary Foundation whose area of interest number one is Peace Building and Conflict Resolution.

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT: The peer mediation project in schools seeks to develop pedagogical tools that allow young people and children to learn to solve their differences, through interaction, communication and dialogue, in an environment of respect for others, and where tolerance towards difference is a given. It is intended that the children develop skills as mediators that make a pacific resolution of conflicts in school possible. The projects intends to enable the children to transport the skills they learn into their daily life situations, and to seek improved relationships and school climate in the educational institutions, and to contribute to an overall more peaceful society long-term.

OBJECTIVES:

- Contribute to a culture of peaceful negotiation of conflicts in the participating educational institutions through the training of mediators.
- Lead students to reflect on how to relate and how to adequately address the resolution of the conflicts that affect them and make them managers of peace
- Participatory approach to building values capacities for dialogue and tolerance

Service Projects 2018-19
(/content/service-projects-2018-19)

- Build agreements of coexistence and good relationships in each school community.
- Carry out activities to prevent bullying.
- Link parents and teachers into the construction of good relationships and improved, more peaceful societies.

Aspandem (/content/aspandem)

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

Collective Calling: vulnerable refugees (/content/collective-calling-supporting-vulnerable-refugees)

By initiative of the Rotary Club Medellin, the project "Hagamos las Paces" was proposed to the Foundation "Amor por Medellin Y Antioquia" (Love for Medellin and Antioquia) in order to design and implement a joint project for the pacific resolution of conflicts, together with the Committee of peace building and conflict resolution of the Rotary Club Medellin.

Hogar Betania (/content/nuevo-hogar-betania-la-linea-andalucia-spain)

The project has been implemented in several phases: In August 2014 a motivation workshop was given to 280 educational institutions on the importance of school mediation and the revision of existing conflict resolution manuals. Then there was a meeting held to share best practices and experiences in school mediation with the participation of 70 schools.

Fundatul (/content/fundatul)

The project sought to train young mediators and children in 10 public institutions around 300 mediators in its first phase, this goal was highly exceeded.

PolioPlus (/content/polioplus)

Breaking the Guinness World Record for Alzheimers
(/content/breaking-guinness-world-record-charity)

The training phase began with a 2-day workshop for mediation trainers. 3 teachers participated per institution, then 3 workshops were done in each institution: one on mediation, another one on communication and another one on values to enable a good school climate and positive relationships.

Ser Humano (/content/ser-humano-0)

The coordinating teachers in each educational institution are the instructors of the mediator training processes, they are given the Teacher's Mediation Manual, which contains materials for the workshops. In addition to the training received, several workshops were held to instruct their students. The young mediators are given the mediator's guide and the children receive manuals in the form of a comic which teaches them respectful behaviour with others and towards the environment, and a "passport" which identifies them as "agents of peace".

Shelterbox Syria and Typhoon Haiyan (/content/shelterbox-syria-and-typhoon-haiyan)

Each school is given posters with motivational phrases about communication and good treatment and also posters to show their commitment as "agents of peace".

Dental Mavericks
(/content/dental-mavericks)

The project's leadership has the support of the Secretary/Ministry of Education and the Rotary Club Medellin.

Hagamos Las Paces
(/content/hagamos-las-paces-peer-mediation-colombia-and-school-materials)



At the end of 2015, the Project had reached 10 public institutions, 2 private institutions and 280 institutions were motivated to implement the project. By now in November 2016, the project has been implemented in over 40 schools and its ambitious are to reach schools all over Colombia and to contribute to the country's peace building process.

Mutomo Water project
(/content/mutomo-water-project)

Update on Enlace Estepona-Etiopia (/content/enlace-estepona-etiofia-2015-2016-and-2017-18)

2. Where will the project be developed?

In Medellin and surroundings, with a potential to make a replicable blueprint and to be adopted in other areas of Colombia.

A Car for Concordia Aids Charity (/content/car-concordia-aids-charity)

the first implementation phase is finished?

50 Public Institutions ----- 2500 Mediators Children and Youth
20 Private Institutions ----- 600 Mediators Children and Youth
TOTAL: 70 INSTITUTIONS 3,100 MEDIATORS

ACEPSA (/content/acepsa)

Animal Care of Espana
(/content/animal-care-espana)

Next Goal: Total institutions benefited 180

In addition, the work of the 10 institutions with which the project started already in 2015 will continue to be strengthened and the results obtained in each institution will be monitored and evaluated on how exactly the mediation processes work and how successful they are in all different sort of conflicts. Until date there is very little empirical data available worldwide that evaluate school mediation projects.

Feeding of the Five Thousand
(/content/feeding-five-thousand)

The schools, the project is implemented in, use the project materials within the Peace and Conflict Resolution Curricula. In May 2015 the Colombian President Santos signed a federal law which establishes the subject of Peace Building and Conflict Resolution in schools in Colombia, a University course with the same name and corresponding curricula was implemented too. The subject for the education for peace aims to provide overall knowledge and skills for living together peacefully, and teaches democratic participation, building equity, respect for plurality, Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law. Finally the subject addresses issues of sustainable development, around which discussions will be held on economic growth, quality of life and social welfare and renewable resources which avoid the deterioration of the environment.

Help for DYA Ambulance
(/content/help-dya-ambulance)

Manacare update 2015
(/content/manacare-update-2015)

4. How will the continuity and sustainability of the project be achieved once it has been completed?

The participating schools are given material and the training, which will allow them to replicate the project each year with new students and even in other neighbouring institutions.

Toys for El Calvario Church
(/content/toys-el-calvario-church-2011-and-2012)

Sponsoring Nabugabo Children (/content/sponsoring-children)

nabugabo-children)

Water tank for a Ugandan Orphanage (/content/water-tank-ugandan-orphanage)

Nabugabo Community Learning Centre (/content/nabugabo-community-learning-centre)

Funds (/content/funds-support-other-organisations)

Diningroom/ Assembly hall for Ugandan orphanage (/content/dining-assembly-hall-ugandan-orphanage-school)

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Global Grant Project Hagamos Las Paces – 2nd visit to Medellín, September 2017

By Martina Spann

It was very exciting to go back to Medellín after our club has achieved the Global Grant from TRF together with RC Medellín. The first day after I had arrived, I was invited to attend a training for teachers on how to do school mediation as teachers and students are equally trained in the Hagamos las Paces programme in order to achieve a successful conflict resolution in the educational centres.



In the following days I accompanied Didier Vélez Madrid, the project founder to schools where she gave mediation training to pupils in very poor and conflictive areas of town. It was impressive to see how dedicated the children are to the programme and what they have to cope with so early in their lives. One student, she must have been around 15 years old, asked whether we could also train the parents because in many homes there is a lot of violence going on. 52 years of civil war definitely had a huge influence on relationships in general and it is not easy for people to overcome these behavioural patterns.

I visited Comuna 13, which was the most conflictive and dangerous part of town and where the so called Urban Cells of the FARC rebels had brought terror and devastation to. The biggest mass grave of Colombia lies "in the backyard" of that community and I was told that in the worst times of the armed conflict, the graveyards were so saturated, that they had nowhere to bury the bodies of the victims.

This part of town is still very poor but I learnt that some of the young members of the community started to wanting to change their lives. They stopped selling drugs, went to University and now put development programmes in place to help their people and especially women and children as a huge problem is not only to give financial support but also to insure that the children do not drop out of school: They had international artists come to the place to paint the walls with graffiti to make it look less miserable. They do guided tours for tourists to create awareness, they have programmes for children how to plant vegetables, they produce t-shirts with prints of the graffiti, etc.



In the second week, Dr. Juan Carlos Torrego, professor at Alcalá University near Madrid came to do a workshop. This project was partly sponsored by private donations of members of our club and Paul Church had very generously paid the flight for the professor. The workshop in which he taught the concept of the "helping students" is far more advanced than mere school education. It teaches pupils to identify when a class mate has a problem and is isolated within the class community, and how to offer help in such cases.

The teachers were very grateful for receiving the training, and they asked me to thank all my colleagues from RC Marbella-Guadalmina for this great support. RC Medellín also sends a warm thank you and best wishes to all of you.

School Backpacks

When the Rotary Club Medellín and the Foundation Amor por Medellín started implementing the school mediation project that we have filed the Global Grant for, they noticed that many poor families do not send their children to school, because they cannot pay for school material like backpacks, exercise book and pencils even though there are no school fees and books are free in Colombia. To provide the children with school education is their only way they have a chance to escape poverty one day. We donated 2500€ to pay school materials for 210 children for 1 year.

[Watch the short video of their delighted reaction. \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Borc7bGzOo0&list=PLkOTBWMMevoYHP4e2I6AsizNOzDMNDOfw&index=3&t=26s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Borc7bGzOo0&list=PLkOTBWMMevoYHP4e2I6AsizNOzDMNDOfw&index=3&t=26s)



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