

**Paloma Martínez – A participant in MBBI’s International Training Institute for Women PeaceBuilders funded by a Grant from Rotary International uses training to develop a powerful local peace project.**

The MBBI Women in Mediation Initiative and International Training Institutes (ITI) are dedicated to preparing women to accept new roles and to thrive as leaders in peacebuilding. MBBI recognizes that some cultures currently limit women’s participation to informal means or to certain sectors. However, experience has shown that when provided culturally-insightful context-specific training and support, the influence of women trained in advanced conflict resolution and leadership skills can be significant. The ITI training, subsequent consultative support, and peer networking help women to strategize to achieve the greatest influence and impacts within the cultural and social limits of their communities. The ITI training also increases human resources capacities within peace building partner organizations as ITI-trained women return to their countries with new leadership and conflict resolution skills.

Paloma Martinez is an elementary teacher in Uraba, Antioquia in Colombia for the last two years. Knowing the education system from inside, has helped her to understand, not only the advantages and disadvantages the students suffer, but also the impact the education and the teachers make in the people. The interdisciplinary learning, where the foundations of education can be improved or created, assures a bright future to the communities. The search for ADR tools with kids and teenagers, especially in the location of Uraba, is essential for their growth. The following article highlights her work.



Social leaders in pilot Circle of six, by Colidérate. Photo: Ángela Serrano



The rural areas of the Farc, the disarmament of former guerrillas, the emergence of dissidence in Guaviare, the murder of six peasants in Tumaco, the massacre of 13 people in Magüí Payán ...

The events that marked the media agenda in 2017 overshadowed different regional processes where the communities are trying to build peace. While it is true that the first year of the post-conflict was marked by violence and corruption, it is also true that there were processes that went unnoticed and that can be successful in 2018.

Efforts are being made from the territories to prevent deforestation, to alleviate areas degraded by the environment, to boost labor formalization, to protect leaders, among many other causes. In December, when the political tide went down for a few days, the results of some regional projects began to come to light.

Colidérate, a platform to protect social leaders In Urabá, one of the regions most affected by the armed conflict, they constantly assassinate social leaders. After Cauca, with 28 percent of assassinations, it is followed by Antioquia, with 14 percent in the list of departments with the greatest risks to exercise social leadership. Teachers from the municipalities of Chigorodó, Turbo and Apartadó have closely followed the problem and have had to see how, without any state protection, the leaders are being silenced.

**[Last September, Paloma Martínez, a teacher in Chigorodó, met a group people to cofound a platform to protect social leaders. The idea came from a multidisciplinary team that sought to solve a security problem in the region of Urabá and the country. They realized that there was little information about the processes carried out by the leaders, who did not have a support network, and had poor security in areas where the government often did not reach. Hence, the group found in the technology a tool to strengthen these processes.<sup>1</sup>]**

**The idea of Martínez and her colleagues reached the ears of Movilizadorio, an organization that helped them consolidate the application to protect leaders. To generate security alerts, the team used the Circle of Six - Circle of 6 platform, developed by The Guardian Project, of the United States. The application was already translated into Spanish and at the end of 2017 they did a pilot test with 60 social leaders. Different social organizations helped them to track social leaders. The next step was to contact them. "The application arises from the idea of self-care, prevention; The idea is that they can activate an alert button at any time they are in danger. Now we have to solve some things, it works by SMS but there are many paths where the cell signal is non-existent. There are also many adult leaders who are not so linked to technology. We are working with 50 leaders and we hope that this year they will be more and of more regions ", concludes Martinez.**

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<sup>1</sup> Added by Paloma Martinez