

Why Everyone Should Practice Citizen Diplomacy

Insights from Vietnam and the Palestinian West Bank

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A Tale of Two Trips

01

Vietnam





PeaceTrees™ VietNam

In the Early fall of 2023, I went on a study abroad trip that partnered with an NGO called PeaceTrees Vietnam.

"PeaceTrees Vietnam's core work is sponsoring the clearance of explosive remnants of war in central Vietnam. PeaceTrees'...Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) technicians...work every day to create safe communities by clearing explosive ordnance (EO) from fields, schoolyards, roadsides, and gardens."

- PeaceTrees Vietnam



What is Citizen Diplomacy?

“Citizen Diplomacy is the concept that the individual has the right to help shape U.S. foreign relations ‘one handshake at a time.’ Citizen diplomats can be [anybody]. They are motivated by a desire to engage with the rest of the world in a meaningful, mutually beneficial dialogue.”

- National Museum of Diplomacy

Building Ties



**What other forms
could citizen
diplomacy take?**

02

Palestine



“

As we arrived...it became immediately evident that our naive assumption of the ‘complexity’ of the situation was only based on false information and propaganda. I can assure you that after only a few hours in the West Bank no ‘reasonable’ human being cannot avoid seeing the evidence of Apartheid and the amount of human rights violations that have been perpetrated for decades with total impunity by the occupying forces protected by our western media propaganda.

— Maurizio Benazzo
Co-director of Where Olive Trees Weep



SYSTEMATIC DESTRUCTION

“Demolition forces” carrying out demolition orders in the village of Tawani.















GRASSROOTS AGGRESSION

A local settler on his way to trespass on and vandalize Palestinian land.











The next day...







CONSTANT ESCALATION



But you can make a difference!

Ecumenical
Accompaniment Program
in Palestine and Israel
(EAPPI)



The Center for
Jewish Nonviolence



International
Solidarity Movement
(ISM)





Thank you!

Sources:

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<https://diplomacy.state.gov/who-else-can-be-a-diplomat-everyone/>

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