



PeaceTrees™ VietNam

Healing Land • Building Community • Planting Futures
Since 1995

2015

Annual Report



Reversing the Legacy of War | Planting Hope for the Future



PeaceTrees Vietnam Annual Report | 2015

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Volunteers

A special thank you to all our dedicated volunteers who graciously gave their time and talents to support the work of PeaceTrees Vietnam.



About PeaceTrees Vietnam

Mission & Vision

PeaceTrees Vietnam is a humanitarian organization dedicated to healing communities affected by war. We accomplish this through landmine removal and education, survivor assistance, and citizen diplomacy. Our vision is to create a healthy future for the children and families of Central Vietnam.

PeaceTrees Vietnam Today

Today, PeaceTrees Vietnam is a Seattle-based humanitarian 501(c)(3) organization working in Central Vietnam to assist those whose lives and livelihoods are threatened by the explosive remnants of war. Founded in 1995, PeaceTrees Vietnam was the first international non-governmental organization given permission to engage in humanitarian demining work in Vietnam after the war.

PeaceTrees Vietnam's goal is to ensure the health and safety of the children and families of Central Vietnam. Our work is focused in two Districts of Quang Tri Province, Dakrong and Huong Hoa. This is one of the poorest and most war-torn regions of the country. Even today, more than 40 years after the war's end, nearly 85% percent of the land remains unsafe, riddled with landmines, bombs, grenades and other unexploded ordnance (UXO). In one out of every five UXO accidents, the victim is a child.

Mine action involves more than just clearing the land. Therefore, PeaceTrees Vietnam's work has expanded to include sponsoring the removal of landmines and UXO, promoting mine risk education and accident prevention education, engaging in environmental and community restoration projects, conducting tree-planting citizen diplomacy programs for environmental restoration and friendship building, offering assistance to UXO victims and their families, microcredit lending, and sponsoring economic and social development.





Key 2015 Accomplishments

53 travelers participated in **4** Citizen Diplomacy Trips.

515 indigenous trees planted by visitors.

3,038 pieces of UXO removed and destroyed.

25.2 acres of land cleared of ordnance.

9,063 families benefited from UXO clearance and removal.

1 kindergarten was built.

220 scholarships awarded to students.

331 students attended PeaceTrees' schools.

17,959 people visited PeaceTrees' **12** libraries; **8,542** people checked out books.

831 new library cards were issued.



2015 | Year in Review

PeaceTrees Vietnam had one of the most exciting and successful years to date! Our 20th year was one to remember and we could not have achieved our goals without the generous support from donors, volunteers, and staff. We would like to thank all our supporters for helping us continue our crucial work as we promote peace, friendship and understanding in Central Vietnam.

In June, we held another successful Mine Risk Education Camp at the Danaan Parry Landmine Education Center. Over 300 students learned about the dangers of UXOs and how to practice safe behaviors when encountering such a threat. Essay and poster contests were also held to promote a dialogue of safety.

We celebrated the dedication of the Good Heart Kindergarten in Xi Nuc village this April as well. This is our tenth kindergarten overall and our sixth kindergarten in Huong Hoa District in the west of Quang Tri Province. The children of Xi Nuc finally have a safe space to flourish, with access to nutritious meals, a playground, and a classroom within which to learn and grow.

We were happy to host not only three citizen diplomacy trips, but a fourth trip during July in partnership with the University of Washington. A group of students travelled to Vietnam and met with our in-country staff to make new connections and engage in or work of cultivating a new legacy of peace between younger generations of

Americans and Vietnamese.

We were delighted to begin International Mine Action Standards training in partnership with the United States Department of State and the GoldenWest Humanitarian Foundation in September. This training advances the skills of our Explosive Ordnance Disposal technicians and increases their safety and health in the field. Our hardworking technicians achieved Level 1 and we look forward for their certification in Level 2 and Level 3 in coming years. These trainings mean more efficient and safe demining in the rural and remote parts of Huong Hoa and DaKrong districts of Quang Tri.

Our 20th Anniversary Luncheon in November was an incredible milestone for PeaceTrees Vietnam. Over 367 friends joined us to gather, share a meal and stories, and to celebrate 20 years. Together we surpassed our goal and raised over \$230,000! We are grateful for our generous donors, whose continuing support helps us to build a future of peace in all corners of Quang Tri Province.

We are looking forward to another successful year in 2016. From all of us at PeaceTrees, thank you once again for your support in 2015 and your ongoing commitment to creating a safe and healthy future for children and families in Central Vietnam. Please join us in 2016 as we continue our life-saving work!

Our Programs

Unexploded Ordnance Clearance

PeaceTrees Vietnam's central program in Quang Tri Province is continuing the clearance of landmines and unexploded ordnance in Central Vietnam. There is a great need for this clearance work, as almost 85% of land in the province is still considered unsafe.

Over the past 20 years, PeaceTrees has seen incredible progress, removing more than 89,000 dangerous weapons from the land—landmines, bombs, mortar shells, and grenades. After PeaceTrees has cleared areas in which these remnants of the war are found, farmers are then able to plant and harvest their crops safely, provide for their family without living in fear of danger, and their children are finally able to play safely.

Our two Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams work throughout the year to ensure the safety of the people of Quang Tri Province. Not one team member has been injured by explosive material in the removal or demolition processes and all teams meet International Mine Action Standards.



EOD Tech with detector

Depictions of life with survivors



One of many presentations



Mine Risk Education

With such a high number of unexploded ordnance that look like balls or other toys, children pick them up not knowing what might happen until it is too late. One out of every five landmine victims is a child.

There are two very important components to PeaceTrees Vietnam's Mine Risk Education program. The first of these is Danaan Parry Landmine Education Center in Dong Ha, the capital of Quang Tri. This center is the only one of its kind in Vietnam and continues to educate Vietnamese citizens and visitors alike about the dangers of UXOs. The second important piece of the program is a mine risk education camp. Held in honor of International Children's Day in June, PeaceTrees hosts more than 300 students with the support of the U.S. Department of State. Children who attend learn about the dangers of UXOs and how to remain safe while encountering them. The camp features a poster and essay contest, which encourages students to think about how these issues affect their daily lives.

"Mine risk education (MRE) is a very necessary and important activity. At my school, all of teachers and students participate in this activity, excitedly and fully. Our life is happy when we are safe. That is what I want to share with you."

- Ho Thi Roi, a student at Huong Linh Secondary School in Huong Hoa District

Our Programs



University of Washington Citizen Diplomacy
July 2015

Citizen Diplomacy & Tree Planting

PeaceTrees Vietnam was founded with the goal of renewing the bond of understanding and respect between Americans and Vietnamese. By promoting peace, friendship, and renewal, we hope to continue to strengthen relationships between the citizens of both nations. Citizen Diplomacy Trips allow travelers to experience Vietnam from a unique and rewarding perspective. By bringing people together to plant trees and share a meal, a story, or a laugh, we create positive memories for people and help dismantle stereotypes that still persist today. This year we hosted 4 Citizen Diplomacy trips with a total of 45 travelers. We were excited to once again partner with the University of Washington's Comparative History of Ideas Department for the trip in July. The students explored the legacy of war and the post-war rebuilding efforts in Vietnam. The students join PeaceTrees in Dong Ha. There, they meet landmine survivors, visit the war museum in Khe Sanh, and participate in community building projects.



Women get a chance to provide families with loans

Microcredit Lending

Extensive landmines and UXO contamination restricts the citizens' full participation in a wide range of economic activities, from farming to transportation. PeaceTrees Vietnam supports a microcredit program, administered in partnership with the Quang Tri Province Women's Union.

Women who receive loans use the funds to increase the productivity of their livestock and land for improving their family's quality of life. Training programs are provided as well for recipients, emphasizing nutrition, sanitation, housing quality, community participation and entrepreneurial skills. By helping to provide the capacity and resources to maintain a healthier livelihood, PeaceTrees supports positive family development. These microloans enhance women's empowerment and supports the country's gender equality goals.

Our Programs

Survivor Assistance

As part of our ongoing work, PeaceTrees Vietnam provides assistance to accident survivors and their families. PeaceTrees offers emergency medical treatment, long-term health care, nutritional support, household economic support, education scholarships, and microcredit lending. During 20 years of work, we have provided survivor assistance to more than 957 victims of UXOs and their families.

This year, 220 scholarships were given to students whose families were affected by UXO accidents. PeaceTrees Vietnam's Friendship Village also is a safe home for economically disadvantaged families who have been impacted by unexploded ordnance.

Survivor with his family



Citizen Diplomat helps out at a PeaceTrees kindergarten



Community Building:

Over the last 20 years PeaceTrees Vietnam has built a 100-home village, 12 libraries, 10 kindergartens, 1 computers lab, and 2 community centers. This year we built the Good Heart Kindergarten in Xi Nuc village, and another kindergarten planned to be built in the coming year.

These projects do more than just provide a safe space for children and families to gather; they are the foundation for a safer and healthier future for children and families in Quang Tri.

Our kindergarten project plays an important role in both the health of young children and the province. Many children in ethnic minority communities are malnourished and do not have a safe place to play. Our work provides a safe place to play, nourishing meals for children ages 3 to 5, and a Vietnamese language-learning program. We are committed to improving the change that these children will succeed in their education, starting from the very beginning.

Our libraries serve many purposes as well. PeaceTrees lends books, creates a meeting space, venues for sporting and cultural events, and even provides safe shelters for women in domestic violence situations. All of these opportunities help the women and children of Quang Tri to more actively contribute to the economic and social development of their villages and their province.



20 Years and



The celebration in Vietnam



In 2015, PeaceTrees Vietnam celebrated its 20th anniversary. This was a monumental landmark for us. Founded in 1995, PeaceTrees has expressed caring and promoted healing the wounds from the war's emotional, economic and environmental losses. Our grassroots approach shows our commitment to help bring safety and well-being to those of Quang Tri Province and Central Vietnam.

In March, Co-founder of PeaceTrees Vietnam Jerilyn Brusseu led a Citizen Diplomacy Trip to Vietnam to celebrate this historic milestone. In Hanoi and Quang Tri, PeaceTrees was recognized for its' outstanding and long-lasting commitment to repairing the wounds of war still present in Quang Tri Province and Central Vietnam today.

In Vietnam President Clinton joined the 20th Year celebrations, appreciating the Vietnamese and American people for the tremendous progress that has been made during these years. In Washington DC, leaders of both countries gathered to celebrate and honor the strong partnerships that have been built step-by-step, through individual relationships, and the potential to build even strong bridges in the future.



A local children's dance troupe per-



PeaceTrees Vietnam Black

The PeaceTrees Vietnam Black Pepper Project started this year as a way to improve the lives and economic conditions of poor, ethnic minority partners in Quang Tri Province. Both Tram Village in Huong Tan Commune and Con Village in Tan Lap Commune are remote areas of Quang Tri that were heavily bombed during the war. Many families there experience extreme poverty and are unable to access even the most basic resources due to high numbers of explosive remnant.

We teamed up with Sahale Snacks, Pacific Basin partnership, One Day's Wages, and other corporate partners to make this exciting project possible. In these two villages, PeaceTrees Vietnam's EOD technicians have cleared 30 families' fields of UXOs to ensure a safe and secure area to grow the pepper. Microcredit loans are given at a low interest rate with no collateral, to be repaid when the pepper is ready to sell at market.



PeaceTrees technical experts then worked with the Quang Tri Women's Union to train and assist farmers. This includes agricultural and financial training, as well as ongoing monitoring by the Women's Union and PeaceTrees. We also provide the plant seedlings, stakes and fertilizer.

The Good Heart Kindergar-



Children play at the new Good Heart Kindergar-

In April of 2015, PeaceTrees Vietnam dedicated and opened the Good Heart Kindergarten. With the help of The Hayward Family Foundation, and other generous private donors, children of Xi Nuc now have a safe environment in which to play and learn.

The families of Xi Nuc, located in Tan Long Commune of Huong Hoa District, have suffered countless injuries and deaths from UXOs. These tragedies hinder the socio-economic progress in the village and because most of the households are of an ethnic minority, they also suffer from high poverty rates and low literacy rates. From ages 3 to 5, ethnic minority children are provided a place to play on safe land cleared by EOD teams, and have opportunities that otherwise would be not available. These include new kindergarten providing Vietnamese lessons in preparation for the children to enter the Vietnamese school system. Children also receive daily nutritional meals to help combat malnourishment. Through PeaceTrees Vietnam's partnership with the Quang Tri Women's Union and local communes, this is the 12th kindergarten that has been built in Quang Tri Province, and we look forward to building many more to support the province's socioeconomic development.

A Grassroots Approach: Humanitari-



Demolition blast at grand demolition site in Hai Ba, Hai Lang

Story to Share: Cu and His Monkey

The small commune of Tan Lien is near Khe Sanh and home to some 3,200 farmers and traders . Most of the population is composed of an ethnic minority, the Viet-Van Kieus. Here our EOD team met fifteen year old Cu who told of some metal scraps that resembled bombs. Hiking through some coffee farms, our team finally reached Cu's home, a wooden stilt shelter amid white coffee flowers.



After a quick examination of the metal scraps that Cu had found, it became clear that the young boy was correct. Covered in dry coffee leaves was a 90mm projectile and an unfired M79 grenade. PeaceTrees' EOD team successfully removed and secured both UXOs, without incident. They were rewarded for their hard work by being introduced to Cu's pet monkey. The monkey was quite friendly and had been trained to warn for wild snakes or weasels that came to kill the family's chickens.



PeaceTrees Vietnam's Explosive Ordinance Disposal technicians identify UXOs and survey land, remove and collect any landmines, grenades, bombs and other war remnants, and dispose of these dangerous ordnances in demolition blasts. PeaceTrees now has 29 EOD technicians that continue to advance PeaceTrees' cause and make the land safe for rural farmers and their families. They can once a gain plow their fields without fear, children can play and walk safely though the countryside, and towns can expand their houses and schools, as well as improve their economy.

Humanitarian Demining

3,030+ dangerous weapons removed, including landmines, bombs, mortar shells, and grenades in 2015



Looking Ahead: 2016

We look forward to another outstanding year of education, economic and social support for those living in Quang Tri Province.

2015 was a big milestone for PeaceTrees and we are excited to achieve bigger and better accomplishments in our third decade! Our EOD technicians will be continuing their training with Golden West and exceeding demining goals. In addition, PeaceTrees has some great new additions planned for 2016.

One of these is the building of a new kindergarten in Tram village in the district of Huong Hoa. The Friends Forever Kindergarten will provide a safe learning environment for over 40 children and support their growth, learning and health. The kindergarten will also be located in the same village as PeaceTrees' new Pepper Project, providing more support for both the children and the farmers in the area.

Another project to look forward to in 2016 is the expansion of our Healthful Gardens for Healthy Children program! Located in Huong Hiep commune in Da Krong district, we hope to improve the lives of many families by helping to provide the supplies and training need for growing nutritious food.



Partners, Donors and Citizen

U.S. Partners



United States Department of State – Office of Weapons Removal & Abatement

GoldenWest Humanitarian Foundation

Pacific Basin Partnership

Sahale Snacks

One Day's Wages

University of Washington

\$10,000 - \$100,000+

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\$5,000+

Linda and Mac Cheever · Jerri Potts · The Sexton Family Foundation · Fran's Chocolates · Karyl & Elias Alvord · Kenneth Alhadef

\$2,500+

Joshua Schroeter & Lisa Kartiganer · Hayward Family Foundation · Sarah Horrigan · Microsoft Matching Grants Program · Grace Episcopal Church · Elizabeth Rudolf · Chinoise Café · John and Beverly Carey · Seattle International Foundation · Deborah and Glenn Nease · Don Hacherl · Tracy and Thomas Garland · Doris Cassan · Scott and Monica Anderson

Vietnam Partners

The Vietnam Union of Friendship Organizations

The Vietnam-USA Society

People's Aid Coordinating Committee

The Vietnam Women's Union

People's Committee Quang Tri Province

Quang Tri Province Department of Foreign Affairs

The Vietnam Women's Union of Quang Tri Province

People's Committee Dong Ha Township

Donors

\$1,000+

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Thank You for Your Generosity

Financials

Audited financial statements for 2015 are not yet available.

However, if you would like information regarding our unaudited financials for 2015, please contact our office at 206.441.6136 or info@peacetreesvietnam.org.

Audited financial statements for 2014 are available online at <http://www.peacetreesvietnam.org/wp-content/uploads/2014-Annual-Report.pdf> or you may contact our office at 206.441.6136 or info@peacetreesvietnam.org.

Thank you!



PeaceTrees Vietnam is grateful to our supporters whose remarkable contributions have allowed us to continue to renew relationships with the people of Vietnam and promote a safe, healthy future for its families and children. We are extremely thankful for the outstanding support from longtime friends and new donors. We offer our heartfelt thanks to the thousands of supporters we do not have space to list, including the many who gave of their valuable time.



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