

The 9th Trip to Guangxi – a Trip of Confirmation, Success and Completion

On Sunday June 9, 2013 Dr. C.K. Wong led the Project Mingde's team to Guangxi for three reasons. The first reason was to conduct the final check on the Yingdong footbridge before handing it over to the village. The second reason was to liaison with the villagers of Dabao Village for a consensus in site boundary and layout of the school and community centre. The last reason was to farewell Dr. D.J. Guo who would leave his long-served department by the end of June.

Besides Dr. Guo and Dr. Wong, the team was formed by two teachers (Adjunct Professor of the Department Prof. Nicolas S.Y. Yeung and Dr. Ivan Lau who is working as a senior engineer in the Environmental Protection Department of HKSAR), five students (Byron Chen, Tim Hu, Manson Lee, Eldon Lin and Tony Wu) and an old friend of Prof. Yeung, Mr. Ng Chan, who has traveled with the team to Guangxi for many times before. The team was then joined by the donor and designer of the Yingdong footbridge, Ms. Jiang and Mr. Ko from JWDA (an architectural firm in Shanghai) at Guilin Airport.

The team was greeted by inclement weather at Guilin Airport. It was reported that it had been raining heavily for the past few days. After some hassles with the blockage of road because of landslides and the breakdown of a van after running through a flooded section, the team finally arrived safely at Rongshui for a rest.



Small stream becomes large river after days of heavy rain.



Driving through the flooded road.
A van broke down afterwards.



Landslide blocking the road to Rongshui...

It was planned that the team would go to Dabao Village on June 10, but prolonged heavy rainfall had rendered the road to the village inaccessible by cars. Thanks to the effort of the village representatives who traveled by motorcycles and walked for an hour from home, the team could meet and discuss with them at Hongshui village, 10 km from Dabao Village. At the office of Hongshui village administration, Dr. Wong presented the three schemes of building arrangements (with models) to the representatives, explaining the pros and cons of these schemes as well. The village representatives studied each scheme and commented that they preferred the basketball court to be located near the road and that the development should minimize as much as possible the use of farmland at the uphill part. The discussion went on for another half an hour without conclusion. Finally the Dabao Village representatives and the team came to a consensus to adopt Scheme C of the arrangements after lunch, during which thorough discussion of the concerns from each side was made. So this is a trip of Confirmation – a confirmation of mutual understanding and final building arrangements from the Dabao Village representatives and the team of Project Mingde.



Dr. C.K. Wong was presenting the schemes to the representatives of Dabao Village.



Mr. Lee was pointing out their concerns to Dr. Wong.



The team and the representatives from Dabao Village were working hard to come up with a win-win solution.



Mr. Lee (Secretary of Dabao Village) and Dr. Wong confirmed to use Scheme C of the building arrangements. The corresponding model was given to the village as a souvenir.



We were all very happy to have reached a consensus in the Dabao School and Community Centre Project.

The rain finally stopped on June 11. The first visit of the day was not the Yingdong footbridge but the primary school of Yingdong Village. JWDA had donated another fund for the construction of a reinforced concrete stage to hold the flag raising ceremony and other activities at school. The stage was constructed to the satisfaction of Ms. Jiang and Mr. Ko, and then the team went on to check the Yingdong footbridge nearby.



The new stage at Yingdong Primary School.

At the site, all team members were excited by the newly constructed Yingdong footbridge. Workers were giving a final touch to it - painting a protective layer on the wood and bamboo parapet. Dr. Wong then assigned the students to measure and record the critical as-built dimensions and layout of the bridge and its connections while representatives from JWDA were talking to the village representatives and the boss of the contractor Mr. Wu to finalize issues for the handover of the bridge. At the end, only very minor defects were found on the bridge and the project team was satisfied with the quality of its construction. After Ms. Jiang had made some remarks on the

maintenance of the bridge, it was then handed over to Yingdong Village and everybody gathered around to celebrate the timely completion of the bridge as the heavy rainfall season has already started. This is a trip of Success – success of the joint effort from JWDA, Project Mingde, the contractor and the villagers of Yingdong in bringing a new sustainable footbridge to the village.



The new Yingdong Footbridge.



The close-up of the Yingdong Footbridge.



Dr. Ivan Lau and the students were checking the critical connection details of the bridge and recording the as-built dimensions of the piers.



Celebrating the successful completion of the Yingdong Footbridge.



The old and new Yingdong Footbridge.

The trip climaxed in the evening of June 11 when the team celebrated the success of Dr. Guo's era of Project Mingde. Dr. Guo took up the post of the project manager of Project Mingde in 2003 and has led more than 300 students in design and project management of the Mingde Building project, the Gewu building project and the Zhengdong Jie Kindergarten project. Dinner was joined by distinguished guests Mr. Pan, chairman of the standing committee of Rongshui county and his colleagues. The trip came to a perfect close when Prof. Yeung and Dr. Guo debriefed the team at the lobby, filling the air with laughter and cheers. This is a trip of Completion –completion of the term of service of Dr. Guo, who has been wholeheartedly devoted to working to perfection, for the Department.



Distinguished guest Mr. Pan, chairman of the standing of Rongshui county was sharing his thought on Project Mingde at the dinner.



Prof. Yeung and Dr. Guo were debriefing the students after dinner.



The torch of Project Mingde is now passed on.



All the best to Dr. Guo!

Finally, everyone who participated in the trip has written down some reflection to share. The torch of Project Mingde is now passed on to its successors and it is hoped that its light will continue to light up places and people in need.