

9-12 Jan Tengchun Bridge Trip Reflection

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This is my second trip involved in Project Mingde and is also a follow up trip to the previous one. In my first trip, I did site supervision in Daping Primary School teacher dormitory and also preliminary study on three broken bridges in Rongshui. Through discussions with professions after we return to Hong Kong, we decided to reconstruct the Tengchun Bridge. Therefore, in this trip, we did land surveying on the bridge, to obtain more data of it.

I studied the course on land surveying in the past semester, so I am still very familiar with the techniques. Although we have practiced a lot in the course and during the surveying camp, it feels apparently different when we perform land surveying in an actual project. We can feel the importance and responsibility of getting accurate data, which might cause serious issues in construction or decision making.

One thing that surprised me a lot is that we could use techniques and equipments taught in lectures, with brand new method depending on the actual situation. I was in the traversing team in the trip. At first, I thought we are only to find out the coordinates of certain points. But then, we have to use total station and prisms to find out the leaning angle or distance of the piers, and to determine whether the piers are damaged and have to be replaced/removed. The method suggested by professors are innovative and totally new. This reminds me of the importance of knowing how to apply, but not to only knowing the theory or knowledge.

I am so glad that I could join the trip because I was trapped in Japan due to flight delay before the trip. Fortunately, I could come back on the day before the trip. However, I misread the weather forecast in Guangxi. I thought it will be around 15 degree Celcius, but then it is only correct for the city part. As we go higher to the mountain, it becomes cooler. And it was less than 0 degree at Daping. Thanks to Anila who borrowed me her coat and took care of us a lot during the trip, and I will always remember that I should prepare more than enough, or more than what I think is enough.

All in all, trips of Project Mingde teach us a lot, we learn not only from professors who go with us, but also from our own experience on site and discussions back in HKU. I am sure that it would be one of the most important activity of preparing me to be a real engineer apart from studying. Being one of the members who participated since the very beginning of the Tengchun Bridge project, I really hope that we could successfully find donors and also finish the project as soon as possible so that the people in Tengchun can use the repaired bridge. Last but not least, I will definitely join the next trip if I have the chance.