

Mingde Program Reflection

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Working in rural Vietnam under supervision from World Vision is indeed precious and unforgettable. Within the 45 days in Hung Yen, we helped build up a library for Trung Dung primary school, conducted social interviews on various topics and delivered living value lessons to primary students, all prove to be influential on me. In particular, this internship experience has rewarded me with better self-development, insights into a developing country, as well as a clearer career path.

To be honest, working with an international NGO is not an easy task for we have to follow the schedule strictly, play in different roles and always work in teams. Given the limited time for each task, I realized the importance of time management and efficiency. Working with schoolmates with different characters and diversified academic backgrounds was another challenge. Yet debates and compromises have built up not only our mutual respect, but also my deeper awareness of my strengths (e.g. creative, understanding of local context) and weaknesses (e.g. less organized, insufficient communication skills).

Prior to this trip, Vietnam was only a typical third world country in my mind. However, my ideas changed gradually after visiting museums of Ethnology, National History and Ho Chi Ming. The knowledge accumulated later contributed to my deeper understandings of Vietnam. Questions about their respect for Ho Chi Ming, their open-up policies, their encouragements on export labour, their needs for local empowerment kept echoing in my mind. By the time I left, Vietnam was no longer an ordinary developing country for me, but a place I knew a little bit and had struggled to make changes.

Development studies is a field that intrigued me since high school and now one of the choices for postgraduate study. This internship enabled me to work on different subfields of development (e.g. health, education, environment etc) and through attempting all options, I eventually found out the one for me - environment and sustainability. Right now I am quite convinced to go for development studies (most likely in the stream of environment) after graduation.

In all, my internship experience in Vietnam is fruitful and enjoyable. Thanks so much for the organization and support from Mingde Program and in fact, I am now looking forward for my next internship trip.