

# The 23<sup>rd</sup> Working Trip to Guangxi (5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> January 2015)

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Project Mingde aims to improve the living environment and provide more education opportunities for the children who are living in rural mainland China since 2003. Through building schools and a series of facilities, it enables HKU students to contribute their knowledge and skills learnt from classes to the society.

For this visit, there were altogether 19 members, including 11 Engineering students, 5 Architecture students and 3 teachers. We visited the site of the current project, Dabao Cultural and Community Centre and a potential site for the next project in Sancun Village.

Our team arrived at Guilin by plane in the afternoon on 5<sup>th</sup> Jan. After 4 hours of travelling by coach, we finally arrived at Rongshui and we could just have some preparation work for the site visits on the first day.



*Fig. 1: The team arrived at Guilin Airport.*

On 6<sup>th</sup> Jan, we spent around 3.5 hours and finally arrived at the Sancun Village at 11a.m. We started to work immediately because our schedule was tight. We were divided into four teams: levelling team, traversing team and detailing team for engineering surveying; questionnaire team for consulting local residents' views respectively.



*Fig. 2: Engineering surveying teams.*

At the beginning, we were not familiar with the procedures of the surveying works. But Dr. Y.P. Huang and Dr. Ryan Wong were very patient to teach us step by step and we could finally manage the work.



*Fig. 3: Smiles on children faces after receiving the gifts (left).*

*Architecture students were introducing themselves (right).*



*Fig. 4: Questionnaire team at the village office and villagers' home.*

Then, we had a chance to visit the existing school. The school was extremely poor. It is no longer being used as it is unsafe for normal usage. The children are urgently in need of a new primary school; otherwise, they may have to leave the village and go to school in a bigger town.

After a whole day of work, we shared our feelings and observations at the hotel at night. I was delighted to see the kind of team spirit among us as all of us were wholeheartedly involved in the land surveying and questionnaire work in that day.

On 7<sup>th</sup> Jan (the third day of this visit), we went to the site of our current project, Cultural and Community Centre at Dabao Village. We walked around the site and Dr. Ryan Yan and Martin briefed the members about this project and the on-going works since it was the first time of most members to visit Dabao Village. At night, we went to Love Seedling Community Service Centre in Rongshui to understand the daily operation and difficulties that they are facing. On the next day, 8<sup>th</sup> Jan, the team went back to Hong Kong and the 23<sup>rd</sup> trip ended.



*Fig. 5 Current site at Dabao Village (left) & Love Seedling Community Service Centre in Rongshui (right)*

This was our first team visit to Sancun Village. Through performing land surveying and doing survey with the villages using questionnaires, we would like to evaluate whether it is feasible to construct a teaching and learning facility there.

The implementation of a construction project is not easy. It usually takes a long time for planning before the construction could start. Meanwhile, it requires lots of communication between different parties, different teams and different members. But once the work was done, you would be proud of what you and your team have done. 'It's like a little baby, you saw her grow up day by day. You will be filled with tears', said by many friends of Project Mingde.



*Fig. 6: All of us are really enjoying this working trip!*

*Some feelings from our team members:*

Oliver: ‘Having been to Sancun Village, I learnt that we should not take everything for granted. We are the fortunate ones and should treasure what we have.’

Martin: ‘The trip gives me a fruitful experience to deeply understand the hardship faced by the Miao community. I hope that I can have more opportunities to interact with the local people and listen to their stories in the next trip.’

Marcus: ‘I am glad that we, the next generation of Project Mingde, are going to foster the spirit of the past participants of Project Mingde. We hope that many people in need can be benefited from the new project. On the day when the construction finished, I hope that I can take my graduation photos with the new building and our team members.’

*List of team members for this trip:*

Dr. Ryan W.M. YAN

Dr. Y.P. HUANG

Dr. Ryan C.P. WONG

11 undergraduate students from the Department of Civil Engineering:

Yulin LU

Ka Chun LIU

Tsing POON

Yat Sing TSE

Pak Yue WONG

Ziyuan YANG

Sio Hin CHOU

Wing Nin CHU

Cheuk Yin LAU

Kristie Ka Ki KWOK

On Ki KWOK

5 undergraduate/postgraduate students from the Department of Landscape Architecture:

Oi Ling WONG

Ho Shun YUEN

Yan ZHANG

Jia Yue XU

Sai Bond CHONG