

Reflection on Completion and Handover Ceremony of Mingde Jundi Teacher Dormitory

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It has been an amazing adventure for the past three days. This journey offers me an opportunity to broaden my horizon and connect with another part of the world. Most significantly, it provides me with inspiration on future service projects in this place.

The first thing that I would like to address is absolutely about the photogenic scenery that I have encountered. Even it took around 13 hours to travel from Hong Kong to our destination, time on the bus is never dull since I was truly fascinated by the beauty of mother nature.

When we first stepped into the primary school, we were welcomed by applause from a crowd of enthusiastic villagers. Some of them were playing instruments made by themselves which has created an atmosphere of warmth and unity. After the handover ceremony, our mission started. Basically we walked around and interviewed some children about their habits on personal hygiene. Out of my expectation, many of them have been doing well that they not only understand the impacts of maintaining personal hygiene on their health, but they also have been paying tremendous efforts in doing so. Unfortunately, time was limited hence we could not have a deep conversation with these sincere and innocent children. If time allowed, I hope that I could learn more about their lives and thoughts.

At night, we had a dinner with the person in charge of this programme. We were told a story about the principal of this primary school. He used to be a young boy who was financially supported by the villagers for his study. When he grew up, he gave up jobs with good prospect in urban areas, but returned to work for the village to express his gratitude to endless efforts paid by the villagers. Moved by the story, I realized that never shall we underestimate our power. Every step we take and every move we make could bring a massive influence to others' live. Out of a sudden, a famous saying from Mahatma Gandhi started to linger in my mind. "Be the change you want to see the world". I kept asking myself two questions. Firstly, what can I do to improve the lives of villagers as a dental student? Secondly, what can I do to make the world a better place as a global citizen?

Last but not least, no words could express my respect to the pioneers who have discovered this place which are in need, who have devoted substantial resources to this village, who have been continuously paying effort to improve the living standards of villagers. Without the betterment of transport and infrastructure, villagers could hardly travel to and from their hometown. Without the education on significance of personal hygiene, villages might not have cultivated an awareness towards health and diseases. I would say that the previous intervention done has been a huge success. Somehow, it is comparative to a snowball effect. When some volunteers took the initiative to actualize their plans, more and more people are then encouraged to expand their mission and vision to reach more people in need.

In short, action speaks louder than words. There are many parts of the world which need more attention and assistance. It is time to consider how could we stretch our limits and leave our comfort zones. I am ready for a new challenge ahead.