

This trip to Guangxi is an extensive and exploratory one. We have been to Daping, Fengmu and Danzhou and we have met a lot of stakeholders of projects. Daping is a village where we are going to build a residential building for a primary school. Before visiting the village, we had a chance to see a completed bridge project responsible by past members of Project Mingde. I have seen many structures built by Project Mingde in photos but this was the first one I really saw with my own eyes and touched on. Witnessing how people in Daping village live, I was surprised by their optimism and life style. They had poor living environment and the local hygiene condition was pathetically out of my expectation. Nonetheless, they were joyful and satisfied with what they possess. They were gracious and served us with loads of indigenous food.

The project in Fengmu consists of some buildings also in a primary school, which has a larger scale than Daping primary school. Hundreds of students were all diligently cleaning the whole campus when we arrived there. They did not seem reluctant and was excited about our visit. After a meeting with the staff members of the school, the students ended cleaning and were playing with their homemade toys, like shuttlecocks and dodgeballs made of plastic bags. We took some photos with the students, who were always grinning as a kid should do.

Danzhou is an ancient town with buildings constructed in the Ming dynasty. It was just a hub we stayed for a night and had meetings with local contractors. We had a look of some attractions there before we left by boats.

We have passed by countless places when we travelled from place to place, so I had time to enjoy the views of Guangxi and understand the lives of ordinary Guangxi residents, mostly farmers. Although I could not help much in meetings as I was not familiar with the engineering concepts yet, I enjoyed listening to the professionals and trying to learn from them. I did learn something that I may not know by only attending lectures. This unforgettable trip raised my awareness of the people in rural areas around the world and also my enthusiasm on civil engineering.