

Reflection of working trip to Daping

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It may just be a short working trip to Daping. But for me, I think this is something that really broaden my horizon and give me a greater exposure on the work of civil engineering. The things that I have learnt are not only the technical knowledge but also some important soft skills like socializing and collaboration with others. And it is really a precious chance for me to learn from Professor Tham and Professor Mak during the trip and work under their kind guidance.

This working trip provided me an opportunity to turn words on textbooks into actions that are truly beneficial; it is also my first time to observe the process of construction in details. Through continuous discussions and interactions with Engineer Luk, we learnt more about the construction details of the teaching dormitory inside the primary school as well as the limitations they have encountered during construction stage. Most importantly, Engineer Luk also teaches us a lot of useful construction knowledge and truly demonstrates his passion towards his work as a civil engineer. He answered our questions patiently and we also recorded down all necessary details for the progress report. Some aspects with regard to the foundations of teacher dormitory, pattern of brick walls, design amendments details were clarified together with Engineer Luk. Although the code of safety practices and construction methods may not be totally in line with the same standard in Hong Kong, I think it can also be very good learning experiences to see things in different perspective.

Moreover, another highlight of this trip is to study and analysis the feasibility to rebuild the 3 broken bridges in Rongshui which were damaged during the once-in-a-century flood. We did some measurement on the dimension of bridge as well as the length of the bridge span in order to study the feasibility of rebuilding or repairing the damaged bridges. Through communicating with the villagers, we know that the main reason of damaging the bridges is not by the flooding water but instead, damage is caused by the big and heavy timber carried downstream. Therefore the disastrous effect of this flood is so damaging, and precautions should be made to avoid this large scale destruction on bridges in future.

On the other hand, it is a valuable chance that we could meet and chat with the local people including the teachers in Daping Primary School and the villagers in Rongshui followed by their warm hospitality. We are all impressed by their devotion and had a great time there. Apart from meeting villagers and teachers; we also visited and had a good discussion with Mr. Ng, the boss of the contractor company. Through meetings with different stakeholders involved in this construction project, I really know more about the duties and responsibilities of each sector in order to makes thing better, with concerted efforts. Moreover, every stakeholder plays a vital role and communication is of paramount important to avoid problems like the misunderstanding of project details. This also serves as a real life example to illustrate what we have learnt in lessons.

Although we spent most of the time on travelling, there were ample learning opportunities throughout the whole trip. A Chinese proverb says "it is better to travel ten thousand miles

than to read ten thousand books " After this eye-opening trip with the thoughtful sharing from the two experienced professors, I am inspired and it is my great pleasure to join Mingde project and learn from them. Last but not the least, I think that our team cooperated smoothly and is also grateful to build our friendship among five teammates throughout this short but fruitful working trip to Daping.