

Mingde Project Vietnam

(11th June – 27th July, 2018)

By Pang Lam To - BEng(CivE) II

Beyond my expectation

I had never joined a cross-disciplinary learning programme overseas. This programme sounded intriguing to me as I was eager to develop a deeper understanding of Civil Engineering as well as to train myself to analyze problems from different perspectives. Yet, the programme brought me much more than I had expected.

Hands-on Engineering experience

I took this project as a valuable opportunity to learn practical engineering skills. Through participating in various construction processes, I now have a better understanding of each procedure. For example, bricklaying, steel fixing, cement mixing, and sieving the sand etc. The understanding of the construction process is extremely important as the engineers need to optimize the labour and maximize the working efficiency on site. The sequence of works is a crucial part of engineering project management. It is necessary for an engineer to be familiar with different working processes as it is his/her responsibility to ensure the construction is proceeding smoothly and efficiently. A lot of engineering practices were not taught at school and these practices enable me to prepare myself for the future engineering career.

Change my mind

As a Civil Engineering student, I used to focus on the hardware and believe the facilities played the most important role in providing a better living condition to the community. I thought that once the construction had been completed and the local community would benefit from the infrastructure. Yet, I did not think deeper about the usage, the communication with the local community and the operation in the future. Social Science and Comparative Literature students could always analyze problems from humanities perspectives. Through conducting needs assessment and evaluation with Social Science and Comparative Literature students, it reminded me to view the same issue from other aspects and take the opinions from the locals into account.

Cultural Exposure

I visited Hanoi, Ninh Bình, Da Nang and Hội An during the vacation. These are beautiful and gorgeous places. Not only was learning from Engineering or social science work but also the culture in Vietnam. I had learned their language, history, and tradition through the interaction with the local Vietnamese. The locals were welcoming and hospitable and I really appreciate their attitudes and passions.