

Project Mingde: Vietnam
Ho Kai Fung, BEng (CivE) II

Engineering-related experience:

We have been given the opportunities to work with the local contractor and workers. During the weekly meeting with contractor, whenever I have questions related to the construction plan, for instance, some unclear expressions on the design drawing and detail of the construction methods, I can ask the contractor for the answer or for the further explanation. Meanwhile, the local workers taught me several construction techniques so that I can have a clear understanding on what the workers are doing in the construction site. For example, the appropriate way to tie the reinforcing bars together with wire and the correct manner for plastering work. Besides, I have also learnt the skills to complete the site diary and report, for example, the purpose of writing these site records and the contents to be included in these site records.



Fig.1 Doing construction work

CIP lessons:

Apart from construction work, we have given a total of six lessons to the students in Trung Dung secondary school which aims at raising their awareness on child injury prevention (CIP). In the lesson, I was not just the teacher who taught students the basic CIP knowledge, but I was also the learner. I learnt how to cooperate with the interpreter to control the pace of translation delivery so as to facilitate the lesson. I learnt how to adopt the active learning approach in lesson planning to make the lesson more attractive and interactive. I learnt how to interact with the people who spoke in other language. After the 7-week of internship, we have established a good relationship with the students and some of the students even cried in the last day we met.



Fig.2 Photo taken from CIP lesson

Work as a team:

I worked with groupmates from different faculties to finish various tasks, including library evaluation, model documentation and needs assessment. Before the trip, I thought that there would be a lot of conflict between social science students and civil engineering students as our mindsets are quite different. For example, when discussing the solutions of a problem, civil engineering students usually focus on solutions through construction or structural alteration whereas social science students usually give solutions related to education or awareness raising.

However, when we worked together in the trip, we learnt to respect others' opinions and tried to integrate the two kinds of mindset. For example, one of the suggestions written in the report of needs assessment is that fences could prevent the children from falling into the lake accidentally while education could raise children alertness on drowning prevention so that they would stop the dangerous activities consciously. Different people may have distinct ways of thinking, we should learn to appreciate others, for instance, taking their good qualities and follow them, their bad qualities and avoid them.



Fig.4 Group photo taken during community visit