

Quarter II, narrative report of McGregor Model Forest Association Representative Office in Khabarovsk

While the first quarter was highlighted by the inception mission to Khabarovsk, work plan development and its discussion with the Russian partners in the second quarter the main efforts were to start the project going on. With this purpose the Khabarovsk office kept coordination of the further activities with the Project partners. With the work plan having been discussed and agreed upon we started to get ready for the September mission to Khabarovsk of two Component 1 instructors. Thus the main efforts in this quarter were concentrated on the activity within the 1st Component.

According to the work plan training of Russian participants in wood frame house construction was to begin in the middle of September. Before the event could happen the Project had to solve several significant issues

1. ***There was a need to identify training participants.*** The DPPE made its decision to include teachers and instructors from all the schools where they teach carpentry. Initially 38 students were included in the group. It was obvious that training could not be as effective with this many students and the Project proposed that the group be divided in two so that more individual approach could be used. Finally the amount of students decreased to 29 and two groups of 13 and 16 students both including teachers and instructors were formed.
2. ***There was a need to identify training schedule.*** After consultations with the DPPE and Component I coordinator it was decided that the groups will undergo four weeks training with the first week being purely theory in class and the rest a combination of theory and practical work. The second group was scheduled to take over immediately after the first group was done.
3. ***There was a need to identify house design for the construction.*** Bill Sluyter has forwarded a number of house designs so that the Department could chose the one they liked. Initially the School #3 on the property of which the construction was supposed to take place made a decision to build a two storied building. Mr. Sluyter has managed to convince the Russian partners that the main purpose of the Project is not to build a house but to train trainers and give them enough theory and introduce to the Russian building code. His attitude turned to be right as it turned out later was the fact that the DPPE was not quite ready for the construction of a big house since the money for it were not in the budget and there were some difficulties in obtaining funds for the construction of small modest house.
The designs for the basement were also sent from Canada so that the basement was ready before the visit of the instructors. The school managed to have it finished in due time, but made it in Russian style, i.e. 50 centimeters thick instead of 20 centimeters. This was done due to great misconception as they though 20 will not be enough. There was nothing left but to use this basement.

4. ***There was a need to prepare adequate amount of lumber for the construction.*** Bill Sluyter has developed a list of lumber materials that was delivered to the DPPE well in advance. Thus we eliminated all problems with the lumber in the future. All lumber was cut and dried. Lumber quality though was not as good because the dimensions were all different. But it was a good lesson for Russian since they learned that millimeters do matter. We had to plane all the lumber to dimension to eliminate all these problems.
5. ***There was a need to locate, identify and purchase all the tools necessary for the construction.*** With this purpose Bill Sluyter and Igor Snitsky have been communicating on a daily basis trying to identify the necessary right models. A list of tools was compiled and the local vendor in Khabarovsk was identified. The company “Stroika” was identified because of the following reasons:
 - It is on the local market for more than 10 years
 - It is an authorized Bosh dealer
 - It provides three years warranty on the tools and post warranty service

Since wood frame houses are new in the district it was difficult to locate air nailers and collated nail for them which are not sold in Khabarovsk. This is why we had to locate SENCO dealer in Moscow and buy these products from them.. All the tools were ready by the time practical work began.

6. ***There was a need to prepare teaching materials for the students.*** This was the most time consuming effort. Mr. Sluyter sourced out the relevant video tapes, DVDs and books as well as Russian Building Codes which have been developed with CMHC assistance. The CMHC has also published a book on Canadian wood frame houses construction in Russian and this book was also included on the list. Other than this, materials on house construction based on the Russian Building Code have been prepared and sent over for translation. Altogether there were 368 pages of the material which had to be translated. This activity took most of August and first decade of September and they were ready for copying on the 10th of September. With DPPE assistance that took it upon them to make enough copies of the materials 672 pages of teaching materials were copied for all 29 participants what makes 19,500 pages. As a result each participant has received Copies of Russian building codes (3 of them), a copy of the book “Canadian wood frame houses construction” and 14 lectures on the theory. The books shipped from Canada will be later transferred to School’s libraries and the Scientific and Methodological Center. During the classes the students expresses genuine interest in the video materials and were made copies of them as well. Thus we may easily say that each student has received enough of materials to begin the training process when they come back to their schools. The same set of materials has been issues to “Magma” company which want to become the leader in this industry in Khabarovsk. Also it is planned to provide them to the former CIDA partner Yuri Donkan in Sinda of Nanai district.

The training started as it was planned on the 20th of September when everything was ready. During the first week the classes took place at the Methodological center and later the group moved to school # 3 on which premises the group continued their training. All participants though they reflected different categories as to their age, level of education and positions expressed great interest in the new technology. There were expressed some intentions to start construction of these kind of houses immediately. During the training process the participants were closely studied with the purpose to select the most promising ones for the study tour to Canada which will take place next year.

The Project activity at school # 3 immediately became known in Khabarovsk thanks to a word of mouth and many construction companies and businesses came to the site to be introduced to the technology. All of them were provided with ample information.

In September Mr. Stefen Simek, the President of “Ferguson Simek Clark”, a Canadian company that has an extensive experience in Russia and is now building villages in Sakhalin Island visited Khabarovsk for the International Economic Congress. He was introduced to the Project’s instructors Mr. Sluyter and Marcus and visited the site. With the Project’s support a meeting was arranged between him and Mr. Dovzhko where possibilities of expanding framed house construction were discussed.

As to the other two components there were mostly coordination activities. With the purpose to prepare Glenda Shaw Garlock’s visit which is planned for November. Her visa and plane tickets were obtained and coordination with the DPPE continued.

It should be noted that Khabarovsk office has provided assistance to two missions to Khabarovsk by CIDA officers Steven Basadur and Adrian Walraven, which took place in July and September. Igor Snitsky has developed visit itinerary and coordinated it with the Russian Partners. During the first and the second visits Mr. Basadur and Walraven. Visited with the Project stakeholders and the construction site at school # 3.