

Capacity Building on Emergency Medical Services - Visit the Tzu Chi Hospital of Chinese Taipei



New Taipei City, Chinese Taipei - The APEC Emergency Preparedness Capacity Building Center (EPCC), established in 2017, to assist APEC economies in emergency preparedness through experience and technology sharing.

Mr. Silvestre Zubeldia Barrameda JR from Local Government Academy-Department of the Interior and Local Government (LGA-DILG) of the Philippines visited Chinese Taipei in May 2017, to learn about the emergency system of local governments and the emergency medical services.

In the summer of 2015, there was an explosion in the water park that caused 499 injuries and 15 deaths in New Taipei City. At the same time, amount of injuries crowd into the hospitals, emergency medical services faced a major challenge for emergency response. Therefore, under the EPCC's arrangement, Mr. Barrameda and EPCC colleagues visited the Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital to understand the emergency response process and experience for the management of multiple casualty.



Dr. Yang, the director of the emergency department at Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital, introduced on Chinese Taipei's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and the National Disaster Medical Aid Team (DMAT), briefed to the emergency medical difficulty during the bombing of the explosion in the water park.

Chinese Taipei establishes the regional operation centers for emergency medical care in six regions which under the Ministry of Health and Welfare for cross-regional directing. The centers monitor regional disasters 24 hours, and integrate the emergency health impact as well as organizing the training programs for regional medical rescue team. In the event of a major disaster, it can quickly and accurately integrate information to accelerate the response and reduce disaster losses.

The APEC EPWG meeting and the APEC Disaster Risk Reduction Framework that adopted in 2015, both stressed the "new normal" in the Asia-Pacific region. In particular, climate factors and terrorist attacks have increased the scale of disasters. At the time of major disasters, the operation of the emergency medical system and the rescue mechanism for multiple casualty incidents are very important.

Director Yang also emphasized that the number of patients during catastrophic events often exceeds our expectations, or underestimates injuries on-site, or needs special care equipment (such as burns ward), how can the regional coordination or emergency adjustment of space equipment be performed when the hospitals cannot load? The hospitals in greater Taipei area held a referral meeting every month to coordinate these tasks. The First Aid Responsible Hospital conducts desktop and practice drills for regional disaster risk assessments each year. The types of drill include fires, car accidents, earthquakes, and typhoons. Mr. Barrameda mentioned that there is no coordination or management among the public hospitals, private hospitals and governments in the Philippines. In all phases of disasters, the public-private partnership is quite important.

The APEC EPCC looks forward to strengthening the regional emergency capability building and cooperation through the best practice of experience and knowledge sharing.

By: Kiri Chen