

emergency medical teams based on global standards. Exactly 10 years after, from once recipient of international aid, for the first time, the Philippine Emergency Medical Assistance Team was deployed internationally in response to the 7.8 magnitude earthquake in the Republic of Türkiye in 2023.

Method/Description: PEMAT served a total of 1,022 patients during their 14-day operation within the 21-day duration of the mission.

Despite the extreme cold weather, language barrier, cultural differences, unfamiliar surroundings, long travel, PEMAT provided quality health services to the people of Adiyaman. Majority (97.4%) of the patients rated the PEMAT service as “excellent,” and none rated the service as “poor” and “very poor”.




Results/Outcomes: PEMAT’s first international deployment showcased the country’s capacity to respond effectively to disasters, both domestically and internationally. It is a testament to the “Bayanihan” spirit of the Filipino people and the unwavering commitment and solidarity in helping those in need, anytime and anywhere in the world.

Conclusion: The journey from a domestic response to a global humanitarian workforce is a remarkable transformation. As the Philippines continues to face its own challenges, the lessons from the said international deployment will be applied to strengthen the country’s disaster preparedness and response, especially with the possibility of an earthquake happening in the country’s capital.

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Insights from International Search and Rescue Responders to the 2023 Türkiye-Syria Earthquakes

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Background/Introduction: In the early morning of February 6th, 2023, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck southeastern Türkiye and parts of Northern Syria. The earthquake was followed by multiple high-magnitude aftershocks (5.6 - 7.5). The earthquake caused 50,339 deaths and 311,000 collapsed or severely damaged houses. In the wake of this disaster, the Turkish government appealed for international assistance to expedite search and rescue operations and medical assistance.

Objectives: This study aims to explore the experiences and insights of the first responders during their deployment to Türkiye in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake.

Method/Description: A semi-structured interviews were performed with 18 first responders from the Jordan International Search and Rescue team (JSAR) who deployed to Türkiye and participated in the search and rescue operations. The JSAR team is certified as a heavy international team and works under the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (ISARAG).

Results/Outcomes: The results revealed a success in coordinating the international response of over 90 teams. However,

numerous obstacles and difficulties were encountered due possibly to the sheer scale of the disaster. These obstacles can be categorized into resource allocation and time management. Resources allocation issues include the selection of the operation site; suboptimal use of teams’ capabilities and capacities; and suboptimal coordination and collaboration with local authorities and volunteers. Time management issues include the deployment decision time, transportation to the operation site, and the scheduled roster of deployed personnel.

Conclusion: These findings stress the urgent need to reevaluate and reform current approaches to ensure more efficient and impactful future disaster relief efforts.

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Lessons from the Türkiye Earthquake 2023

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Background/Introduction: On February 6, 2023, a 7.8 earthquake hit Gaziantep, Türkiye, causing massive destruction, over 59,000 deaths, and displacing millions. EMT Aceh from Indonesia was deployed to provide medical aid.

Objectives: This research aims to evaluate EMT Aceh’s disaster response during the 2023 Türkiye earthquake, identifying key successes and challenges. It offers recommendations for improving future responses and examines the importance of international collaboration, community acceptance, and government support in the effectiveness of foreign medical teams.

Method/Description: The study used an intrinsic descriptive case study method, including interviews with EMT members and thematic analysis of primary and secondary data.


Results/Outcomes: Key findings show EMT Aceh’s success stemmed from strategic resource use, local collaboration, and public acceptance. Challenges included extreme climate and language barriers.

Conclusion: In conclusion, EMT Aceh’s experience underscores the importance of preparedness, collaboration, and adaptability in disaster response. Recommendations include improving communication skills, fostering teamwork, enhancing logistical preparedness, and promoting community engagement to ensure more efficient and effective responses in future disasters.

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Italian Field Hospital Experience in Türkiye

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Background/Introduction: On February 6th, 2023, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Türkiye and Syria causing

hundreds of thousands of casualties and almost 57,000 fatalities. The two main hospitals of Antakya (capital of the Hatay province, 1,686,043 inhabitants) were strongly damaged and not operational from the day of disaster. The EMT2-ITA Regione Piemonte (EMT2-ITA) deployed its field hospital in Antakya and became operative on February 2023, the 17th.

Objectives: The objective of this study is to perform a descriptive analysis of the EMT2-ITA mission in Türkiye, to better prepare the teams for future missions.

Method/Description: Starting from the paper patient records and the surgical procedures logbook, a chart review was conducted: the anonymous data of the patient records were manually entered into an electronic data collection form by healthcare staff (nurses supervised by doctors). Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the database.

Results/Outcomes: A total of 5,459 triage admissions were recorded during the 29 days of activity: almost all the admissions (4,952; 90.7%) were not critical patients (white or green codes), with only few cases (507; 9.3%) needing urgent or immediate care (yellow and red codes).


The EMT2-ITA performed a total of 51 surgical operations (orthopedic, gynecological, general, and maxillofacial surgery). The mother-child emergency was important too, with 31 births and 23% (1281) of pediatric patients.

Conclusion: The data collected show that the main activity of EMT2-ITA in Türkiye was the full commitment to support and maintain the ordinary health care capacity of the affected country.

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The Essential Role of Intensive Care Unit in an EMT Type 2: The Türkiye Mission

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Background/Introduction: EMT2-ITA Regione Piemonte (EMT2-ITA) was classified by WHO as Emergency Medical Team type 2 in 2018. The WHO EMT type 2 standards do not include Intensive Care Unit (ICU) for this type of field hospitals.

On February 2023, after the 7.8 earthquake struck Türkiye and Syria, the EMT2-ITA deployed its field hospital in Antakya (capital of the Hatay province, 1,686,043 inhabitants)

Objectives: The objective of this study is to report ICU activity of EMT2-ITA in Türkiye, raising interesting points of discussion regarding the essential role of this capacity in a EMT type 2 field hospital.

Method/Description: Starting from the paper patient records and the anesthesiologist logbook, a chart review was conducted: the anonymous data of the patient records were manually entered into an electronic data collection form by healthcare staff (nurses supervised by doctors). Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the database.

Results/Outcomes: A total of 11 patients were admitted in the ICU during the 29 days of field hospital activity with a mean of 1.5 occupied beds per day (with peaks of all the 4 ICU beds occupied for 2 days): almost all the admissions (9; 82%) were patients needing sub-intensive care; 2 patients were critical (treated with intubation and ventilation) and were referred to other facilities after stabilization in the ICU.



Conclusion: The data collected show that an EMT type 2 would benefit from at least 2 ICU beds plus a sub-intensive capacity to treat patients needing higher standards of care than inpatient ward.


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Mobile Health Services by Turkish Red Crescent Following the 2023 Kahramanmaraş Earthquakes

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Background/Introduction: Following the February 6th, 2023 Kahramanmaraş Earthquakes (Mw: 7.7 and 7.6), critical health services were needed in regions with limited access. TRC, coordinated by the Ministry of Health, deployed mobile health teams to address these needs, reaching those with restricted access due to the disaster

Objectives: This study evaluates the effectiveness of mobile health services provided post-earthquake, examining service accessibility, diversity, and impact on affected populations to assess the strategic role of mobile health in disaster response.

Method/Description: Between February 18 and June 12, 2023, 11 mobile health teams were deployed across six affected provinces (Adıyaman, Gaziantep, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Malatya, Osmaniye). Each team, consisting of a doctor, nurse/paramedic, radiology technician, and psychologist, operated from mobile vehicles converted for health services. Primary care services, including medication supply, wound care, home health care, X-rays, and ECGs, were provided. A survey of 453 individuals from a population of 47,127 was conducted to assess satisfaction.

Results/Outcomes: The teams reached 42 districts, examining 47,127 patients, distributing 75,156 boxes of medication, taking 997 X-rays, and performing 117 ECGs. Wound care and home health care were provided to 1,351 and 1,051 patients, respectively, with psychosocial support offered to 18,081 individuals. Satisfaction was high, with over 93% satisfied with services and 97% with team communication.

Conclusion: The mobile health services effectively met the health needs in disaster-affected regions, emphasizing the importance of strategic coordination and the potential for similar models in future emergencies.

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