

Abroad Official trip report form (Student)

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Destination	WHO Western Pacific Regional office (WPRO)
Period of trip	2014/03/26-2014/03/29
Purpose of trip	Visit to the surveillance team of WPRO as "pre-internship"

Summary of activities

WHO Western Pacific Regional office (WPRO) is one out of the six regional offices located in Manila, the Philippines (Figure 1). WPRO presides over Asia and Pacific from Mongolia in the north to New Zealand in the south and from the western border of China to the Pitcairn islands in the mid- Pacific. The countries and areas of this region include the world's most populous nation and small island states with populations of only a few thousand people. In addition, this region harbors a numerous emerging and re- emerging infectious diseases "nest".

In order to minimize the risk of emerging diseases and other public health emergencies through collective responsibility for public health security, the International Health Regulations (IHR, 2005) globally, and Asia Pacific strategy for emerging diseases (APSED, 2010) in the Asia are employed. According the procedure in APSED 2010, 8 "focus areas" perform practical activities for archiving the aim. "Focus area 1"—Surveillance, risk assessment and response conducts event-based surveillance, indicator-based surveillance, risk assessment capacity, rapid response capacity and field epidemiology training. In WPRO, the Emerging Disease Surveillance and Response (ESR) unit is in charge of APSED, working with Member States and partners to build sustainable national and regional systems and capacities to ensure public health security through preparedness planning, prevention, early detection and rapid response to emerging infectious diseases. The Surveillance team is one component of the ESR unit and we joined this team because this working group can kindly accept us as "volunteer" of WHO and thus candidate for our LP internship.

Their work started with rumor surveillance officer early in the morning, around 6 AM. The officer used surveillance specialized web site—Global Public Health Intelligence Network (GPHIN) and ProMED service and other surveillance webpage—then filtered out highly concerning article of which contents could be potentially critical to public health in the Region. Then the officer piled up the articles for pre- morning meeting at 7 AM in front of other officers and discussed with the issues and filtered more intensively. During the morning meeting, with leading officer, rumor surveillance officer did report then added the issues to following-up list. Everyday the surveillance team checked further information on the monitoring action list and if there was no additional updating information and the issues were under controlled then closed the case. By conducting these activities routinely, they checked every ongoing disease in 37 countries in the Region everyday.

And, fortunately, we could have a chance to attend teleconference regarding the risk assessment of Zika virus infection in Pacific Islands with WHO headquarters, the regional office in America (Pan American Health Organization), WPRO, Euro office, and the country office in Fiji. This teleconference was totally web-based meeting which was sharing voices and screen in the same time. They shared their information efficiently and did active discussion with questions and comments and prepared countermeasures.

Additionally, we observed other two meeting; one is that concerning Typhoon, Yolanda, which struck the Philippines, reporting their activities for rebuilding their health system on the both physical and mental health sides. The other one was a regular meeting for the WHO Representatives from all of the country offices in this region and senior managements in the WPRO.

The activities we participated in were also abundant. During the morning meeting, Dr. Li Ailan (Director of ESR; Figure 2) introduced some epidemic diseases now prevalent in the Western Pacific Region and especially the H7N9 avian influenza in China. They began to monitor H7N9 from the initial report in 2013 April, and drew the picture of human numbers of cases H7N9 infected until now. Base on this picture, Dr. Li gave us “homework”—What is the trend of H7N9

human cases in China in coming years? In order to solve this question, we discussed with three teachers as teamwork, and made our own conclusion step by step (Figure 3), finally made a small presentation to ESR members as our homework (Figure 4). After this presentation, ESR members showed interest in our talk and discussed with us in detail. They also talked their own ideas about this and gave many useful advices for us.

The other exciting activity is that we entered their rapid risk assessment (RRA) meeting and Dr. Karl Schenkel showed us how to assess the risk of diseases at the early stage. He assumed that ‘if we found people infected with Ebola virus in Tokyo airport’ and we conducted a RRA of this situation under his supervision. Because in the WPRO, there is a flow chart of the RRA system and thus we had a brainstorm and discussed soundly according this issue (Figure 5). By each step, we firstly showed our own thoughts, the factors we considered, and the decision. Then, Dr. Schenkel and his colleagues discussed each topic with us and supplied some possibilities or explained the principle of decision in detail. Finally, he showed us the total progress of how to make a RRA with many different factors we should considered in different situations. It was a real practical “lesson” to understand well about their work.

Finally, this trip was meaningful for us to think deeply about and understand the activity of the international organization. We thank Dr. Isoda and LP officers for coordinating this trip, and Prof. Horiuchi and Prof. Sawa for giving us this opportunity. We also thank all members of the ESR unit for the warm hospitality.



Figure 1. WHO Western Pacific Regional office (WPRO)



Figure 2. Group photo with Dr. Li Ailan



Figure 3. Discussion and preparing of the presentation of our “homework”



Figure 4. Presentation of the trend of H7N9 human cases in China in coming years and discussion with ESR members



Figure 5. Brain storm for 'Ebola outbreak in Tokyo airport' risk assessment

<p>Approval of supervisor</p>	<p>Institution • Official title • Name :</p> <p style="text-align: right;">印</p>
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