



Pinays from rural areas avail more of birthing services of hilots

Women from rural areas in the Philippines avail more of the assistance of hilots in time of birthing deliveries rather than the services of skilled health personnel like doctors, midwives or nurses. This is according to the results of the 2007 Sub-Regional Multiple Cluster Survey (SR-MICS) conducted by the National Statistics Office in the 24 areas covered by the Sixth Country Programme for Children (CPC-6) of the UNICEF in the Philippines.

About four in ten of the deliveries that happened in two years preceding the survey were made through the assistance of traditional birth attendants (TBAs) or "hilots" in the local vernacular. This is more likely to happen in the rural areas rather than in urban areas due to the inaccessibility of birthing facilities in rural areas.

The largest percentages of women aged 15-49 years who gave birth in the two years preceding the survey by birthing services of hilots were recorded in 17 of the 24 areas surveyed. The biggest percentage were noted in Sulu (78.7%), Masbate (76.7%), Maguindanao (74.4%), Zamboanga del Sur (72.4%) and North Cotabato (69.7%) where at least seven out of ten deliveries were assisted by TBAs.

The single most critical intervention for safe motherhood is to ensure that a competent health

worker with midwifery skills is present at every birth, and that transport is available to a referral facility for obstetric care in case of emergency. About 53.6 percent of the births recorded two years preceding the survey in the country were attended by skilled medical personnel like doctors, midwives or nurses. This is especially apparent in highly urbanized areas like Manila (98.0%), Pasay City (95.4%), Cebu City (89.3%), Quezon City (88.8%) and Davao City (73.3%) where birthing personnel, facilities and services are highly accessible.

Among the skilled health personnel, more women in highly urbanized areas use the birthing services of doctors rather than the services of midwives and nurses. This is specifically evident in Manila at 77.9 percent, Pasay City (73.9%), Quezon City (57.3%), and Cebu City (54.3%). Eight in 24 of the CPC-6 areas surpassed the national average of 30.8 percent for doctor-assisted deliveries. The other four areas are Mountain Province (40.8%), Davao City (40.5%), Negros Oriental (40.1%), and Guimaras (38.2%).

The top three areas with the lowest percentage of births attended by skilled health personnel were lowest in Sulu at 19.9 percent, Masbate (23.2%), and Zamboanga del Sur (24.9%).

Women aged 15-49 years who gave birth in the two years preceding the survey by most qualified person assisting during delivery, CPC-6 Areas: 2007

Province/City	Total number of births in two years preceding the survey (In thousands)	Assistance with delivery	Most qualified person assisting during delivery					No one attending	Any skilled personnel (doctor, nurse, midwife)
			Doctor	Nurse	Midwife	Hilot	Others		
All CPC-6 Areas	988	99.8%	30.8%	1.5%	21.3%	44.0%	2.2%	0.2%	53.6%
Agusan del Sur	33	100.0%	16.7%	2.4%	17.3%	63.0%	0.7%	0.0%	36.3%
Antique	24	100.0%	18.6%	0.8%	24.8%	48.7%	7.0%	0.0%	44.3%
Aurora	10	100.0%	19.4%	0.7%	19.7%	59.2%	0.9%	0.0%	39.9%
Bukidnon	66	99.4%	15.1%	0.0%	12.8%	64.7%	6.8%	0.6%	27.9%
Camarines Norte	28	100.0%	26.8%	5.8%	24.9%	39.9%	2.5%	0.0%	57.5%
Capiz	27	99.7%	20.3%	0.0%	35.1%	44.1%	0.3%	0.0%	55.3%
Cebu City	76	100.0%	54.3%	3.6%	31.3%	8.9%	1.8%	0.0%	89.3%
Davao City	73	99.5%	40.5%	1.2%	31.6%	24.5%	1.7%	0.5%	73.3%
Eastern Samar	23	99.6%	15.4%	0.2%	14.9%	67.3%	1.8%	0.4%	30.5%
Guimaras	6	100.0%	38.2%	0.3%	11.4%	48.5%	1.5%	0.0%	49.9%
Isabela	65	100.0%	24.1%	0.6%	35.8%	37.6%	1.9%	0.0%	60.5%
Maguindanao	42	100.0%	10.2%	0.3%	15.0%	74.4%	0.0%	0.0%	25.6%
Manila	62	100.0%	77.9%	2.1%	18.0%	1.1%	0.9%	0.0%	98.0%
Masbate	52	99.8%	10.9%	0.9%	11.4%	76.7%	0.0%	0.2%	23.2%
Mountain Province	8	100.0%	40.8%	2.2%	28.1%	16.1%	12.7%	0.0%	71.1%
Negros Oriental	56	99.6%	40.1%	1.0%	18.4%	37.5%	2.6%	0.4%	59.4%
North Cotabato	51	100.0%	15.9%	0.4%	12.1%	69.7%	2.0%	0.0%	28.4%
Northern Samar	33	100.0%	16.4%	0.0%	17.1%	64.1%	2.4%	0.0%	33.5%
Pasay City	17	100.0%	73.9%	5.2%	16.3%	3.2%	1.4%	0.0%	95.4%
Quezon City	88	99.9%	57.3%	2.6%	28.9%	10.1%	1.0%	0.1%	88.8%
Sarangani	25	99.2%	12.6%	0.7%	14.1%	66.1%	5.7%	0.8%	27.4%
Sultan Kudarat	28	100.0%	12.2%	1.4%	24.8%	61.4%	0.2%	0.0%	38.3%
Sulu	16	100.0%	4.0%	3.8%	12.1%	78.7%	1.4%	0.0%	19.9%
Zamboanga del Sur	78	100.0%	11.8%	1.7%	11.4%	72.4%	2.7%	0.0%	24.9%

Source: 2007 SR-MICS, National Statistics Office

March is National Women's Month. Theme: Babae. Yaman Ka ng Bavan!