

PROVINCES AND CITIES OF CAR EXAMINED MATERNAL AND NEWBORN DEATHS AT DOH-REGIONAL OFFICE

The maternal and newborn deaths of 2013 were tabled in the Department of Health – Regional Office (DOH-RO) of Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) by the Maternal and Neonatal Death Review (MNDR) Regional Team through annual review on January 28-30, 2014 aimed to revisit the causes of deaths and assessed the action taken by the concerned provinces and cities towards strengthened maternal and child health service delivery.

According to Roland Eric Macanas, MCH Specialist of JICA-SSC, "The MNDR will provide information that can be used in the development of strategies, activities and interventions to improve maternal and neonatal health, reduce maternal and neonatal morbidity, and improve the quality of care of women during pregnancy, delivery, and the puerperium, including to the baby". He added that counting cases is important but not enough...the number of deaths must lead to information that can, in turn lead to specific recommendations and actions, as well as to valuation of effectiveness of the interventions.

CAR-Regional Health Office report shows that 19 maternal deaths were recorded in 2013 which is lower than 25 in 2012 and all defined directly related to pregnancy. However, a tripled increase was recorded for neonatal deaths in 2013 at 275 from its state of 71 in 2012. Report revealed that the upsurge of neonatal deaths was due to improved reporting of cases. One of the participants further commended the findings and revealed that some community members do not register their neonatal as their usual practiced.

Moreover, participants have observed that top causes of maternal deaths are consistent since 2010 until 2013. These include eclampsia and pre-eclampsia, retained placenta, amniotic fluid embolism and post-partum haemorrhage. On neonatal deaths, causes were prematurity, meconium aspiration, sepsis neonatorum, asphyxia and respiratory distress syndrome.

Dr. Virginia Narciso, the Family Health Cluster Chief of DOH-RO CAR, reiterated that the purpose of the activity served as venue on achieving to: (1) determine the status of MNDR implementation at the local level; (2) understand the trends and causes of maternal and neonatal deaths; (3) Provide technical assistance to identified issues and concerns for enhanced MNDR implementation; (4) setting-up of Regional MNDR Team; and (5) develop an action plan to strengthen the Local MNDR as well as to Regional MNDR.

As a result, the participants have formulated their respective action plan and agreed the following towards improved implementation of MNDR: (1) Maternal and neonatal deaths occurred in the hospital will use clinical audit approach and review within 60 days from the date of death; (2) All deaths in Rural Health Units / Barangay Health Stations and other place outside health facilities will be reviewed within 60 days from date of death; (3) Provincial Review team will submit both the presentation material and signed intervention plan to the Regional MNDR secretariat (Family Health Cluster of DOH-CAR RO); and (4) Regional MNDR Team will conduct regularly the technical review every quarter of each year.

The Annual Regional MNDR were participated by the members of Provincial MNDR Team from all 6 provinces of CAR and Baguio City and the BEmONC Trainers of Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center (BGHMC). Dr. Filipina Ramos and Dr. Ferdinand Gangangan of BGHMC served as technical resource speakers during the presentation of cases.



Project for Cordillera-wide Strengthening of the Local Health System for Effective and Efficient Delivery of Maternal and Child Health Services

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More Mothers gave birth in the health facility

"Adu dan ti ina nga ag an anak dito birthing center manipud idi nangted ti JICA ti usar nga agpaanak"(many mothers are already delivering at the birthing center as soon as JICA provided birthing equipment) said midwife Rocel Bangon in BHS Buluan of Apayao Province. One client named Marie testified "nag anak ak ijay BHS Buluan gamin kapmpanti ken natalged ak ijay nang nangruna keni anak ko' (I gave birth in BHS Buluan because I feel more secure and safe especially for my baby".

This is one of the remarkable outcomes of the Department of Health's project, "Cordillera-wide Strengthening of the Local Health System for Effective and Efficient Delivery of Maternal and Child Health Services", supported by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The project aims to make quality maternal and newborn care services more accessible, available and equitable for all, especially for the people living in economically and geographically difficult situation.

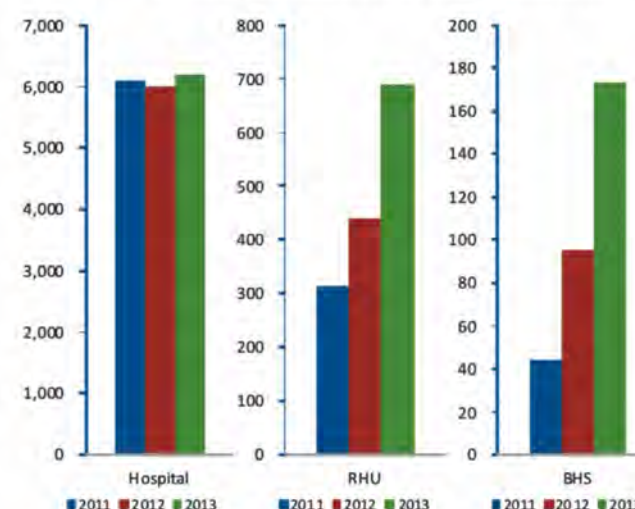
According to Dr. Makoto Tobe, the Project Chief Adviser, "During the first year of the Project, the Project provided equipment for RHUs and Hospitals. During the second year of the Project, in November 2013, twenty-two target BHS-birthing centers received JICA-donated equipment, and successfully started their birthing service operation in January 2014. " Now, people of Apayao and Abra have functional birthing services available in selected barangay health stations".

Moreover, the Project provided IEC materials and commodities, which include flipchart, back-pack and uniform (T-shirts with logo) for 3,000 Community Health Team (CHT) members during JICA-sponsored CHT conventions held in November and December 2013. Also distributed are 400 pieces of IEC banners to be placed in highly populated areas in the barangays.

Number of deliveries in public hospitals, Rural Health Units (RHUs) and Barangay Health Stations (BHSs) in the project target sites

Province	2011	2012	2013
Abra			
Hospital	35	40	61
RHU	0	14	176
BHS	0	0	1
Subtotal	35	54	238
Apayao			
Hospital	1,279	1,237	1,288
RHU	51	118	160
BHS	31	76	126
Subtotal	1,361	1,431	1,574
Benguet			
Hospital	4,788	4,721	4,856
RHU	264	307	352
BHS	13	19	46
Subtotal	5,065	5,047	5,254
Project Site Total			
Hospital	6,102	5,998	6,205
RHU	315	439	688
BHS	44	95	173
Total	6,461	6,532	7,066

Note: RHU: Rural Health Unit, BHS: Barangay Health Station



JICA - SSC Office, 3rd floor
Regional Training Center,
CHD-CAR, BGHMC Compound,
Baguio City
Telefax: (074) 422-0239



Project's developed Banner posted in identified populated area in the barangay



Provincial DOH Rep. Victoria Palos discussed the content and use of flipchart during the CHT Convention in Abra

DOLORES LGU HOSTS 1ST COMMUNITY HEALTH TEAM CONVENTION OF DOLASAN ILHZ

With less than 2 years left before 2015, the target year to achieve Millennium Development Goal 5 "Improve Maternal Health", the DOLASAN Inter Local Health Zone is gearing up the most important link between the pregnant woman and the birthing facility, the community health team.

Last November 22, 2013, the Dolores Civic Center played host as the ILHZ held its first ever Convention for the Community Health Teams of its 3 member municipalities Dolores, Lagangilang and San Juan. The theme for the convention is "Achieving MDG 5 through the Community Health Team: Together, Everybody Achieves More"

According to Dr. Ruby Rose Orosco, Municipal Health Officer of Langilang, the Community Health Team serves as the community based advocate for prenatal care, facility based delivery, postpartum care and newborn screening, which are the most essential strategies to prevent maternal death. Reducing maternal death by 75% is one of 2 indicators for MDG 5.



CHT members familiarizing with the flipchart

Mayor Robert Victor G. Seares in his welcome address thanked the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the major sponsor for the event, and for providing the necessary birthing equipment and training to the 3 RHUs as well as the Dolores Medicare Community Hospital. But he acknowledged that the Community Health Team will have to play a crucial role to make sure the costly equipment and training serve their purpose.

The Mayors, Barangay Captains, Councilors, and the visitors from JICA, PHO and DOH gave their commitment and signed on the prepared pledge board to keep empowering the CHTs, and ultimately give the best care for the mother and child.

JICA also distributed T-Shirts, Bags, Flip Charts and Banners to the CHTs to aid them in their community service. DOH Representative Victoria Palos gave a brief lecture on the use of the flip chart. She, however, informed the CHTs that they will have to meet again on a later date to come up with an Ilocano Version for the flip chart.

Additional Incentive From Philhealth Payment

The Inter Local Health Zone Board also took action to come up with incentives for the CHT. The board came up with a resolution requesting the Sangguniang Bayan Members of Dolores and Lagangilang to appropriate at least 250 pesos of every PhilHealth payment from the Maternal Care Package (MCP) for the CHT serving as pregnancy partner.

The MCP pays the health facility 6,500 pesos for every delivery of a PhilHealth beneficiary, plus an additional 1,500 pesos if the mother was able to complete 4 prenatal check ups. While most of the money is spent to buy equipment and medicine for the facility, a portion maybe used for the health workers. The final amount for the incentive will be decided by the local government, but the ILHZ requested that it be at least 250 pesos.

Certain conditions have to be met of course such as the mother has to be a PhilHealth beneficiary, she has to complete 4 prenatal check ups, deliver at the Rural Health Unit, and that the incentive will only be given to the CHT during the postpartum check up.

With this, the ILHZ is expecting the CHTs to become partners in advocating PhilHealth enrollments.

JICA Keeps Giving

The Convention also saw the ceremonial turnover of equipment for the Barangay Health Station of Cayapa, Lagangilang. The birthing equipment include brand new delivery table and chair, recovery bed, medicine cabinet, bassinet, gooseneck lamp, BP apparatus with stand, suction machine, and even a burner stove and a generator. All equipment and the training of the staff are funded by JICA, who will be supporting MNCHN in Cordillera up to 2017.



Old examination table



New! Donated by JICA

BENGUET LOCAL HEALTH INSURANCE OFFICE PROMOTES PHILHEALTH ENROLLMENT

In line with the implementation of Kalusugan Pangkalahatan /Universal Health Care which is directed towards the achievement of the health system goals of financial risk protection, better health outcomes and responsive health system, PhilHealth races with time to achieve universal coverage.

The Benguet Local Health Insurance Office does its share in urging people, especially those who are residing in the rural areas to be members of PhilHealth. In order to achieve this goal, everyone needs to be awakened and educated regarding the importance and benefits of proper maintenance and safeguard of health. They need to know the services and health programs that are available to them. As health advocates, the Benguet LHIO conducts intensive information drives to different sectors in the 13 towns of the province. During 4Ps pay-outs, community events and proceedings, PhilHealth is there to present their programs and expound on the benefits and advantages that its members can avail and enjoy. By conducting activities for the members and non-members, it is with no doubt that they are edified regarding the National Health Insurance Program. Likewise, their issues and concerns are clarified.

The Sponsored Program, considered the "heart of PhilHealth", was given the most attention because it is where most of the marginalized sector of our society belongs to or are supposed to belong to. With the poorest of the poor already covered by the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR), PhilHealth concentrated in marketing the Sponsored Program to the

local government units and private sponsors. Taking into account that the province of Benguet has the highest number of enrollment for the Sponsored and Indigent Program, Benguet LHIO acknowledges the importance of winning and maintaining lasting relationships with its partners and stakeholders. Relative to this, several forums were conducted with the Local Chief Executives, Municipal and Barangay officials, the Municipal Health Officers, the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office staff, the Finance officers and the private sponsors to keep them abreast of the new developments that PhilHealth devised and implemented. The office also presented its accomplishments which were successfully realized because of the unrelenting and never-ending support of its sponsors.

These efforts were not wasted and put to vain because at the end of the year, most of the sponsors committed to renew and even add new enrollees to their existing ones. Side by side with Benguet LHIO's intensive campaigns was Governor Nestor Fongwan's untiring and persistent urging of the people to be PhilHealth members wherever he goes in whatever occasion he attends. To really walk his talk, he allocated P500,000.00 for the implementation of the "Point of Care" which will accommodate the people of Benguet who cannot really afford to pay for their hospitalization. This is on top of maintaining the provincial support that the province provides to all the municipalities in the continuous implementation of the Sponsored Program.

With all these support that PhilHealth is receiving, universal coverage for the province of Benguet will not merely be a product of imagination, but a universal reality.

JICA PROVIDES BIRTHING EQUIPMENT TO 17 BHSs IN APAYAO

The Province of Apayao spearheaded the conduct of Community Health Team Convention in each Inter-local Health Zone between Dec. 6 and 12, 2013. All barangay captains were present including from those 17 target-Barangay Health Stations to operate as birthing facilities as recipient for equipment donation from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) through the Department of Health. Brgy. Capt. Hon. Rolly Uddipa of Marag, Luna, verbalized his gratitude to JICA after the equipment was handed-over and making the birthing service available at the barangay.



Brgy. Captain Rolly Uddipa of Marag, Luna, Apayao received equipment donated by JICA

Moreover, Hon. Florentino Talosig of Mataguisi, Pudtol says "Agyaman kami unay iti opisina ti JICA kadagiti gamit nga inted da. Ada meten ti usaren dagiti masakog nu ag anak da" ("We are thankful enough to JICA for the birthing equipment knowing that these are very important in the safe delivery of mothers").

JICA provided delivery equipment to seventeen (17) BHSs of Apayao which are targeted to become birthing facilities. Particularly, these are distributed among the five (5) BHSs in Calansan, three (3) in Pudtol, three (3) in Conner, two (2) in Luna and two (2) in Kabugao. Some of these BHSs have already catered to delivery in 2012. These BHSs are expected to fully operate by first quarter of 2014 as soon as the facility improvement is finished.

To complement the equipment and facility improvement, JICA funded the training of the midwives assigned to these BHSs on Harmonized BEmONC training. This training will equip them with better knowledge, attitude and skills in providing quality Maternal Newborn Child Health and Nutrition (MNCHN) services.

JICA is closely working with Apayao Provincial Health Office who leads in providing health services especially on Maternal and Child Health Care. The provincial government is also thankful to the equipment support JICA is extending to the 17 barangay health stations.