



Baseline report and needs assessment findings informed the programming of maternal and newborn care in hard-to-reach communes of Vietnam

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Background: The 4-year project of Strengthening Health Systems and Improving Nutrition in Vietnam (2016-2020)

- Site: 6 communes in 2 districts of Son La province in northwest mountainous region
- Target groups: 8 ethnicities

Objectives:

- Measure knowledge and practices of antenatal, delivery, postnatal care, breastfeeding, and male engagement of care
- Identify factors preventing/enabling use of health services

Method:

- Household survey:
 - N = 452 mothers of children under 24 months from 53/102 clusters
 - Probability Proportional to Size sampling
- Needs assessment:
 - 16 in-depth interviews with district and commune health officers
 - 30 focus group discussions with village health workers, women and men of children under 24 months

Findings:

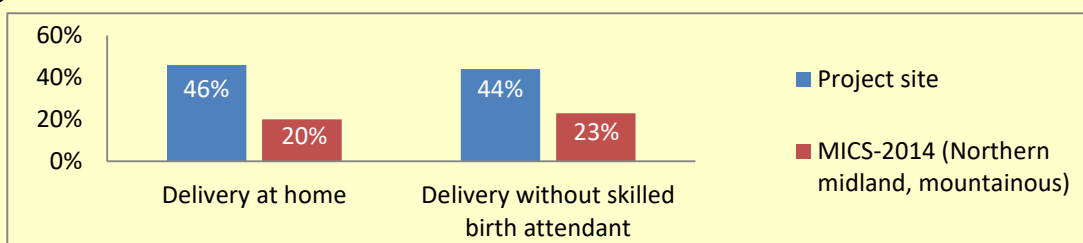


Figure 1. Place and assistance at delivery

Table 1. Factors influencing high rates of unsafe delivery in minor ethnicities (N=452; p<0.05)

Maternal age by year	Home delivery %
<20 (n=47)	51%
20-29 (n=137)	52%
>=30 (n=25)	40%
Mother's ethnicity	
Thai/ Kh'Mu/ Khang/ LaHa/ Xin Mun (n=364)	44%
H'Mong (n=56)	82%
Kinh/ Muong (n=32)	6%

Maternal education by grade (1-12)	Home delivery %
No schooling/ can't read/write (n=60)	73%
Up to 5 grade (n=27)	52%
6-9 grade (n=97)	43%
>= 10 grade (n=25)	6%
Economic status (government standard)	
Poor (n=34)	22%
Near poor (n=47)	50%

Conclusion: High rates of unsafe delivery among ethnic minorities are the result of:

- Poor knowledge of pregnancy and home delivery danger signs
- Inadequate health services (including maternal/newborn/child care education)
- Insufficient usage and accessibility of health facilities



Photo: Nga Le, HBV

Recommendations:

Interventions should prioritize:

- Enhancing health education
- Increasing male involvement
- Improving the use of skilled birth attendants

Utilization of baseline results:

Informed the design of:

- Recruiting and training ethnic minority midwives for remote villages
- Applying mobile technology and implementing mHealth strategies for health education