

Antenatal Care and Delivery Practices among Rural Kokang Mothers, Northern Shan State, Myanmar

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the antenatal (AN) care and delivery practices among Kokang mothers. It was done in March 2010 in the rural area of Kunglong Township, Northern Shan State. A total of 8 Focus Group Discussions were carried out with 47 mothers from two villages with health facilities and from two villages without any health facilities. Six key informant interviews were carried out for triangulation of findings. The median age of the participants was 33 years with children ranged from 1 to 13. Mothers in the study area considered AN care as an unnecessary for the reasons of pregnancy being a natural phenomenon for a married woman, financial constraints and transportation difficulties. Only when a pregnant mother suffered from an illness, a visit to a basic health staff was made and received AN care as well. Many of the mothers interviewed got at least one AN care contact with a local health staff during last pregnancy. However, majority of the mothers interviewed had their last child born at home without a skilled help. Reasons for unskilled home deliveries were financial constraint, previous experiences of easy home deliveries, no helping hands at home and transportation difficulty. Some mothers still use bamboo slabs for cutting cords. Prolonged labor and retained placenta were the perceived risks during delivery. Rural Health Centre and Township Hospital were regarded as the destinations for solving their problems. In conclusion, there are incorrect reproductive health behaviors among rural Kokang mothers that are needed to be improved.