



# EXPLORING THE REASONS FOR HOME DELIVERIES AMONG THE WOMEN OF MYAGDI DISTRICT OF NEPAL HEALTH OFFICE, MYAGDI

## BACKGROUND

Child birth is one of the crucial events in the life of a women and her family. However, almost 800 women died each day due to preventable causes related to pregnancy and child birth with almost 95% of all deaths worldwide occurring in low and middle-income countries in 2020. The location of childbirth can impact the health and survival rates of both mother and child (1). The quality of maternal and newborn care is also linked to where the delivery takes place.

## METHODOLOGY

Descriptive cross-sectional study design was employed. Qualitative data was collected from the women who had delivered their babies at home in the past six months and from the health workers of Myagdi district through In-depth interviews and Key Informant Interviews (KII) respectively.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select the required number of participants for individual semi-structured interviews. The sample size was based on data saturation, that is sampling to the point at which no new information was obtained, and redundancy was achieved. Thematic analysis was done to analyze the data.

## RESULTS

Based on the responses of the In-depth interview and Key informant interview, these themes were developed.

Cultural and traditional beliefs related to child birth:

Our study findings reveal that the cultural traditions play a very important role in making decision regarding the place of delivery of the baby.

**One participant from Raghuganga Rural Municipality stated:**

In my family we deliver the baby at home, my mother, my mother-in-law and my sisters all delivered their babies at home. The tradition of delivering the baby at home with the help of Traditional Birth Attendant has been deeply rooted in my family. Although the practice of delivering the baby at hospital is increasing, I chose to deliver my baby at home.

**Reasons for giving birth at home:**

This theme focused on the reasons for home delivery. Our findings show that various personal, family and health-related factors played an important role in influencing women to give birth at home.

One woman from Malika Rural Municipality stated that, *"I went into labour pain at about 10 o'clock at night and it was raining at that time, also there was none availability of ambulance so I had to give birth at home."*

While another woman from Ollari village stated that,

*"I planned to have my baby at a health facility, but things didn't go as planned. I wasn't in much pain before the birth, and my husband told me not to go to the health facility for the delivery. The main reasons I had the baby at home were my husband's support, not having enough money, and the health facility being too far away."*

The Health Facility staffs also stated how socio-economic status, geography and other personal reasons have been major barriers for institutional delivery in Myagdi district. One health staff stated,

*"Because of their poor economic situation, the sudden start of labor, and the lack of transportation, along with the difficult geography, the women here often have no choice but to give birth at home."*

**Opinion regarding maternity services:**

Even though many women are aware of the excellent care available at health facilities, some still choose to give birth at home for various reasons. One health staff stated that,

*"A lot has been said before and no matter how much it is said, the number of home births has increased slightly due to geographical difficulty, transportation inconvenience and financial lack. Among these, financial need is the main factor."*

**Improvement to be done for making women give birth at health institution:**

Our study suggests that to increase the number of deliveries at health institutions in Myagdi district, several improvements are needed. First, better transportation infrastructure is essential to make it easier for pregnant women to reach health facilities, especially in the region's challenging geography. Additionally, raising awareness through community education about the benefits of professional maternity care can help shift cultural attitudes and encourage more families to choose hospital births. Finally, improving the availability and quality of services at health facilities, such as ensuring adequate staffing and resources, would make them more appealing and trustworthy for expectant mothers.

One woman from Shivagarbhuja village had a different perception. She emphasized on the importance of counselling during pregnancy. She stated that, *"To bring the women of the community to the health facility the staff of the health facility should go to the homes of the women for providing counselling to those women who are going to deliver the baby in the health facility."*

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study suggests improving birthing center infrastructure with better equipment and accommodation, training midwives. Additionally, transportation and roads need upgrades, possibly with financial incentives. Health staff should visit expectant mothers at home to provide counseling, every health institution should have a birthing center, and remote areas should have waiting rooms. Husbands, mother in law and other family members' involvement community awareness programs could increase institutional deliveries.

## REFERENCES

1. WHO. Maternal mortality: World Health Organization [Internet]. [cited 2024 Aug 2]. Available from: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/maternal-mortality>
2. Mahato PK, van Teijlingen E, Simkhada P, Sheppard ZA, Silwal RC. Factors related to choice of place of birth in a district in Nepal. Sexual & Reproductive Healthcare. 2017 Oct; 13:91–6.