

Luu Thi Tân is a happy, relieved mother. The 26-year-old ethnic Thái woman has given birth to two healthy daughters with minimum fuss, which in itself might not be something extraordinary, but considering that she and her husband are, in her own words, "floating on rivers all day to earn our living," she has reason to be thankful.



Bjorn Andersson, Regional Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Asia Pacific Regional Office visits a mother and her newborn at the Vân Đồn District Medical Centre. — VNS Photo Thu Trang

It is thanks to the careful support and supervision of local medical workers during her pregnancy and delivery that Tân was able to safely deliver her two children.

The native of the central province of Thanh Hóa used to be worried about many women in her community and hometown give birth at home, exposing themselves to a lot of risk.

After their marriage, Tân and her husband moved to Vĩn Yên Commune, Vân Đồn District in the northern province of Quảng Ninh.

They fish in rivers for a living and earn about VNĐ2-4 million (US\$90-180) per month. Despite this, she was able to receive good, regular care, courtesy the Vĩn Yên Commune Medical Station.

“Although my husband and I are on the boat most of the time, the medical workers still call and tell me to return to the mainland for examination,” said Tân.

She had four prenatal examinations during her pregnancy, and vaccinations on schedule.

“Thanks to the good care, I did not have any problems from when I became pregnant till giving birth to my daughters safely,” she said.

When her date drew close, the staff asked her to move to the Vĩn Yên Commune Medical Station and wait for delivery.

Tân’s first daughter is five years old and her second daughter is two months old. They have also received their vaccinations on schedule.



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