

The Civil Registration of Indigenous Peoples in the Cordillera Region: Issues in Implementing NSO Administrative Order No. 3 of 2004¹

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Abstract

“Rules and Regulations Governing Registration of Acts and Events Concerning Civil Status of Indigenous Peoples” is the subject of National Statistics Office (NSO) Administrative Order (AO) No. 3 that was promulgated in 2004. After a decade or more of its existence, it is instructive for government and all concerned to identify and establish to what extent the intent of the Order “to respond to the expression of the ICCs/IPs for cultural integrity and to render basic services more responsive to the needs and desires of these communities” has been accomplished. This paper discusses the results of a study undertaken to assess the state of implementation of NSO AO No. 3 in the municipalities of the Cordillera Region for the period 2004 to 2012. Factors that facilitate as well as obstruct the offices of the local civil registrar with the Order’s provisions are discussed. Some recommendations are proposed to overcome these challenges in order that an effective registration system of civil events of members of IP communities can be put in place.

KEYWORDS: civil registration system, IP registration, Barangay civil registration system (BCRS), Cordillera region

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Introduction

Pursuant to Republic Act 8371, otherwise known as the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA), which mandates the State “to recognize, respect and protect the rights of Indigenous Cultural Communities (ICCs) and Indigenous Peoples (IPs) to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions and institutions,”² the Office of the Civil Registrar General (OCRG) of the Philippines issued Administrative Order Number 3, Series of 2004.³ The Administrative Order (AO) directs offices under the National Statistics Office (NSO) and the OCRG to register the marriages, their dissolution, births and deaths among IPs in the Philippines. The registration of births, deaths and marriages in the civil registry system of the country are necessary to obtain certificates from the NSO that enable persons to exercise other civil rights. For example, a birth certificate is required when applying for a passport, which is in turn necessary for the chance to work or travel outside of the country. The birth certificate is also a requirement for a child to begin formal schooling. A death certificate enables a surviving spouse to make a claim on a government pension. A marriage certificate grants spouses and children the right to inherit money and property. Persons who are not in possession of such civil registry documents are thus substantially disadvantaged.

AO No. 3 was issued to establish an effective civil registration system for ICCs or IPs and more importantly to render the services of the civil registration system “more responsive to the needs and desires of these communities.”⁴ Therefore, in order “to respond to the expression of the ICCs/IPs for cultural integrity”⁵ and “to ensure that members of the ICCs/IPs benefit on an equal footing from the rights and opportunities which national laws and regulations grant to other members of the population,”⁶ additional registration forms that enable the recognition of unique customs, practices and rites of ICCs/IPs were devised.

These are the:

1. Certificate of Live Birth (Municipal Form No. 102, Attachment IP Form No. 1) [see Annex 1];
2. Certificate of Death (Municipal Form No. 103, Attachment IP Form No. 2) [see Annex 2];
3. Certificate of Marriage (Municipal Form No. 97, Attachment IP Form No. 3) [see Annex 3];

4. Certificate of Dissolution of Marriage (IP Form No. 4); and
5. Statement of Revocation of Dissolution of Marriage (IP Form No. 5).

These supplementary forms are to be completed in addition to the standard forms used in the civil registration of non-IPs in the country. The implementation of AO No. 3 is the responsibility of local civil registrars (LCRs) assisted by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) Field Personnel deputized as Birth Registration Agents.

This paper discusses the findings of a research study on the implementation of AO No. 3 in the Cordillera, home to ethno-linguistic groups with distinct cultural practices and traditions. After this section is a brief presentation of studies on the civil registration system. This is followed by an analysis of the statistics obtained from the civil registration of Cordillera municipalities from 2004 to 2012 as provided in response to the study's survey questionnaire. The issues and concerns surrounding the implementation of AO No. 3 in the Cordillera municipalities are delineated and assessed. The paper concludes with recommendations on the implementation of AO No. 3.

Data Collection Methods

In order to determine the problems and issues related to civil registration and the implementation of AO No. 3, the research conducted a survey with the City/Municipal Civil Registrars (C/MCRs) serving as respondents. The survey questionnaire collected a combination of primary and secondary data. The former includes the LCRs' awareness about the provisions of AO No. 3, as well as their perceptions about the non-registration and/or delayed registration of civil events in their areas. Data obtained on civil registration mechanisms (fees, procedures, and requirements) is also primary in nature. The secondary data consists of statistics on the number of births, deaths, marriages and dissolution of marriages registered with the Local Civil Registrar's Office (LCRO), as well as statistics on civil events involving indigenous peoples registered with the LCRO following AO No. 3.

During the third week of September 2012, questionnaires were distributed to all 77 LCRs in the region through the NSO Regional Office, CAR and the Provincial Statistics Officers. A total of 61 questionnaires were returned, corresponding to a response rate of 79.22%. The turnout was highest for Abra, Ifugao and Mountain Province where all except one municipality in each province participated. Benguet had the lowest response rate as only 6 of 13 municipalities responded. Although the study uses the municipality as its unit of analysis, some analysis is based on data aggregated at the provincial level. The non-participation of the LCRs of La Trinidad and Baguio City seriously underestimates the values for Benguet province. Most births, deaths, and marriages in Benguet are expected to occur in these two highly urbanized localities, where the greatest concentration of population and health facilities are found. Tabuk City did not participate in the survey, which also underestimates the values for Kalinga province.

The non-participation of the three urban centers handicaps the aggregate analysis that compares data for the provinces. However it does not handicap the analysis comparing municipalities. And because of the absence of data for Baguio, La Trinidad and Tabuk, the study's aggregate analysis, both at the provincial and regional levels, should be taken as applicable to the rural areas of the provinces and of the region (see Table 1).

TABLE 1. Response Rate to the LCRs Survey of September 2012

PROVINCE	Number of Municipalities/Cities	Number of Questionnaires	Response Rate
Abra	27	26	96.3
Apayao	7	4	57.14
Benguet	14	6	42.86
Ifugao	11	10	90.91
Kalinga	8	6	75
Mountain Province	10	9	90
TOTAL	77	61	79.22

The specific objectives of the survey were:

- a. To determine the number of births, deaths and marriages registered with the local civil registrar in the different municipalities of the Cordillera from 2004 to 2012;
- b. To determine the incidence of delayed or late registration of births, deaths, and marriages across the different CAR municipalities from 2004 to 2012;
- c. To determine the local civil registrars' knowledge about the rules governing the civil registration of indigenous peoples as embodied in AO No. 3 Series of 2004;
- d. To determine the incidence of registered births, deaths and marriages among the IPs of the Cordillera following AO No. 3 Series of 2004.

In addition to the conduct of the survey of LCRs, the research team collected information through interviews. The following were the key informants: the Regional Director and Provincial Officers of the National Statistics Office (NSO) of the Cordillera Administrative Region, the Provincial Officers of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) of the Cordillera Administrative Region, the Local Civil Registrar of Tublay, Benguet and NCIP Field Officers from Ifugao and Benguet.

Relevance of the study to legislation

In the Third Regular Session of the 15th Congress, House Bill No. 6419 titled “An Act Providing for a Free and Culture-Sensitive System of Registration concerning the Civil Status of Indigenous Peoples and for Other Purposes” was submitted by Congressman Teddy Brawner Baguilat, Jr., Chairperson of the Committee on National Cultural Communities, on July 30, 2012. This House Bill substituted for two other House Bills, 4701 and 5184. An overriding concern expressed by House Bill 4701 is the discrepancy of estimates made for the total IP population of the country. “The 2000 Philippine census refers to 6.3 million IPs belonging to 85 ethno-linguistic groups while the NCIP data based on “unofficial surveys” of population by ethnographic regions estimate the total population of IPs to be 13.5 million.”⁷ It

is suggested that the discrepancy⁸ arises from the non-registration for births and/or deaths of IPs. The Kalipunan ng mga Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas says there are 8 million IPs divided into more or less 100 ethnic groups in the country and “levels of birth registration among the marginalized sectors [including IPs] have been very low.”⁹ Specific characteristics of the civil registration system for IPs are proposed, i.e., that it is free and that it is culture-sensitive. This paper provides information and analysis that can contribute to the discussion of the subject matter of these bills.

Studies on the Civil Registration System

The United Nations¹⁰ defines “civil registration” as “the continuous, permanent, compulsory and universal recording of the occurrence and characteristics of vital events (live births, deaths, fetal deaths, marriages and divorces) and other civil status events pertaining to the population as provided by decree, law or regulation, in accordance with the legal requirements in each country.” Defined as such, the term “civil registration” is closely associated with “vital statistics.” The Statistics Division of the United Nations uses the term “civil registration system” to refer to “all institutional, legal, technical settings needed to perform the civil registration functions in a technical, sound, coordinated, and standardized manner throughout the country, taking into account cultural and social circumstances particular to the country.”¹¹

Moriyama¹² suggests that governments initially imposed civil registration on citizens and subjects as a legal requirement, but in time it was used for planning purposes—e.g. policy formulation, implementation, and assessment. Vital statistics data thus informed social and economic development policies, including health and family planning programs. The policy significance of vital statistics data, in addition to the demand for legal documents, prompts the need for a civil registration system characterized by “complete coverage, accuracy, and timeliness.”¹³ The World Bank’s¹⁴ “Strengthening Civil Registration” cites the reasons why civil registration is important. Echoing a point raised earlier, civil registration matters because it is vital to attaining development goals and to assessing and improving governmental

performance. The World Bank says civil registration gives “voice to the poor.” It is vital in establishing civil identity apart from informing policymakers “who and where the poor are.” Moreover, civil registration data facilitates governmental accountability and promotes transparency, especially by allowing the monitoring of governmental performance vis-à-vis the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Effective civil registration implementation can be attributed to a host or confluence of general factors, among them legal, organizational, technical, cultural and/or social. Rao, Bradshaw, and Mathers¹⁵ underscore the importance of a “sound and comprehensive legal framework” to the creation and maintenance of an effective civil registration system. Such a legal framework clearly defines the duties and functions of citizens and government. It also provides for an organizational structure for the civil registration system. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)¹⁶ highlights the organizational aspect of civil registration systems. It argues that organizational structure bears on the performance of registration systems. Such systems ought to be characterized by a clear chain of command. Still, they also need to exhibit the capacity for inter-agency cooperation and coordination. The PAHO also draws attention to the number and distribution of local registration offices and their accessibility to their clientele – the general public.

As for the technical aspects of civil registration systems, the PAHO cites the need to computerize civil registration processes. Computerization not only facilitates the storage and management of records; it also improves the transmission and sharing of relevant information. Meanwhile, Rao, Osterberger, Anh, MacDonald, Chuc, and Hill¹⁷ talk of structural and social barriers to civil registration. Included among the former are geographic constraints, limited staff resulting in high workload and inefficient services, inconsistent application of rules, inconvenient registration policies, etc. Social barriers involve burial and mourning customs that bear on the decision to register deaths, and the sensitivity that some groups have when it comes to reporting causes of death. Hence, the civil registration system can also be evaluated in terms of its sensitivity to such social and cultural considerations.

In the Philippines, Aves¹⁸ attributes the problem of non-registration to the following: (a) harsh geographic conditions in some parts of the country that discourage travel to registration centers; (b) exorbitant transportation costs, coupled

with unreasonable registration-related fees charged by local government units (LGUs); (c) unavailability of transportation services, poorly maintained road networks; (d) linguistic differences, particularly between members of cultural minority groups and the staff of government offices (especially in registration centers); (e) peace and order considerations; (f) indifference and perceived discriminatory demeanor of government officials; (g) people's lack of awareness of the significance of legal documents; and (h) cultural practices, customs, and religion. Cited among the cultural practices that hamper effective civil registration are the insistence of some indigenous persons on using single names and the practice of Muslims of changing their names after the Haj.¹⁹

To address these barriers to civil registration, Aves advocates the strengthening of the Barangay Civil Registration System (BCRS) instituted in 1993, which essentially called on barangay secretaries to assist the Municipal Civil Registrar in the registration of births, deaths and marriages occurring in his jurisdiction. He is specifically pushing for (a) the adoption of the BCRS by all cities and municipalities in the Philippines; (b) additional logistical support from the LGUs for barangay secretaries; and (c) the permanent appointment of barangay secretaries to prevent their "whimsical" replacement whenever new barangay captains are elected.²⁰

Linder²¹ offers an interesting distinction between relatively intractable versus solvable problems of an effective civil registration system. Short-range remedies applied to the component parts of the system do not solve the relatively intractable problems. These problems require solutions that are included in long-range social and economic development plans. Examples of relatively intractable problems are illiteracy, harsh geography, poor transportation and communication facilities. Improving aspects of the civil registration system would have little effect on these relatively intractable problems. Problems solvable but requiring additional technical assistance funds from national or outside sources include those pertaining to staffing, training of personnel, provision and distribution of necessary forms and supplies, transportation facilities for registration personnel, office space, and modern storage systems. Such problems are easily addressed by the infusion of additional funds. Solvable problems may also refer to obstacles to effective civil registration that can be solved even without external intervention and with relatively minimal financial

requirements. Examples of solvable problems are those pertaining to the adequacy of relevant legal instruments, organizational structure of the civil registration system, inter-agency coordination, and lack of priority attached by government to issues of civil registration. For Linder, solvable problems should not be taken to refer to “easily” solvable problems. What he stresses is the necessity of governmental recognition that civil registration is a critical governmental function requiring a strong political will to address its problems.

Civil Registration in the Cordillera, 2004-2012

Let us turn to an analysis of the data obtained from the study’s survey beginning with the statistics on births, deaths, and marriages in the municipalities of the Cordillera region.

Vital Statistics

The municipal civil registrars were asked to supply information on the number of registered births, deaths and marriages in their area covering the years 2004 up to the Third Quarter of 2012. As seen in Table 2, a total of 219,874 births were registered in the 61 municipalities in CAR.

The biggest share comes from Abra, accounting for 28.8% of registered births, followed by Ifugao (23.1%) and Mt. Province (16.9%). This is to be expected, given the almost 100% participation in the survey of all the municipalities in these provinces. The number of registered births is more or less equally distributed over the years, but the highest level was recorded in 2004, constituting 13.2% of the total. The figures for the first three quarters of 2012 recorded a total of 16,866 registered births in the region, or 7.7% of the total.

For deaths, data reflects a total of 29,848 over the nine-year period under study, as shown in Table 3. Almost 40% of these occurred in Abra while around 18% each were registered in Ifugao and Mt. Province. More than 6% of deaths were registered in Apayao and in Kalinga provinces. The distribution is fairly uniform over time in all six provinces.

TABLE 2. Total Number of Registered Births, 2004 to 2012

YEAR	Abra	Apayao	Benguet	Ifugao	Kalinga	Mt. Province	TOTAL
2004	8122	1542	3436	7304	4308	4279	28991
2005	6915	1425	3236	5122	3372	4287	24357
2006	7717	1566	3145	7383	2902	5124	27837
2007	7634	1699	3182	6500	3122	4821	26958
2008	7070	1502	2754	4920	2620	3966	22832
2009	7161	1351	2700	4906	3702	3811	23631
2010	6679	1531	2692	5209	2809	3798	22718
2011	7284	1477	2700	5725	4161	4337	25684
2012*	4744	1475	1917	3828	2002	2900	16866*
TOTAL	63326	13568	25762	50897	28998	37323	219874
%	28.8	6.2	11.7	23.1	13.2	16.9	100

TABLE 3. Total Number of Registered Deaths, 2004 to 2012

YEAR	Abra	Apayao	Benguet	Ifugao	Kalinga	Mt Province	TOTAL
2004	1249	201	402	503	183	568	3106
2005	1291	166	463	557	172	549	3198
2006	1183	190	470	535	227	621	3226
2007	1308	191	476	560	191	601	3327
2008	1367	229	421	585	301	596	3499
2009	1391	215	536	595	204	629	3570
2010	1342	212	503	591	233	620	3501
2011	1466	269	428	631	235	588	3617
2012*	1101	229	338	442	226	468	2804*
TOTAL	11698	1902	4037	4999	1972	5240	29848
%	39.2	6.4	13.5	16.7	6.6	17.6	100

In order to better appreciate these birth and death statistics, one needs to express the number of births and deaths as a ratio of total population. Crude birth rate (CBR) measures the number of births per 1000 population, while crude death rate (CDR) measures the number of deaths per 1000 population. Expressed this way, the birth and death rates across different areas are made comparable with one another. For our purposes, the CBRs and CDRs are computed at the municipal level. The average number of births per year (from 2004 to 2012) was first computed, and then expressed as a ratio of the 2007 population count for the municipality. Data for 2007 was used as base since it is the closest to the midpoint of the nine-year period under study. Descriptive statistics were then derived for each province, as summarized in Table 4.

The Cordillera Region's estimated CBR for the 2004 to 2012 period was found to be 29.1. This means that around 29 babies are born alive for every 1000 population in CAR. This figure is comparable to that of Abra (28.54) and Mountain Province (28.8). The birth rate is highest in Kalinga at 38.38, while it is lowest in Benguet at 20.26. The Abra municipalities exhibited the highest relative dispersion as measured using the coefficient of variation. The lowest birth rate in Abra was 11 (in the municipalities of Langiden and Tayum) while the highest was 78 (in Lagangilang), also the highest CBR in the region. Bangued,

TABLE 4. Descriptive Statistics for Estimated Crude Birth and Death Rates, 2004 to 2012

PROVINCE	Crude Birth Rate		Crude Death Rate		N
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Abra	28.54	15.578	4.51	2.935	26
Apayao	22.84	5.474	3.30	1.242	4
Benguet	20.26	7.706	3.51	0.708	6
Ifugao	33.06	16.024	3.31	2.031	10
Kalinga	38.38	13.140	2.50	0.714	6
Mt. Province	28.80	9.621	4.23	2.157	9
CAR	29.10	13.950	3.90	2.337	61

**Authors' calculations*

the capital town of Abra, only has a birth rate of 58 per 1000 population. The CBR for Ifugao ranged from 14 (in Hingyon) to 72 (in Lagawe). The capital town of Bontoc, Mountain Province was estimated to have an average of 49 births per 1000 population.

In terms of crude death rates, an average of 3.9 persons died per 1000 population in CAR from 2004 to 2012. The figure is a little higher for Mt. Province at 4.23 and for Abra at 4.51. All other provinces have lower CDRs than the regional average. Lagangilang, Abra was calculated to have the highest CDR of 15 deaths per 1000 population.

Using Pearson's r as measure of correlation, it was found that the CBR and the CDR at the municipal level have a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.460$). This indicates that municipalities that have high birth rates have a greater probability of also having high death rates, while municipalities with low birth rates tend to have low death rates.

Let us now turn to the data on marriages shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5. Total Number of Registered Marriages, 2004 to 2012

YEAR	Abra	Apayao	Benguet	Ifugao	Kalinga	Mt Province	TOTAL	%
2004	1636	533	878	1141	721	968	5877	12.2
2005	1455	437	873	935	470	917	5087	10.5
2006	1335	372	982	1149	626	899	5363	11.1
2007	1421	531	1024	1070	715	921	5682	11.8
2008	1287	425	981	1090	467	909	5159	10.7
2009	1315	412	1005	1167	725	1106	5730	11.9
2010	1254	471	963	1167	625	789	5269	10.9
2011	1334	549	903	1476	954	845	6061	12.5
2012	965	354	606	934	497	735	4091	8.5
TOTAL	12002	4084	8215	10129	5800	8089	48319	
%	24.8	8.4	17	21	12	16.7		100

The different LCRs recorded a total of 48,319 nuptials held over nine years in the 61 municipalities in the survey. One in four of these marriages occurred in the province of Abra, while one-fifth was reported in Ifugao. Benguet and Mt. Province accounted for 17% each of the regional total. The proportions per year do not differ much, indicating that the number of registered marriages in the region remained stable over time.

Delayed Civil Registration

We now pay attention to the statistics on delayed/late registration derived from information provided by the LCRs for their municipalities. According to policy, all births, deaths and marriages should be reported to the LCRO where the event occurred within 30 days. When registration is done beyond this period, it is considered delayed or late. Most municipalities say that this practice is penalized with fines ranging from as low as PHP 5 to as much as PHP 500. The average amount charged for late registration is PHP 116. Six municipalities claim that late registration is free of charge. Three municipalities reportedly charge PHP 10 per year of delay.

The incidence of late registration in each municipality is simply the number of births, deaths or marriages registered beyond the prescribed period expressed as a proportion of the total registered for the entire period 2004 to 2012. The descriptive statistics on these variables are summarized in Table 6.

TABLE 6. Descriptive Statistics on Delayed/Late Registration as a Percentage of Total Registration

	BIRTHS	DEATHS	MARRIAGE
N	61	61	61
Mean	48.70	17.21	9.43
Median	47.19	12.42	6.27
SD	20.03	16.66	11.05
Minimum	3.88	0.19	0
Maximum	92.74	72.33	76.79

The data suggest that the problem with late registration is more prevalent for births than for deaths and marriages. The figures on late birth registration are much higher, averaging at around 49% of total registered births across the Cordillera. Wide variations are also observed with the values ranging from a low of 3.88% (Tinoc, Ifugao) to a high of 92.74% (Malibcong, Abra). Half of all municipalities have an incidence of delayed birth registration of at least 47%.

The incidence of delayed registration of deaths and of marriages averages at around 17% and 9% of the total registered. The median proportion for late death registration is 12.42%, while that for late registration of marriage is half that value (6.27%). However, these low figures only reflect part of the story because there are a few municipalities where over 70% of all registered deaths and marriages were reported beyond 30 days of their occurrence. Several LCRs remarked that most of the marriages they registered late over the last nine years are “reconstructed marriages.” Reconstructed marriages refer to those that occurred a long time ago following customary practices, but were never officially registered with the LCR until recently. The need for legal documents for purposes of making veteran’s claims or retirement pensions as well as for travel abroad has necessitated the late registration of marriages and deaths that occurred 50 or more years ago. A case in point as cited by the LCR of Sabangan, Benguet is that of an individual whose marriage was registered only after 91 years passed. In Sagada, Mt. Province, the longest time that it took a marriage to be reported is 74 years. As seen in Table 7, the longest case of late marriage registration occurred 31 years later, on average.

With regard to births, the longest delay in civil registration has an average value of 61 years. One LCR reported that in his area, someone’s birth was registered only after 112 years. As far as deaths are concerned, the average delay was 27 years.

A correlation of the proportions of delayed birth, death and marriage registration across the 61 municipalities under study reveals a moderate positive correlation between each pair of variables using the Pearson’s correlation coefficient as a measure (see Table 8). This indicates that municipalities with high incidence of delayed birth registration are more likely to have high levels of delayed death and marriage registration as well.

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TABLE 7. Longest Period of Time (in Years) that Passed Before Birth, Death, and Marriage was Registered

	BIRTHS	DEATHS	MARRIAGE
N*	46	42	43
Mean	60.5	26.7	30.8
SD	30.3	22.9	26
Minimum	1	0.5	0.25
Maximum	112	67	91

**includes valid responses only*

TABLE 8. Pearson's Correlation Coefficients Relating Proportions of Delayed Birth, Death and Marriage Registration, 2004 to 2012

	Pearson's r
Delayed births * delayed deaths	0.524**
Delayed births * delayed marriages	0.402**
Delayed deaths * delayed marriages	0.422**

significant at a =.01

This moderate correlation of delayed birth, death and marriage registration points to the existence of a common condition that underlies this phenomenon. The obvious answer is the region's topography, consisting of rugged terrain. More often than not, there is a poorly maintained if not non-existent road system, and people's homes are distant from government and urban centers. Geographic inaccessibility is a critical factor that challenges the effective implementation of civil registration, particularly in the case of births for this region. Analytically, it must be seen as a factor distinct from the other factors like conditions of poverty or cultural considerations that may also influence effective implementation of civil registration of members of IP communities.

To the extent that the poor are also those who live in geographically isolated areas of municipalities, the civil registration system may be seen as not being "poor-friendly." The fact that the offices of the local civil registrar are located in the municipal halls

found in the “poblacion” or urban centers does make the registration process more difficult for the poor—i.e., defined as those with less income—because of travel costs. (Our observation on whether the current civil registration system is “culture-sensitive” is presented later in regard to the registration of customary marriage.)

Data from the survey allowed us to infer about the existence and extent of delayed or late registration. Unfortunately, the survey data cannot tell us about the existence of the problem of non-registration. Instead, we asked the LCRs about their perception of the extent of the problem of non-registration of births, deaths and marriages. This is what was obtained: More of the LCRs perceive that there are few, rather than many cases of non-registration of births (61%) and of deaths (74%). In the case of marriages, 70% of LCRs perceive that there are many, rather than few cases of non-registration.

Awareness of LCRs of AO No. 3 and Its Provisions

Crucial to the successful implementation of AO No. 3 (Series of 2004) is the acquisition of the Local Civil Registrar’s Office (LCRO) of the so-called “NCIP approved list of ICCs/IPs affiliation.” This list is essential in determining whether the birth, death or marriage events being registered are covered by AO No. 3. The Administrative Order specifically mandates all C/MCRs to “ascertain the ethnic affiliation of the parents of the child” whose birth is being registered. “If ethnic affiliation of either parent is listed on NCIP approved list of ICCs/IPs affiliation, the C/MCR shall require the informant to accomplish or give the following data in the accomplishment of Municipal Form No. 102 Attachment IP Form No. 1 (see Annex 1): Name of the child, date of birth, and the ethnic affiliation/s of parent/s.” In the case of deaths among members of IP groups, the ethnic affiliation of the deceased, his name, other names, and date of birth are also required for inclusion in Attachment IP Form No. 2 (see Annex 2) that accompanies the death certificate issued by the LCRO.

Table 9 shows that only one-fourth of the LCRs in CAR have the said list of IP groups supposedly supplied by the NCIP. In terms of distribution across the provinces, Mountain Province has the highest proportion of LCRs with the said list

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(62.5%), followed by Ifugao (33.3%), Abra (20.8%) and Kalinga (20%). None of the municipalities in Apayao and Benguet who participated in the survey reported having the list of officially recognized IP groups. The low figures indicate one of the problematic areas that need to be addressed in the proper implementation of AO No. 3. Agencies like the NSO and the LGUs mandated with some functions related to IPRA require this basic document to implement their mandates. Whose task is it to disseminate the approved list of IPs among the concerned government agencies? To what extent are LCRs constrained in the implementation of AO No. 3 by the absence of the NCIP list? Would they have registered more IP members if such a list were provided them? Here we observe the lack of inter-agency cooperation and coordination in discharging this task.

Awareness among the LCRs in the Cordillera about the pertinent provisions of AO No. 3 does not appear to be problematic. Table 10 shows the basis for this assertion. We wanted to find out if they knew that their mandate includes determining the ethnicity of the child's parent/s, and that if either (or both) father or mother belongs to any of the IP groups recognized by the NCIP, then the child's Certificate of Live Birth should have an accompanying form referred to as Attachment IP Form No. 1. Data shows that 76.4% of the LCRs were aware of the said provision. When asked whether they knew that such birth certificates must also contain an annotation that the birth was registered pursuant to RA 8371 (Indigenous People's Rights Act IPRA), we found 75.5% responding in the affirmative. Awareness about the registration of deaths among Indigenous Peoples, which is to be accompanied by Attachment IP Form No. 2, is also high with 63% of LCRs acknowledging that there is such a policy in effect.

TABLE 9. Does the LCRO have a Copy of the NCIP Approved List of ICCs/IPs?

	Abra	Apayao	Benguet	Ifugao	Kalinga	Mt. Province	TOTAL
Yes	20.8	0	0	33.3	20	62.5	25.5
No	79.2	100	100	66.7	80	37.5	74.5
N*	24	3	6	9	5	8	55

**Includes valid responses only*

TABLE 10. Awareness of LCRs about Rules 6 and 7 (AO No. 3)

	N*	Yes	%	No	%
IP Birth Certificates Should Contain					
Attachment IP Form No. 1	55	42	76.4	13	23.6
IP Birth Certificates Should Contain Annotation	53	40	75.5	13	24.6
IP Death Certificates Should Contain					
Attachment IP Form No. 2	54	34	63.0	20	37.0

**includes valid responses only*

The Implementation of the Provisions of AO No. 3 in the Cordillera

Despite the predominance of IP groups in the total population of the Cordillera Region and what seems to be a high awareness among LCRs about AO No. 3, the implementation of the registration of IPs in consonance with AO No. 3 is patently inadequate. This is reflected in Table 11, where only one-fifth of the LCRs have actually registered births using Attachment IP Form No. 1 since 2004. The proportion of municipalities that reportedly have birth certificates containing the required annotation is slightly smaller at 18.5%, despite the fact that such an annotation should be written whenever the attachment form is used.

TABLE 11. Distribution of Municipalities with Registered Births and Deaths Following Rules 6 and 7 (AO No. 3)

	N*	Yes	Percent	No	Percent
Birth Certificates with Attachment IP Form No. 1	55	12	21.8	43	78.2
Birth Certificates with Annotation re IPRA	54	10	18.5	44	81.5
Births Registered with One-Name/ Indigenous/					
Tribal Names	56	9	16.1	47	83.9
Death Certificates with Attachment IP Form No. 2	57	3	5.3	54	94.7
Death Certificates with Annotation re IPRA	56	1	1.8	55	98.2

**Includes valid responses only*

With regard to birth registration, AO No. 3 further provides that the following names be allowed:

- a. One-name/indigenous name/tribal name which is first name only with no middle name and surname;
- b. First name, middle name and last name not following filial relationships;
- c. A first name, middle name and last name according to filial relationships; and
- d. Other names, except those referring to a, b, or c, in accordance with customary laws of either parents of the person to be registered as certified by the NCIP.

Item c follows the conventional practice of the child taking on his/her father's surname, for example. The other provisions above allow for the use of one-name or indigenous/tribal names or other such names in accordance with customary laws. Survey data shows that only nine municipalities (16.1%) in the Cordillera have registered individuals bearing such names from 2004 to 2012. One LCR remarked that the cases with one name were in fact all late registrations of births that occurred a long time ago. Another LCR wrote that one name is no longer seen among the children being registered in his area but there are still such cases among the older generations. This may imply that the practice of giving one name or using traditional names is no longer as prevalent as before.

Let us now examine the number of registered births, deaths and marriages following AO No. 3 from 2004 to the third quarter of 2012 as presented in Table 12.

The implementation of AO No. 3 is best described as very sparse with highly disparate figures. For one thing, only a small proportion of LCRs say that they have registered IPs following AO No. 3 since 2004. But an even smaller proportion of LCRs provided us with the pertinent statistics. This observation is true for births, deaths and marriages.

Our survey data shows that a total of 2,388 registered births were reported in eight municipalities (four in Ifugao and four in Mt. Province) bearing the required Attachment IP Form No. 1. However, wide disparities in number of cases registered are observed across municipalities. Besao, for example, only recorded five IP births

TABLE 12. Registration of IP Births, Deaths, and Marriages based on Survey Responses

Provisions of AO No. 3	Number of LCRs who say there are cases registered in their municipality since 2004	Number of LCRs who provided the statistics	Total Number of Cases Registered, 2004 to 2012
Registration of births			
with Attachment IP Form No. 1	12	8	2388
Registration of births			
with annotation re: IPRA	10	8	3904
Registration of births with			
one name/ traditional names	9	6	3241
Registration of deaths			
with Attachment IP Form No. 2	3	1	57
Registration of deaths			
with annotation re: IPRA	1	0	0
Registration of customary marriages	18	15	731
Registration of cases of			
marriage dissolution	1	1	96
Registration of revocation			
of marriage dissolution	1	1	12

over the last nine years, compared to Mayoyao, which had a total of 700 cases. Bontoc registered 565 IP births since 2004, while Kiangan had 521 cases.

Rule 6 on the Registration of Births in AO No. 3²² requires that Municipal Form 102 or Attachment IP Form No. 1 shall contain an annotation that said birth was registered pursuant to RA 8371 (IPRA). The number of cases following this provision reached 3,904 over the nine-year period under study. This number is more than the previous 2,388 cases of registration of birth using Attachment IP Form No. 1. The same municipalities in Ifugao and in Mt. Province that reported statistics on the use of the Attachment IP Form No. 1 reported that the said annotation is found in the same number of birth certificates. However, in addition, the Banaue LCR stated that it registered a total of 1,830 births with the said annotation since 2004. The LCR of Tinglayan, Kalinga also reported 646 birth certificates containing the annotation, but it did not report cases with the attachment form.

Registered births bearing one name or traditional names totaled 3,241 cases in six municipalities. Ten of these births were registered in Licuan-Baay, Abra while the Ifugao municipalities of Mayoyao and Banaue accounted for 700 and 1,830 one-name births, respectively. The LCRs of Bontoc, Sagada, and Sabangan (all in Mt. Province) reported a total of 701 one-name births.

Although 3 LCRs reportedly used Attachment IP Form No. 2 for the registration of deaths among IP groups, only Bontoc provided us with the relevant statistics. Data shows that 57 deaths were registered with the attachment form over the period 2004 to 2012. None of these deaths were reported to have the required annotation.

Statistics on registered customary marriages as shown in Table 13 were provided by 15 out of the 18 LCRs who said that there are such cases in their area. The numbers they reported are highly disparate, ranging from one case to as many as 210 cases. Eight of the 15 LCRs are from Mt. Province, which reported a total of 531 registered customary marriages, 210 of which are accounted for by Bontoc. A total of 43 cases were reported by three LCRs in Abra, while 138 cases were registered in three municipalities in Ifugao. A total of 731 customary marriages were registered in CAR from 2004 to 2012.

When IP civil registration statistics are expressed as a proportion of the total number of cases registered between 2004 and 2012, we can only describe these proportions as being very low. We must conclude that the level of implementation of AO No. 3 is very poor. As summarized in Table 14, the use of Attachment IP

TABLE 13. Total Number of Registered Customary Marriages by Province, 2004 to 2012

Number of Registered Customary Marriages	Abra	Benguet	Ifugao	Mt. Province	Total
5 or less	2	0	0	2	4
12 to 19	0	1	1	2	4
37 to 78	1	0	2	2	5
165 to 210	0	0	0	2	2
N* = 731	3	1	3	8	15

**Includes valid cases only*

TABLE 14. Descriptive Statistics on IP Civil Registration Levels (%), 2004 to 2012

	N*	Minimum Percent	Maximum Percent	Mean Percent	SD
Registered births with Attachment IP Form No. 1	8	0.22	13.44	5.74	4.39
Registered births with annotation re: IPRA	8	0.22	22.95	7.78	7.82
Registered births with one name/traditional names	6	0.76	22.95	8.38	8.31
Registered deaths with Attachment IP Form No. 2	1	2.98	2.98	2.98	
Registered deaths with annotation re: IPRA	0				
Registered customary marriages	15	0.11	13.47	5.08	4.29

**Includes Valid Cases Only*

Form No. 1 accounted for 0.22% up to 13.44% of the total registered births in eight municipalities.

On average, IP registered births accounted for only 5.7% of the total in these areas. Annotation on birth certificates was found in only 0.22% up to 22.95% of all registered births, or an average of 7.8% of registered births in these areas. The proportion of births with one-name or traditional names averaged 8.4% of the total births in eight municipalities.

The levels of IP-registered deaths and marriages are even lower than the already dismally low levels of IP-registered births. As seen above, only 3% of registered deaths in one municipality were registered to involve IP members. With regard to marriages, only an average of 5% was recognized as having occurred in accordance with customary law. The proportions ranged from 0.11% up to 13.5% of total registered marriages.

Factors Affecting the Implementation of AO No. 3

The statistics presented in the previous section point to a low level of implementation of AO No. 3 in the Cordillera Region. We provide an explanation for this situation in the case of birth, death, and marriage registration.

Birth Registration

If local civil registrars followed the procedures promulgated by AO No. 3, the registration of events concerning the civil status of indigenous peoples requires five additional forms. Information obtained from interviews revealed that these forms are not generally used. A Field Officer of the NCIP in Ifugao claims that the IP Forms are not attached to the civil registration forms in Ifugao.²³ Perhaps an explanation for the minimal use, if not absence, of the IP Forms is the conflicting interpretation of the application of AO No. 3. For example, the Local Civil Registrar of Tublay explicitly claims that the registration forms required by AO No. 3 are for late registrants only. From this LCR's view, the provisions of AO No. 3 do not apply to cases of civil registration that are registered within the prescribed 30-day period, as currently specified.²⁴

If one reads the Baguio City guidelines²⁵ on registration, AO No. 3 and its provisions are not even mentioned. Key NCIP informants lamented the fact that medical officers in hospitals around the region do not attach the IP forms when registering births or deaths. And worse, many do not know about the existence of these forms.

In the IP forms for birth, death, and marriage, a space for ethnic affiliation is provided. The "singular" term – ethnic affiliation – implies that the person only has one ethnic affiliation. A problem arises when the person to be registered has two ethnic affiliations or "mixed" ethnicity because one parent belongs to an ethnic group different from the other parent. The "solution" to this quandary when using the current attachment IP form is for the person being registered to declare only one ethnic lineage. But what would be the criterion for choosing which one? Moreover in the 2010 national census, the NCIP, according to an officer at the NCIP-CAR office, gave instructions that it is the mother of a person who is 13 years old and below who shall determine

the ethnic affiliation of a child being registered. For those persons who are older than 13 years old, they may decide on their own ethnic affiliation.

The issue of whether a single ethnic affiliation is the appropriate information that is to be sought and recorded in the attachment IP forms for the civil registration of IPs requires a resolution. When the government agencies need data on the population count obtained from civil registration data that involves recording the number of persons per ethnic group following the listing of the NCIP, then the manner of dealing with persons born of “mixed” ethnicity must be devised and followed by all LCRs. The procedure that will be developed must resolve the following few cases: What will be the ethnic affiliation of a child with a mother from an IP group that is different from the father’s IP group? Or with a father who is IP and a mother who is not IP? Or with a father or mother who is also of “mixed ethnicity”? Or with a parent who is the child of a mother who is IP and a father who is non-IP, thereby making the parent “one-half” IP?

On the other hand, what if the distinctions “IP” and “non-IP” are all that matters for the objectives of a government program or project? Can the simpler process be that of recording only whether a person belongs to an IP group, whichever one may be from an official list, i.e., the list of the NCIP? In this case, a registration form can simply contain a box that makes the distinction between IP and non-IP.

Of course, it can be argued that both types of information are necessary. We need to know how many persons there are per IP group as well as how many IPs there are in the country as a whole. Then, perhaps the standard civil registration forms used for all Filipinos can include a “box” that classifies someone as IP or non-IP. The supplementary form as devised by AO No. 3 is where the more specific IP group to which a person belongs is indicated. What will be decided upon as the appropriate procedure for the birth registration process can be carried over to those for marriage and death.

Death Registration

Rule 7 of AO No. 3 covers the registration of deaths among IP members. As in birth registration, the LCR is mandated to ask about the ethnic affiliation of the deceased. If the ethnic affiliation is listed on the NCIP approved list, then Attachment

IP Form No. 2 should be accomplished. Over 60% of the respondents said they were aware of such a provision. However, only one (or 1.8%) municipality reported cases of death registered following Rule 7, and no municipality has issued death certificates containing the required annotation about IPRA in the last nine years.

These figures indicate that in the case of IP deaths, AO No. 3 is generally not implemented in the region. When asked in the survey whether LCRs knew of hospitals or clinics in their area that attach IP Forms to the standard forms for births and deaths they submit for registration, the answer was “they did not know of any.” The conduct of an information campaign among hospitals/clinics and health practitioners in coordination with the municipal and provincial health offices about the need to use IP Forms is an important first step in order to encourage the more widespread implementation of AO No. 3 for IP births and IP deaths.

Registration of Customary Marriages

One issue that constantly surfaced during the interviews with regard to customary marriages involves “the person authorized to solemnize marriage,” usually referred to as “solemnizing officers.” The NSO requires that the solemnizing officers for customary marriages that are to be registered following AO No. 3 should be licensed. Since there are communities where the ceremony is solemnized not by one “solemnizing officer,” as would be the case in civil marriages, but by a collective or by several individuals, there is a lack of clarity as to who would then be licensed to officiate the customary marriage ceremony in order that it may eventually be registered. A more difficult problem is the possibility that in the attempt to comply with the provisions of the AO with regard to the registration of customary marriages, an indigenous cultural community may “create” an imagined “solemnizing officer,” even when there are no such persons following customary law.

According to informants, even when a community elder or tribal leader is convinced to apply for a license as a solemnizing officer, he/she may be discouraged because of the costs this process will entail. In addition, these costs can increase since the license requires a renewal. Many do not see the rationale for the need of a license for a “solemnizing officer” of customary marriages since, in fact, these marriages were already recognized by the community. The presence of the license

of the “solemnizing officer” does not grant any additional approval of the customary marriage. This issue is where cultural considerations should be given priority in devising the procedure for the registration of customary marriage under the civil registration system.

Table 15 shows that the statistics on customary marriages provided by the LCRs also underestimate the incidence of marriages that follow customary traditions. For one thing, majority (63.6%) of the LCRs claim customary marriages are no longer observed in their area. Only twenty LCRs (or 36.4%) say that people in their community continue to practice traditional marriage rites and ceremonies. But a key informant asserts that many customary marriages still occur up to the present. What explains this difference? The current practice is for couples to go through either a civil or religious marriage as well as a customary marriage rite. What the couple eventually registers with the LCRO as the event of marriage is the civil or religious rite rather than the customary rite. This probably explains why the survey data show that registered customary marriages happen in only 18 (32.7%) municipalities in the Cordillera. Note too, as already pointed out earlier, the customary marriages that most of these LCRs registered are “reconstructed marriages” where some of the parties are by now deceased.

TABLE 15. Distribution of Municipalities for Customary Marriages

	N*	YES	Percent	NO	Percent
Customary/Tribal Marriages still observed in municipality	55	20	36.4	35	63.6
Customary/Tribal Marriages Registered with LCR	55	18	32.7	37	67.3
Cases of Marriage Dissolution Registered with LCR	53	1	1.9	52	98.1
Cases of Revocation of Dissolved Marriages Registered with LCR	53	1	1.9	52	98.1

**Includes valid responses only*

Among the 61 LCRs that participated in the survey, only Tinglayan, Kalinga reported that there are cases of registered “divorce” in the area. According to the data, a total of 96 dissolved marriages were reported to the LCRO from 2004 to 2012. Of this number, most (18 cases) were reported in the year 2011. The LCRO consistently recorded such cases of marriage dissolution for this nine-year period. As far as the revocation of dissolved marriages is concerned, Tinglayan also reported a total of 12 cases since 2004. The case of Tinglayan is noteworthy because it did not report any cases of IP births, deaths and marriages following AO No. 3 except for these cases under marriage dissolution.

As a final observation on the registration of customary marriages, the study obtained information on certificates of tribal marriage issued by NCIP. In the Cordillera Region, the NCIP issued a total of 313 certificates of tribal marriage for the period from 1998 to 2012. More than half or 58% of these marriages occurred before 1969, leading to the conclusion that these certifications have been obtained largely for customary marriages that occurred decades ago. There are five certifications for 2010 to 2011, with four in Kalinga and the remaining one in Abra. As much as 96% of the 295 cases for which a certificate of tribal marriage was issued were not eventually registered with the Local Civil Registrar.

Other Aspects of the Civil Registration System

The survey also obtained data on other aspects of the civil registration system like the Barangay Civil Registration System (BCRS) and the costs and fees charged by the municipalities. We now present our findings on these aspects.

Can the Barangay Civil Registration System (BCRS) help?

Given constraints faced by LCRs in terms of being “mostly a one-man office” and a “last priority department” with “minimal funding and even none for Civil Registration activities,”²⁶ the Barangay Civil Registration System (BCRS) aims to strengthen the current Birth Registration System (BRS) through the active involvement of barangay officials, particularly the barangay secretary, in civil registry

TABLE 16. Implementation of BCRS by Province

	Abra	Apayao	Benguet	Ifugao	Kalinga	Mt. Province	TOTAL*
BCRS is used	10	2	5	7	5	6	35
BCRS not used	15	2	1	3	1	3	25
TOTAL	25	4	6	10	6	9	60

*Includes valid responses only

work. Under this system, the barangay secretary acts as a registration agent. S/He is mandated to receive applications for birth registration and to facilitate the processing of such with the LCRO. By maintaining a record of birth registration with the barangay, monitoring can be done.

A notable innovative practice of local government units to assist in achieving a comprehensive and complete birth registration in its territory is to appoint the Barangay Secretary, Barangay Health Workers (BHW), or Barangay Nutrition Specialist (BNS) to facilitate the registration of newborns with the LCR. The appointment of the Barangay Secretary, BHW or BNS as documenters of births in their respective areas can systematically improve the civil registration process for IPs. Unfortunately, not all local governments have funds to pay for the honorarium of the Barangay Secretary, BHW or BNS who are designated as birth (or civil) registrants. Indeed, “poor” LGUs are unable to support civil registry work.

The survey also asked the LCRs about the existence of the BCRS. Data in Table 16 shows that 35 out of 60 municipalities use the BCRS to facilitate the birth registration process. Most municipalities in Benguet (83%), Ifugao (70%), Kalinga (83%) and Mt. Province (67%) are assisted by the barangay. In Abra, only 15 out of 25 municipalities have such a system.

Table 17 outlines the individuals who were deputized to serve as Barangay Registration Agents (BRA) in their municipalities. The barangay secretary (71.4%), barangay health worker (94.3%), and midwife/nurse (91.4%) are the most frequently cited by the LCRs. Only two LCRs (Bauko and Buguias) mentioned that the NCIP officers in their area also help out in civil registry work.

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TABLE 17. Barangay Registration Agents

People Acting as Barangay Registration Agents	Number of Municipalities+	Percent*	Average Number of BRAs per municipality
Barangay Secretary	25	71.4	8.14
Barangay Health Worker	33	94.3	20.09
Midwives, Nurses	32	91.4	7.72
Hilot	1	2.9	No data
NCIP Officer	2	5.7	No data
Barangay Registration Agents	1	2.9	5
Daycare Workers	2	5.7	2.5
Barangay Nutrition Scholar	3	8.6	4
LCR Staff	1	2.9	No data
Barangay Council Members	2	5.7	5
RSI	1	2.9	1
N*	35		

*Includes valid responses only +Multiple responses included

Contrary to expectation, there is a low participation of NCIP personnel in the task of implementing the provisions of AO No. 3. The NCIP must recognize their role and immediately institute procedures for better cooperation with LCRs. Barangay council members, day care workers, barangay nutrition scholars and LCR staff were also cited. Note the corresponding average number of BRAs summarized in the last column of Table 17. These numbers are low, indicating that greater participation from concerned persons at the barangay level can still be enjoined.

Are civil registration fees and charges affordable?

Recall that civil registration for IPs must ideally be free of charge, as proposed in the House Bills mentioned earlier. The proponents of free civil registration believe that costs of registration deter IPs from participating in the process. In order to assess if this proposal merits attention, let us turn to an examination of the costs

TABLE 18. Fees and Charges for Various Documents and Services

Service/ Document	N*	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Certified True Copy	55	5	100	44.15	20.275
Certifications	57	20	500	51.98	33.041
Late Registration	51	0	500	123.94	115.804
Marriage Application	60	2	650	182.02	142.534
Service Fee	3	10	50	30.00	20
Registration of Court Orders	2	100	230	165.00	91.924
Registration of Legal Instruments	1	180	180	180.00	
Correction of Clerical Error	7	1000	1000	1000.00	
Petition for Change of Name	3	3000	3000	3000.00	
Affidavit to Use Surname of Father	2	100	100	100.00	
Acknowledgement Fee	1	100	100	100.00	
Solemnization Fee	8	50	500	231.25	183.210
Documentary Stamp	1	15	15	15.00	
Supplemental Report	3	100	200	160.00	52.195

**Includes valid responses only*

involved when various services and documents are sought from the Office of the Local Civil Registrar. Table 18 presents data regarding peso costs of documents and services with regard to the civil registration process.

The costs that do not vary across municipalities include those that are mandated by law, like the correction of clerical error (RA 9048) and the affidavit to use the surname of child's father (RA 9255). The fee charged for paternal acknowledgement is PHP 100, while petitions for change of name cost PHP 3000. The latter amount is also in accordance with RA 9048.

A concern has been raised regarding costs or what can be described as "perceived costs" of registration. According to informants, although the act of registration is technically free, there are indeed costs that are incurred by registrants for "certifying that a document is a true copy and some other out-of-pocket costs for persons who will have to travel to the Office of the Local Civil Registrar, particularly for out-of-town registrants."²⁷ In Baguio City for example, costs of registration may include

payment of fees for certified true copies of registration documents (PHP 40/per page), certification of civil registry documents (PHP 20/per page), marriage application (PHP 100 plus PHP 20 processing fee) and late registration (PHP 50 for registration beyond 30 days but less than one year; PHP 100 for registration beyond one year).²⁸

Generally, civil registration of births, deaths and marriages is a service rendered by LCROs free of charge to the public. What the office collects as payments are for various documents produced as a result of the registration process. The amount of fees varies from place to place since the Local Government Code allows the LGU to determine the amounts of local taxes and local fees. For example, the cost of a certified true copy of a civil registry document ranges from PHP 5 to PHP 100, averaging at around PHP 44 in 55 municipalities in CAR. Certifications requested from the LCRO cost PHP 52 on average, although there are areas that charge as low as PHP 20 while some charge as high as P200. The fine for delayed registration was PHP 10 per year of delay in three municipalities. Six municipalities do not charge anything for late registration.

Summary of Findings

1. Our research data suggests that the problem with delayed/late registration is more prevalent for birth compared to death and marriage. The figures on late birth registration average around 49% of total registered births across the Cordillera. A wide variation among municipalities is observed with half of all municipalities having an incidence of delayed birth registration of at least 47%.
2. There is a moderate positive correlation using Pearson's r between delayed birth and delayed death registration (0.524); delayed death and delayed marriage registration (0.422); and delayed birth and delayed marriage registration (0.402). All are significant at the one percent level. These correlations indicate that municipalities with a high incidence of delayed birth registration are more likely to have high levels of delayed death and delayed marriage registration as well.

3. Only one-fourth of the LCRs in the Cordillera Region have a copy of the NCIP Approved List of ICCs/IPs. This document is essential in the determination of whether the civil event of birth, death, or marriage is covered by AO No. 3.
4. Awareness among the LCRs in the Cordillera about the pertinent provisions of AO No. 3 does not appear to be problematic. However, only eight LCRs reported registering births using Attachment IP Form No. 1 since 2004. In the case of deaths, only one municipality reported to have registered death with Attachment IP Form No. 2. These numbers show the dismal implementation level of the provisions of AO No. 3 for births and deaths.
5. The statistics on customary marriages provided by the LCRs appear to underestimate the incidence of marriage that follows customary traditions. Several key informants assert that a good number of customary marriages still occur even at present. However, couples usually go through either civil and/or religious marriage rites in addition to customary rites. What is eventually registered with the LCRO is the civil ceremony rather than the customary marriage rite. Thus, registered customary marriages are recorded in only 15 out of the 61 participating municipalities. Moreover, most of the customary marriages that these LCROs registered from 2004 to 2012 are “reconstructed marriages,” where some of the parties are now deceased.
6. The Barangay civil registration system that was established to facilitate the birth registration process is not yet fully implemented in the Cordillera Region, with only 35 out of 60 municipalities (or 58%) using the system.
7. Civil registration of birth, death, and marriage is a service rendered free of charge by LCROs. What are collected are payments for the issuance of various documents resulting from the registration process. The amount of fees varies from place to place. For example, a certified true copy of a civil registry document ranges from PHP 5 to PHP 100 or an average of PHP 44. The fine for delayed registration is PHP 10 per year in three municipalities. But no such fine is collected in six municipalities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper is inclined to agree with an opinion expressed by a key informant that the additional forms attached to the standard forms of civil registration for IP members call attention to the difference of IPs from non-IPs. In this light, it seems better that there is only one civil registration form for the IPs as well as the non-IPs in the country. The information on ethnic affiliation, which is the key information contained in the attachment forms, can be included or accommodated in the standard civil registry document for birth, death and marriage. This can be done perhaps by providing a “box” on ethnicity. The specific ethnic affiliation of an IP person will be recorded in the Attachment IP Form No. 1. It is best that a resolution to this matter is undertaken by involving the ICCs/IPs as well as partner agencies, particularly the NCIP offices in the regions, in the design of procedures. This can be one way for the civil registration process to be “culture-sensitive.”

If awareness among the LCRs in the Cordillera about the pertinent provisions of AO No. 3 does not appear to be problematic, as our survey data attests, why is there only a small proportion of LCRs who say that they have registered IPs following AO No. 3 since 2004, whether for birth, death, or marriage? The deterrent appears to be the inconvenience that accompanies the task of obtaining information required by the Attachment IP forms of the Administrative Order.

For the people in the Cordillera, there is no lack of awareness of the importance of obtaining civil registry documents. However, the members of IP communities in this region appear willing to postpone acquiring these documents until it is necessary to do so. For example, a birth certificate is applied for only when the child is ready to start formal schooling. Therefore the problem we identified during the research is not non-registration, but delayed registration of civil events.

The significant moderate positive correlations between delayed birth-, delayed death-, and delayed-marriage registration point to the common factor of geographic inaccessibility as an explanation for the existence and even prevalence of late civil registration. Geographical conditions in many areas of the Cordillera Region discourage persons from visiting the office of the local civil registrar within the required 30 days after the civil event to have it registered. The provision of regular

periodic “mobile” services for civil registration by the LCRs in cooperation with the NCIP and the BCRS in order to reach households instead of LCRs is an important initiative to begin with, and, if already undertaken by the municipalities, to sustain.

An effective civil registration for both IP and non-IP communities in the country is one that achieves complete coverage.

Notes

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- 2 AO No. 3, Preliminary Statement, letter b, p. 1.
- 3 Rules and Regulations Governing Registration of Acts and Events Concerning Civil Status of Filipino Indigenous Peoples
- 4 AO No. 3, Preliminary Statement, p. 1.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Section 2 (e) of RA 8371, Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA).
- 7 Explanatory Note to House Bill 4701 introduced to the Fifteenth Congress, First Regular Session.
- 8 A discrepancy in national statistical data about minority populations is sometimes described as an intentional act by the state to reduce the number of these minorities and is referred to as “statistical genocide” (see post of Christopher Rodriguez of June 26, 2008 at www.vidaafrolatina.com/Statistical_Genocide_in.html) or “statistical ethnic cleansing” (as used by The Khalistan Affairs Center in its post of April 25, 2012 regarding the Sikhs in India in www.khalistan-affairs.com/wp/?p=908). However, the discrepancy observed between the counts by the NSO and the “unofficial” surveys of the NCIP can also be attributed to a civil registration system with high levels of non-registration for specific groups of the national population. The factors causing non-registration in the Philippines need to be studied and established.
- 9 Explanatory Note to House Bill 5184 introduced to the Fifteenth Congress, Second Regular Session.
- 10 United Nations. 2001. *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 2*, p. 167
- 11 United Nations Statistics Division (UNSTATS). 2012. “Civil registration systems.”

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KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

- Interview with NSO provincial statisticians, 7 June 2012, National Statistics Office, Baguio City
- Interview with the Provincial Officers of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), 6 August 2012, NCIP Regional Office, Lyman Ogilby Building, Magsaysay Road, Baguio City
- Interview with Ruth Elyn Dino, Local Civil Registrar (LCR), Tublay, Benguet, 31 August 2012
- Interview with Ifugao and Benguet Field Officers, 20 September 2012, Rajah Soliman Hotel, Baguio City

Annex 1

Certificate of Live Birth

Municipal Form No. 102 (IP Form No. 1) (Revised January 2004, attachment)	
Province _____ Registry No. _____	
City/Municipality _____	
NAME _____ (First) (Middle) (Last)	DATE OF BIRTH _____ (Day) (Month) (Year)
ETHNIC AFFILIATION OF THE FATHER	ETHNIC AFFILIATION OF THE MOTHER
INFORMANT _____	
ADDRESS _____	
Signature _____	
Name in Print _____	
Relationship to the Child _____	

Annex 2

Certificate of Death

Municipal Form No. 103 (IP Form No. 2) (Revised January 2004, attachment)	
Province _____ Registry No. _____	
City/Municipality _____	
NAME OF THE DECEASED INCLUDING TRADITIONAL TITLE, IF ANY _____	
OTHER NAMES _____	
DATE OF DEATH _____ (Date) (Month) (Year)	DATE OF BIRTH _____ (Date) (Month) (Year)
ETHNIC AFFILIATION OF THE DECEASED _____	
FULL NAME OF SPOUSE (S) in chronological listing _____ _____ _____	
BURIAL RITES	
NAME OF OFFICIATING PERSON _____	
SIGNATURE _____	
ADDRESS _____	
TITLE/POSITION/DESIGNATION _____ DATE _____	

Annex 3

Certificate of Marriage

Municipal Form No. 97 (IP Form No. 3) (Revised January 2004, attachment)		
Province _____		Registry No. _____
City/Municipality _____		
DATE OF MARRIAGE _____ (Day) (Month) (Year)	MARRIAGE ORDER (whether first, second, etc.) Husband _____ Wife _____	
AMOUNT OF DOWRY Cash _____ Others (specify) _____ _____	OTHER STIPULATIONS TO THE MARRIAGE	
CONTRACTING PARTIES	HUSBAND	WIFE
Signature _____		
Printed Name _____		
ETHNIC AFFILIATION OF THE HUSBAND _____		
ETHNIC AFFILIATION OF THE WIFE _____		

Appendices

TABLE 1. Estimated Crude Birth and Death Rates by Municipality, 2004 to 2012

MUNICIPALITY	CRUDE BIRTH RATE	CRUDE DEATH RATE
<u>ABRA</u>		
Bangued	58	12
Boliney	34	3
Bucay	22	5
Bucloc	14	6
Daguio	22	1
Danglas	21	3
Dolores	22	6
La Paz	22	4
Lacub	49	3
Lagayan	12	2
Lagangilang	78	15
Langiden	11	3
Licuan-baay	37	3
Luba	32	6
Malibcong	41	3
Manabo	32	4
Penarrubia	19	4
Pidigan	15	5
Pilar	26	5
Sallapadan	32	3
San Isidro	15	5
San Juan	28	4
Tayum	11	5
Tineg	42	1
Tubo	18	5
Villaviciosa	29	4
<u>APAYAO</u>		
Conner	18	2
Flora	22	3
Luna	31	5
Santa Marcela	21	3

MUNICIPALITY	CRUDE BIRTH RATE	CRUDE DEATH RATE
<u>BENGUET</u>		
Atok	25	4
Bakun	17	2
Buguias	32	4
Kabayan	16	3
Mankayan	23	3
Sablan	10	4
<u>IFUGAO</u>		
Aguinaldo	31	1
Alfonso Lista	24	3
Banaue	41	4
Hingyon	14	4
Hungduan	27	3
Kiangan	39	3
Lagawe	72	9
Lamut	22	2
Mayoyao	35	2
Tinoc	25	3
<u>KALINGA</u>		
Balbalan	33	2
Lubuagan	40	3
Pasil	26	2
Pinukpuk	33	2
Rizal	35	4
Tinglayan	64	2
<u>MOUNTAIN PROVINCE</u>		
Barlig	20	3
Bauko	31	4
Besao	35	6
Bontoc	49	9
Natonin	33	2
Paracelis	31	2
Sabangan	19	3
Sadanga	22	4
Sagada	20	5

The Civil Registration of Indigenous Peoples in the Cordillera Region:
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TABLE 2. Incidence of Delayed/Late Registration as a Proportion of Total Registered, 2004 to 2012

PROVINCE	LATE BIRTH REGISTRATION (%)	LATE DEATH REGISTRATION (%)	LATE MARRIAGE REGISTRATION (%)
<u>ABRA</u>			
Bangued	17.43	1.85	4.23
Boliney	78.10	59.04	76.79
Bucay	42.90	2.80	26.04
Bucloc	35.92	8.87	16.52
Daguioman	81.53	23.81	15.45
Danglas	43.99	2.26	13.29
Dolores	43.33	2.17	3.78
La Paz	51.18	4.06	14.46
Lacub	76.48	50.65	21.08
Lagayan	63.48	19.67	10.14
Lagangilang	58.03	.55	2.62
Langiden	69.70	6.85	5.96
Licuan-baay	87.57	56.19	28.80
Luba	58.75	7.40	6.27
Malibcong	92.74	33.75	14.29
Manabo	56.20	7.54	3.90
Penarrubia	40.61	2.69	3.46
Pidigan	32.24	.19	4.34
Pilar	61.42	12.97	18.57
Sallapadan	71.28	72.33	5.47
San Isidro	32.06	.48	3.79
San Juan	58.40	5.03	10.16
Tayum	43.10	.97	4.23
Tineg	91.45	2.44	.87
Tubo	25.28	1.54	14.70
Villaviciosa	61.05	15.03	7.67
<u>APAYAO</u>			
Conner	53.93	16.58	3.47
Flora	30.00	13.99	1.24
Luna	15.26	5.80	1.92
Santa Marcela	31.55	6.74	5.89

PROVINCE	LATE BIRTH REGISTRATION (%)	LATE DEATH REGISTRATION (%)	LATE MARRIAGE REGISTRATION (%)
<u>BENGUET</u>			
Atok	22.30	21.64	4.19
Bakun	35.68	35.04	1.20
Buguias	27.67	17.79	.00
Kabayan	39.75	14.25	7.47
Mankayan	16.57	3.10	1.34
Sablan	42.13	9.14	2.55
<u>IFUGAO</u>			
Aguinaldo	55.41	39.36	1.22
Alfonso Lista	35.30	7.18	.83
Banaue	60.82	10.80	8.15
Hingyon	39.69	17.59	.66
Hungduan	47.19	34.10	3.61
Kiangan	65.87	21.87	7.83
Lagawe	22.07	3.00	2.47
Lamut	54.07	12.42	.68
Mayoyao	67.01	20.83	11.47
Tinoc	3.88	11.36	.93
<u>KALINGA</u>			
Balbalan	75.35	42.17	20.93
Lubuagan	37.37	28.02	6.83
Pasil	77.99	45.14	6.12
Pinukpuk	54.52	50.73	14.94
Rizal	49.32	15.45	4.00
Tinglayan	61.59	26.63	12.65
<u>MOUNTAIN PROVINCE</u>			
Barlig	61.18	17.92	15.06
Bauko	17.99	8.25	4.30
Besao	33.61	6.51	6.68
Bontoc	32.31	4.28	17.00
Natonin	53.45	26.23	14.12
Paracelis	33.96	23.54	11.98
Sabangan	46.56	17.74	6.72
Sadanga	44.61	4.72	13.88
Sagada	50.41	8.77	16.20