

GLOBAL STILLBIRTH FACTS

A Quick Look at the Numbers

- More than **3.2 million** stillbirths occur each year worldwide.
- **99%** of all stillbirths occur in developing countries, with the highest incidence in countries located in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.
- **27%** of all stillbirths occur during labor and delivery. One third of these could be prevented.

What is Stillbirth?

There is no universally accepted definition of stillbirth. It may refer to an early or late fetal death. A definition proposed by the World Health Organization for stillbirth is a death occurring at least 28 or more weeks gestation or when a fetus weighs at least 1000g. However, in the United States, for example, stillbirth refers to a pregnancy loss after 20 weeks gestation.

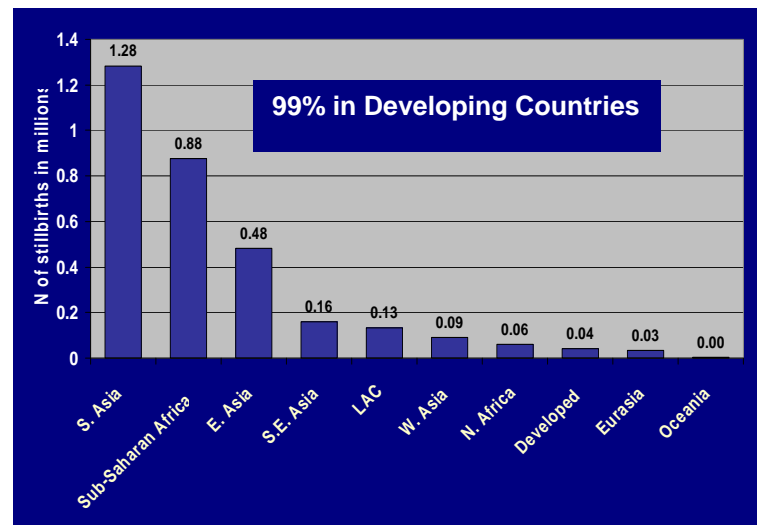
What Parts of the World Are Most Affected by Stillbirths?

The highest incidences of stillbirths occur in South Asia (more than 1.25 million), followed by sub-Saharan Africa (nearly 1 million), and then East Asia (about half a million). The table below provides estimates in millions by global region.

What are Challenges to Data Collection for Stillbirths?

The lack of a global classification system creates varied data across countries and regions. More than 30 different stillbirth classification systems have been identified. In many societies stillbirth is a taboo topic that is not recorded or discussed. In order to increase prevention efforts for stillbirths it is imperative to improve global estimates through increased data collection standards and protocols.

Estimated Stillbirths by Region, 2000
(in millions)



Source: Stanton C, Lawn JE, Rahman H, Wilczynska-Ketende K, Hill K. Stillbirth rates: delivering estimates in 190 countries, 2006. *Lancet*. 2006: 1-8.