

# Preventing stillbirth: What's the latest evidence?

## Further information and resources

### The International Stillbirth Alliance

The International Stillbirth Alliance (ISA) and its partners carry out global collaborative work to raise awareness of stillbirth and newborn death and advocate for increased attention to, investment in, and action for, research and prevention.

As an example, one of the projects we have implemented through our Stillbirth Advocacy Working Group (SAWG) is the [Global Scorecard for Ending Preventable Stillbirths](#). This scorecard tracks progress against global targets for stillbirth reduction and respectful care after stillbirth that were set in the [Lancet's 2016 Ending Preventable Stillbirths Series](#). An adapted version of this scorecard, focussed on high-income countries, has been developed by ISA's Western Pacific Regional Office, the [Centre of Research Excellence in Stillbirth](#) in Australia.

In 2020, the global Scorecard reached global prominence when UNICEF provided the annual update and included the 2020 version (see figure) in its [Every Newborn Action Plan](#) progress report. Among other indicators, the Scorecard tracks country research on stillbirth (indicator 5.3), demonstrating that most countries do not have a dedicated research program for stillbirth prevention.

We want to support parent organizations and parent advocates to use the information in the Scorecard to advocate for increased attention to stillbirths in their own countries. One goal of this is to raise awareness among decision makers and researchers about the need to fund and implement high-quality research, including when randomised trials are not possible or appropriate (and hence might not provide evidence to contribute to a Cochrane Review).

[When it comes to the oil painting analogy in our blog](#), this is part of what we need to make the painting as clear as it can be.

Another project led by [Australia's Centre of Research Excellence in Stillbirth](#) is the ISA Perinatal Death Classification System. The system, which is now being piloted in the Netherlands and Australia and will be tested across eight countries, will help to harmonise data on conditions associated with stillbirth, a critical step for researchers in identifying promising areas to focus on.

The SAWG's [Parent Voices Initiative \(PVI\)](#) is another effort to increase attention on stillbirths, including Advocacy Toolkits for health providers in India and parents in Kenya. The PVI aims to build awareness and capacity to talk about stillbirth and its impact on families and involve parents in addressing some of the challenges related to stillbirth, such as providing better bereavement care. The PVI's registry of parent support organisations is the first global listing of over 400 organisations in 75 countries that provide support to parents whose babies were stillborn, and launches in 2021.

		Regional Coverage																	
		ENAP Global pool		High Burden		Sub-Sahara Africa		Central and Southern Asia		Northern Africa and Western Asia		Eastern and South-Eastern Asia		Europe and Northern America		Latin America and the Caribbean		Oceania	
		2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
NUMBER OF COUNTRIES		90	93	36	36	44	45	14	14	14	14	9	11	2	2	3	3	4	4
<b>MORTALITY TARGETS BY 2030</b>																			
1.1	Countries with Newborn Plan	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢
1.2	Countries with Stillbirth Rate Target	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟡	🟡	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴
1.3	Countries Achieved Stillbirth Rate Global Target	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟢	🟡	🟡
1.4	Countries with Subnational Newborn Plan	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟡	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴
1.5	Countries with Stillbirth Rate Equity Target	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1.6	Countries Reporting Subnational SBRs	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>UHC: FAMILY PLANNING</b>																			
2.1	Additional Users of Modern Methods of Contraception	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	—	—	🔴	🔴	🔴
2.2	Percentage Demand for Contraception Satisfied	🔴	🟡	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟡	🟡	—	—	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴
2.3	Countries with Reproductive Health Plan	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>UHC: ANTENATAL CARE</b>																			
3.1	Global Standards for Antenatal Care	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3.2	4+ Antenatal Care Visits	🔴	🟡	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🔴	🔴	—	—	🔴	🔴
3.3	Validated ANC Quality of Care Indicator in Use	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>UHC: INTRAPARTUM CARE</b>																			
4.1	Global standards for Intrapartum Care	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4.2	Births Attended by Skilled Health Workers	🟡	🟡	🔴	🔴	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🔴	🔴
4.3	Validated Intrapartum Quality of Care Indicator in Use	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>MILESTONES</b>																			
5.1	National Quality Improvement Plan Focusing on MNH	🔴	🟡	🟡	🟡	🔴	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟡	🟡	🟡	🔴
5.2	Perinatal Death Review Systems	🟡	🟡	🔴	🔴	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟢	🟡
5.3	Research Focusing on Stillbirths Planned by Country	🔴	🟡	🔴	🟡	🔴	🔴	🟡	🟡	🔴	🔴	🔴	🔴	🟡	🟢	🟡	🟡	🟡	🔴
5.4	Global Consensus on Respectful Care after Stillbirth	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5.5	National Process for Stigma Reduction	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Notes: 1) Highest burden countries are a list of 37 countries having the highest stillbirth rates, neonatal mortality rates, neonatal deaths and stillbirth deaths in 2019, 2) ENAP pool for 2020 includes three new countries - Botswana, Cambodia and Laos, 3) Data for ANC is only available for 60/93 countries, 4) Data for SBA is only available for 67/93 countries

Global Scorecard for Ending Preventable Stillbirths (2020 version). Source: Every Newborn. Acknowledgements to ISA, LSHTM, and SAWG for the Global Scorecard.



Perinatal Death Classification System Workshop, International Stillbirth Alliance conference in Madrid, Spain (2019). Source: ISA



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