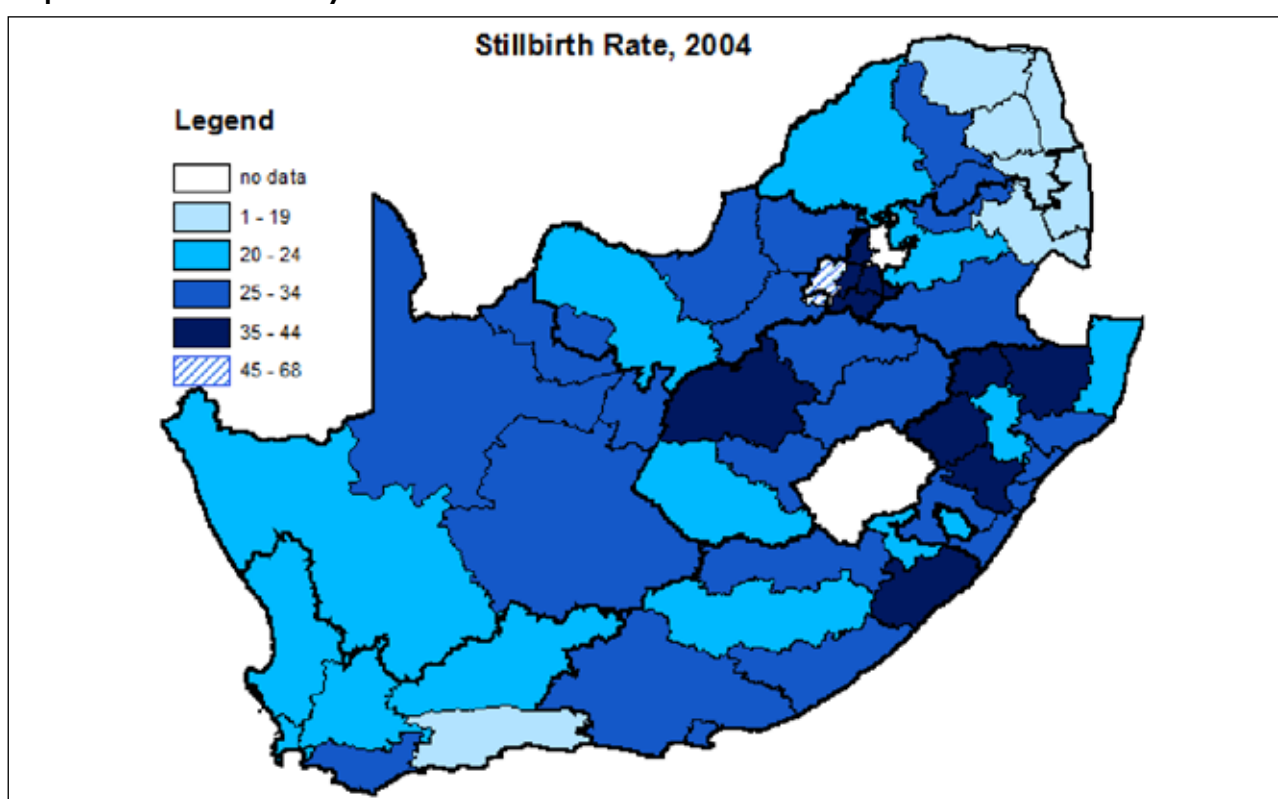


5. IMPACT INDICATORS

5.1 Stillbirth Rate

The stillbirth rate measures the number of babies born dead out of 1000 total births. The stillbirth rate is a measure of both socio-economic status (and nutritional status) of the pregnant mothers and the effectiveness of the health services. Developed countries have a rate of 10 per 1000 or less, whilst developing countries generally have a rate of 20 and upwards. Countries badly affected by the HIV and AIDS epidemic have experienced an increase in the stillbirth rate. The stillbirth rates reflected for SA are in public sector facilities and do not give a full community picture especially in those places where there are significant numbers of home deliveries. This is probably applicable to Limpopo where the stillbirth rates reported here are likely to be lower than they actually are.

Map 16: Stillbirth Rates by District in South Africa

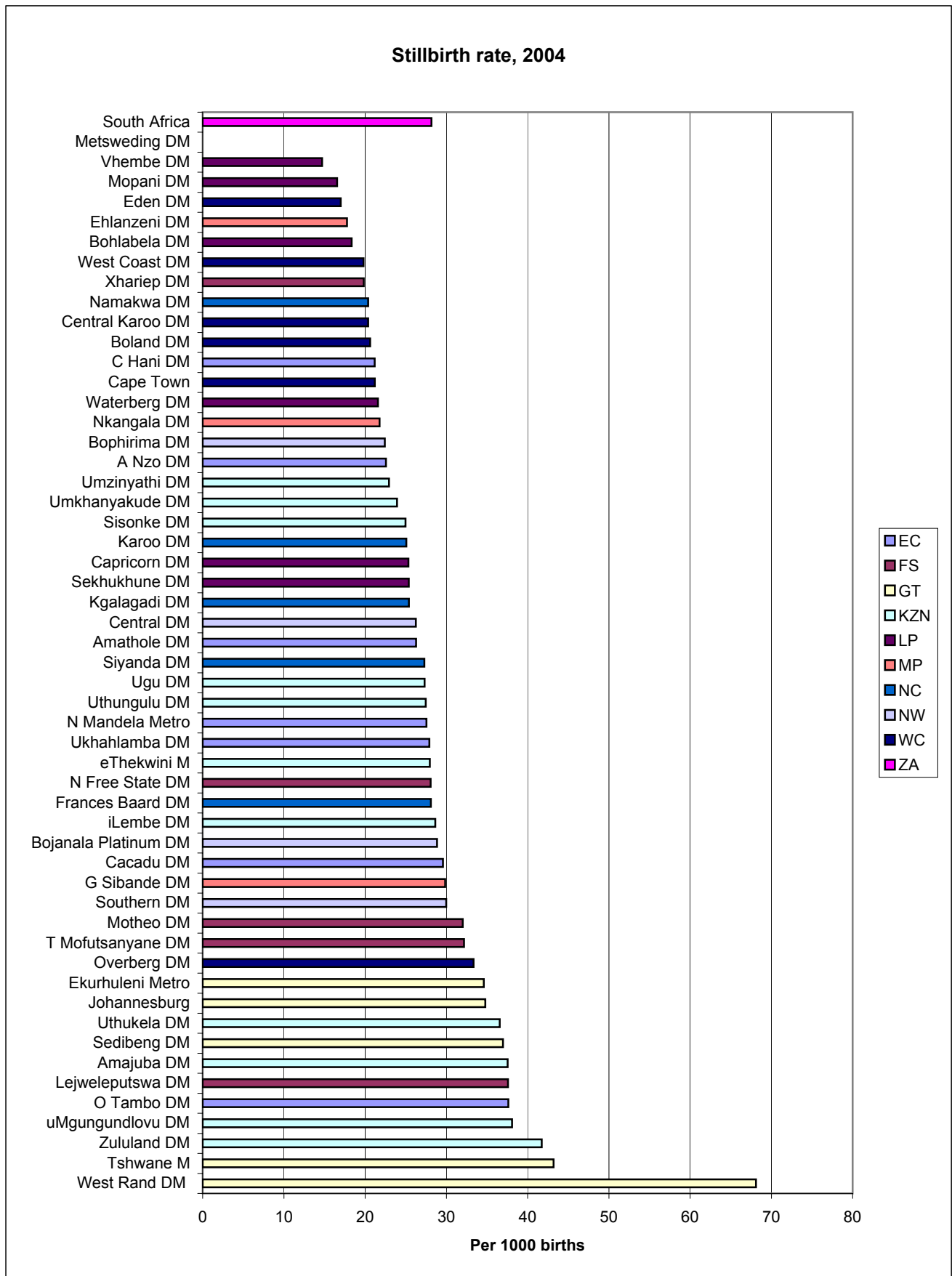


District View:

There is considerable variation across the districts from 68 per 1000 in the West Rand (GT) to 15 per 1000 in Vhembe (LP). However, the data from the districts at the extremes of the range are unlikely to be accurate. At the top of the range it is surprising to have the highest stillbirth rate recorded in an urbanised district where the rate is 50% more than the rate of the district with the lowest stillbirth rate. At the bottom of the range, Vhembe (LP) and Mopani (LP) have the lowest stillbirth rates. As discussed above significant home deliveries in these two districts will likely push the rates down. It is unlikely that these districts have rates lower than the stillbirth rate of 21 in the City of Cape Town.

Gauteng districts record consistently high stillbirth rates. There are three possible reasons for this. Firstly, mothers in neighbouring provinces may be choosing to deliver in facilities in Gauteng. Secondly, it may be that mothers with complications of pregnancy are also formally referred to Gauteng facilities. Thirdly, it may be that the recording of stillbirths is more accurate.

Figure 53: Stillbirth Rate by District²⁹



29 There are no hospitals in Metsweding District and also no formal delivery facilities; therefore no births recorded.

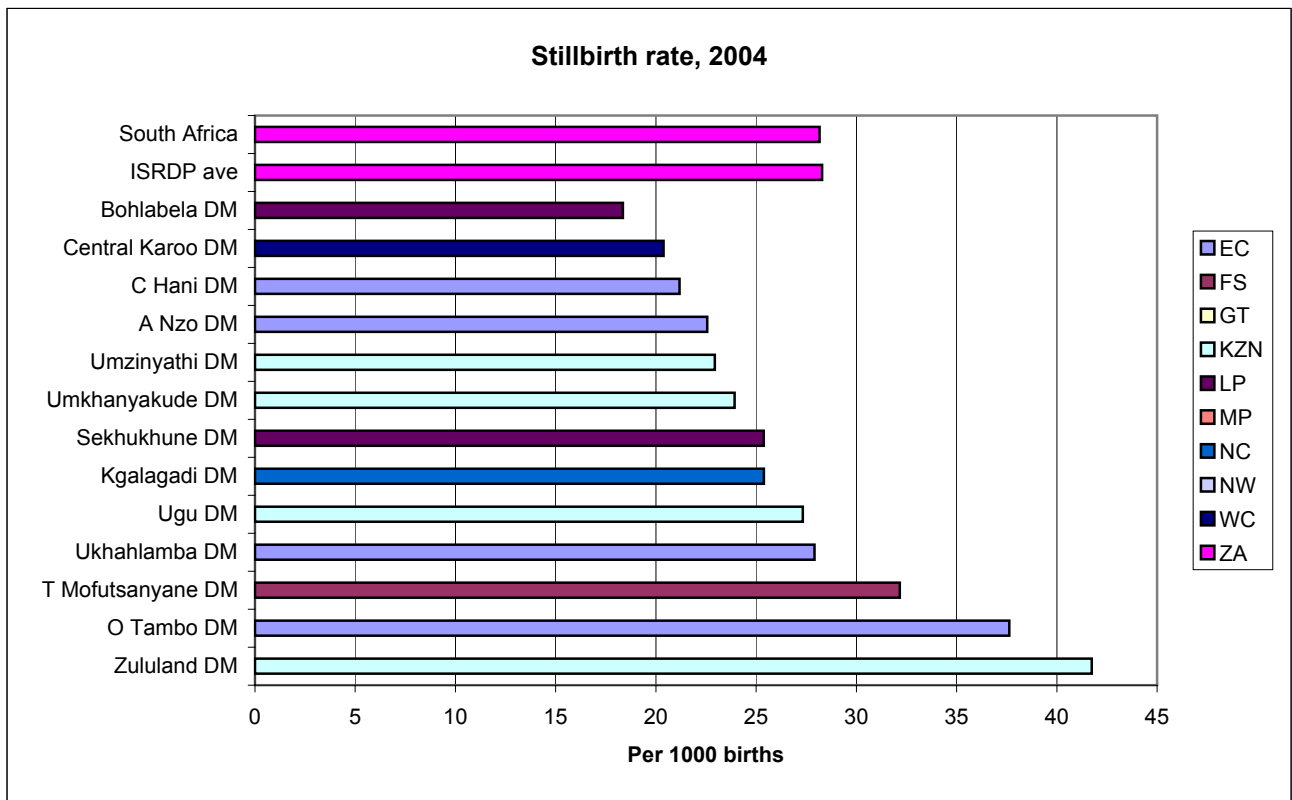
Rural Nodes:

The stillbirth rate for the rural nodes is the same as the national average of 28 per 1000. This is unlikely to represent the real situation as a higher stillbirth rate in the rural nodes would have been expected because of the generally poorer socio-economic status. These results probably reflect a combination of:

- ◆ not all stillbirths in the rural nodes are being recorded
- ◆ greater proportion of home births with consequent complications
- ◆ mothers choosing to deliver in districts with better facilities
- ◆ mothers with complications being referred to other districts.

The stillbirth rates vary from Zululand (KZN) where the rate is 42 per 1000 to Bohlabela (LP) where the rate is 18 per 1000.

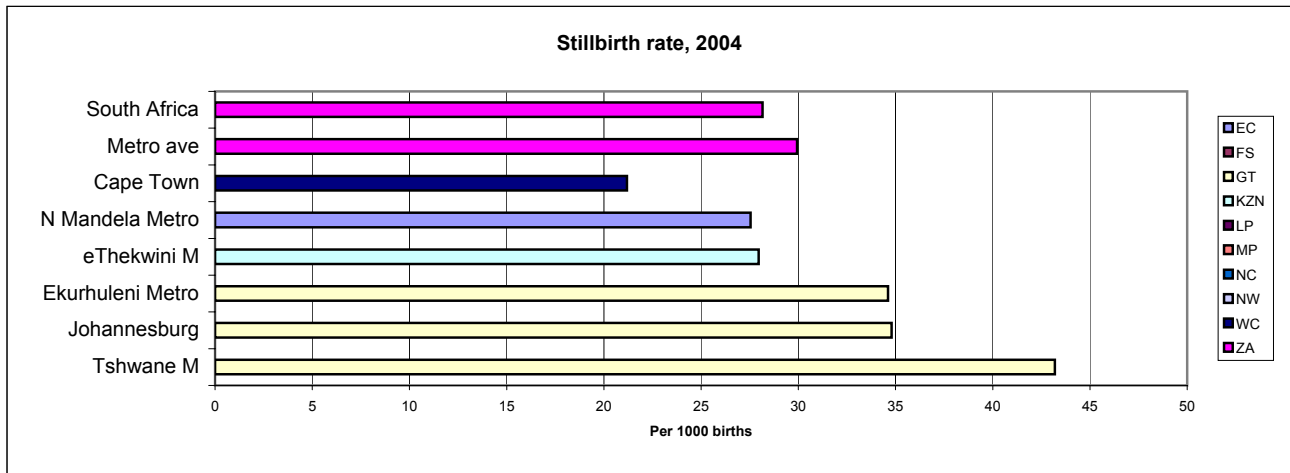
Figure 54: Stillbirth Rate by Rural Node



Metro View:

The average stillbirth rate in the metros of 30 per 1000 is higher than the national average. This is contrary to what would be expected in the highly urbanised metros with the most developed infrastructure.

Figure 55: Stillbirth Rate by Metro District



Provincial View:

The stillbirth rates across the provinces vary from 38 per 1000 births in Gauteng to 20 per 1000 births in Limpopo.

Figure 56: Stillbirth Rate across the Provinces

