

Organization Name: Global Perinatal Services (GPS)

Date of Interview: April 2025

Organization Interviewees: Faisa Frode (Founder and Licensed Midwife), Zainab (Communications and Resource Development Manager), Neha (Director of Programs), Akua (Program Manager)

Impact 100 GRT Interviewers: Amy Shelton, Meredith Nguyen

Organization mission: To ensure every family has access to culturally rooted, respectful, and empowering pregnancy and parenting support, with a focus on Black, immigrant, and refugee families.

What does the organization do? GPS wraps care around families from early pregnancy through a baby's first year across King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties, serving families in 21 languages. Programs include:

- **Doula Services:** Birth and Postpartum Doulas, plus a 24-hour on-demand labor support line.
- **Lactation Support:** A seven-days-a-week multilingual hotline, lactation lounges, home visits, and support from certified lactation support specialists.
- **Easy Access Clinic:** Free walk-in prenatal and postnatal care, open to all regardless of insurance or documentation status.
- **Peer Support Groups:** Mom's Corner, Father-to-Father, and Afghani Sisters' Corner (216+ participants in 2025).
- **Case Management:** Wraparound referrals for housing, food, English language courses, medical appointments, and connection to the Department of Social and Health Services for refugee clients.
- **Doula Certification:** GPS certifies doulas and offers on-demand continuing education credits and support with getting Medicare certification and filing for Medicare reimbursement.

Who does the organization serve? GPS serves Black, immigrant, and refugee families (nearly all Medicaid recipients) who face the greatest barriers in maternal and infant health. GPS also hires and trains people from the communities they serve. For many GPS-trained doulas, this role is their first professional opportunity in the United States, and GPS names economic investment in their community as a core part of their model.

What inequity is the organization addressing and how does it address it? Black and refugee women face disproportionate rates of maternal mortality, preterm birth, and birth trauma. They are less likely to receive culturally responsive care and more likely to experience dismissive or harmful treatment. As a [2023 Washington State Maternal Mortality Review](#) report said, "Communities most burdened by perinatal health inequities have the expertise, cultural knowledge, and lived experience to lead solutions to reduce maternal mortality. Black, Indigenous, and people of color must be centered as leaders." GPS rises to meet this need through continuous, culturally-appropriate doula support; free clinical care regardless of documentation status; multilingual lactation services; and wraparound case management that treats housing, food, and access to services as inseparable from perinatal health. Community-Based Doulas enroll clients at 28 weeks and remain with families through the baby's first birthday, focusing on prevention and informed autonomy. This model, developed first by Health Connect One in Chicago, has a strong [evidence base](#) and track record at GPS.

What are the compelling reasons to support this organization? How is this organization doing transformative work?

1. Proven outcomes.

- GPS had a 0% preterm birth rate for their Community Doula clients in 2025. Every baby was born full term.

- 90.9% of birth doula clients initiated breastfeeding at birth.
- Birth doula enrollments grew 40% year over year, from 298 clients in 2024 to 417 in 2025, driven by GPS's integration of Medicaid reimbursement.

2. A previous Impact100 grant is producing results. GPS used their last Impact100 grant to launch a doula certification program after the existing regional doula certification organization dissolved. Thanks to that investment, over 100 doulas - many of them Black and Indigenous - were certified as doulas. Now that Medicaid reimbursement for doula services is active statewide, GPS relaunched gpsdoulas.org with paid memberships. Using that platform, GPS directly supports doulas as they navigate applying for Medicaid reimbursement. The new site also offers on-demand Continuing Education Units (CEUs) aligned to Washington State's requirement that all Medicaid-reimbursed doulas complete 10 continuing education hours every two years. The original grant seeded a platform that is now helping the organization to certify and support the continuing education of community doulas. This benefits 1) the doulas, who now have a reliable income source and professional support as needed; 2) the various local communities who have increased access to culturally-appropriate doula services; and 3) GPS, which has created a sustainable funding stream.

3. Impact 100's funds would be highly leveraged. Because GPS is in the healthcare space and receives state and federal funds, a significant portion of their funding is heavily restricted and earmarked - leaving internal operations underfunded and overstretched. An Impact 100 grant would go toward administrative capacity, data management, scheduling, billing, and program quality, thereby broadly improving all GPS services.

Highlight a story of impact: During the pandemic, a client who was 36 weeks pregnant went in to be seen at a South Seattle hospital on a Friday, and she was abruptly informed that her baby had died in utero. In shock, the client went home and contacted her doula. The doula accompanied her back to the hospital that night to begin the delivery process, but devastatingly the client was told she had lost her chance to have a D&C that day by leaving and would have to return on Monday. Unable to fathom spending a weekend without receiving care, the doula called GPS founder Faisa Frode. Faisa knows the relevant policies at the various local hospitals, and knew that the client would be eligible for care at Swedish Medical Center. Faisa and the doula contacted Swedish and shared the situation and how the client had been treated, and Swedish agreed to receive the client that evening. When the client arrived, the Swedish nursing staff formed two lines and applauded as she walked in to support her. Faisa shared that most GPS clients do not believe they have the right to advocate for themselves in a medical setting. They fear speaking up will put themselves and/or their baby at risk, and that fear is not unfounded. A GPS doula changes that.

This story speaks not just to the benefit of having a trusted doula, but also how critical it is for that doula to belong to a supportive community. The doula knew to call Faisa, and in turn Faisa knew who to reach out to.

What is the organization's greatest need? Scaling GPS's internal capacity to sustain program growth is their greatest need. Medicaid reimbursement has helped them to be able to significantly expand their reach, but their operational infrastructure has not kept pace. A grant from Impact 100 would support:

- Expanding core programs: Easy Access Clinic, lactation services, and peer support groups
- Building out the GPS Doulas certification and their CEU platform
- Completing and publishing their postpartum discharge research for distribution to hospitals across Washington State
- Additional staffing for data management, scheduling, billing, and program quality