

NNLM Project Overview: Life After 2 Losses: Support, Advocacy, and Health Literacy for Healthy Pregnancy

Let's get started!



Hello, I am Vu-An Foster

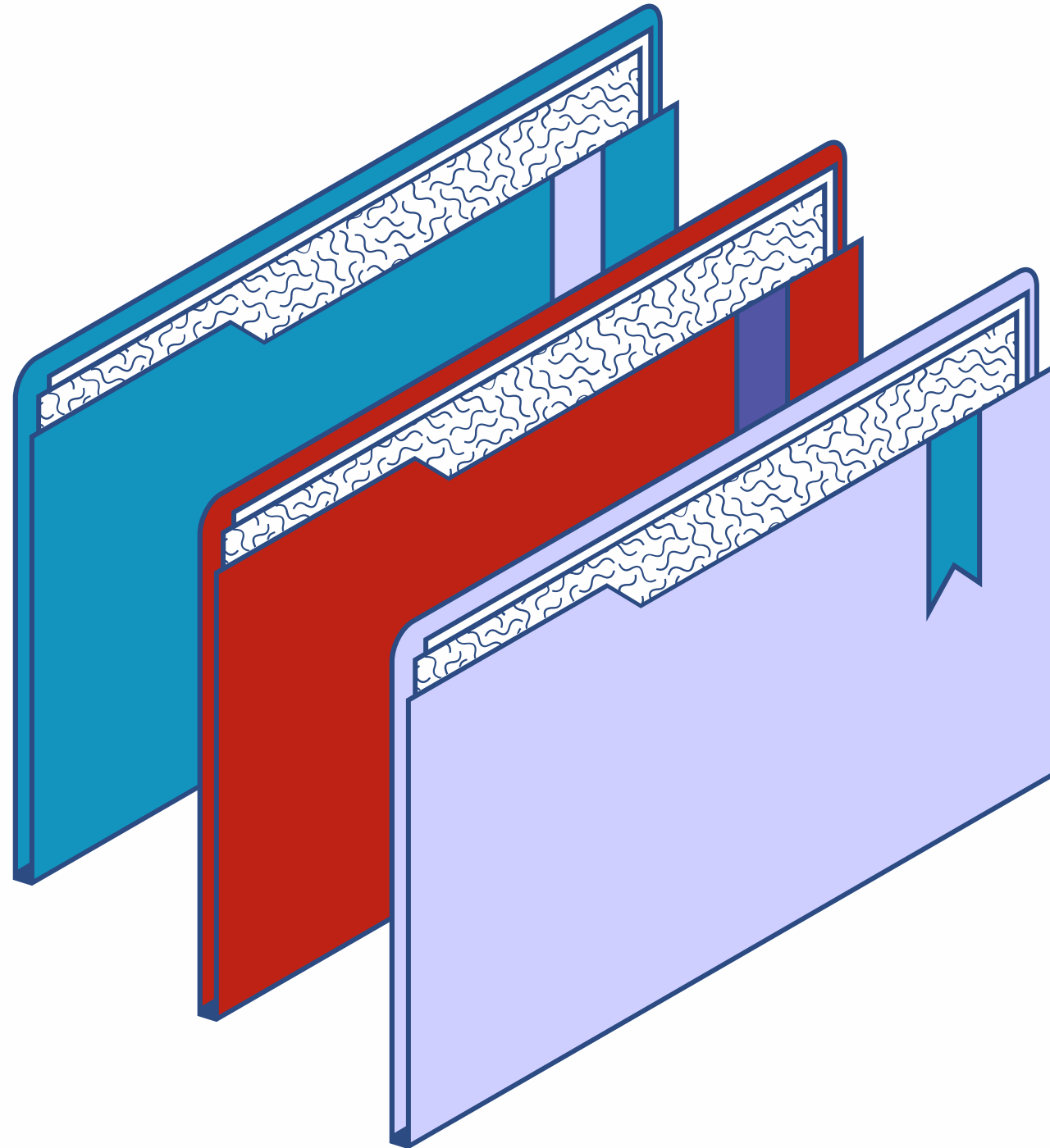
- Graduated from William Paterson University with a Bachelor's Degree in Public Health and a Master of Public Health in Health Systems Administration and Policy from Montclair State University.
- Personal experience with pregnancy loss sparked a transition from health care administration to the Maternal Child Health (MCH) space.



Founded Life After 2 Losses:

- Faced challenges in obtaining MCH experience due to job rejections.
- Founded Life After 2 Losses, a 501(c)(3) organization to provide grief support to those who experienced miscarriage, pregnancy loss, and infant loss.
- LA2L's participants who utilized grief support reported discrimination and the need for health literacy focused on empowerment. LA2L's mission is to prevent reproductive and health injustices





Objectives

BY THE END OF THIS WEBINAR, PARTICIPANTS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Identify birth justice and health equity literacy needs of medically at risk and underserved BIPOC persons.
- Explain methods this program uses to prepare BIPOC persons to make well informed decisions about and advocate for quality birthing and maternal care.
- Discuss outcomes of this NNLM funded project.



Maternal Health Crisis in the US

- The US is facing a maternal health crisis, with maternal mortality rates at record levels.
- New Jersey has one of the widest racial disparities for both maternal and infant mortality.



April 11th-17th is Black Maternal Health Week

Black women in the US experience significantly worse maternal health outcomes compared to their white counterparts: According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Black women are roughly three times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than white women.



Black infants also have higher rates of preterm birth and infant mortality. Black Maternal Health Week to raise awareness of these disparities, highlighting the urgent need for equitable and accessible maternal healthcare!



Birth Equity

- **Birth equity** refers to the goal of ensuring that all individuals have equal access to safe and respectful maternity care, regardless of their race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or other factors.



- It emphasizes eliminating disparities in maternal health outcomes and addressing the root causes of these disparities.

- Birth equity aims to provide fair and just opportunities for all pregnant individuals to have a positive and healthy childbirth experience.



Reproductive Justice

- **Reproductive justice** is a broader framework that goes beyond reproductive rights and focuses on the intersectionality of various issues affecting marginalized communities.



- It advocates for the right of individuals to make their own decisions about their reproductive health, including the right to have or not have children, and the right to parent their children in safe and supportive environments.
- Reproductive justice also addresses the impact of systemic inequalities, such as racism, poverty, and discrimination, on reproductive health outcomes and advocates for social and economic justice.



Partnership with NNLM



Received funding from NNLM for a pilot health literacy program.

Focus on empowerment and shared decision-making during conception, pregnancy, and postpartum.

NNLM's support enabled the expansion of services and reach of Life After 2 Losses.



Health Literacy & Advocacy Workshops

Provide free health literacy and advocacy workshops reaching 500 pregnant/postpartum mamas, birth workers, and support partners of all genders who are BIPOC and/or living on low incomes. The workshops aim to increase health literacy related to common perinatal health issues and enhance self-advocacy skills to navigate healthcare bias and obtain vital care.



Workshop Sessions



Monthly hour-long workshops will be conducted, alternating between one online and two in-person sessions.

Locations include Newark Housing Authority, Southern New Jersey Perinatal Cooperative and partner organizations serving BIPOC pregnant/postpartum mamas with low incomes.

Recordings available online and at the Newark Public Library.



Participant Eligibility and Support Details

Sessions open to BIPOC pregnant/postpartum individuals and their supporters, as well as those interested in becoming pregnant.

Topics cater to perinatal health issues common in BIPOC mamas due to systemic racism. Tools and resources provided to assist with self-monitoring and self-advocacy.

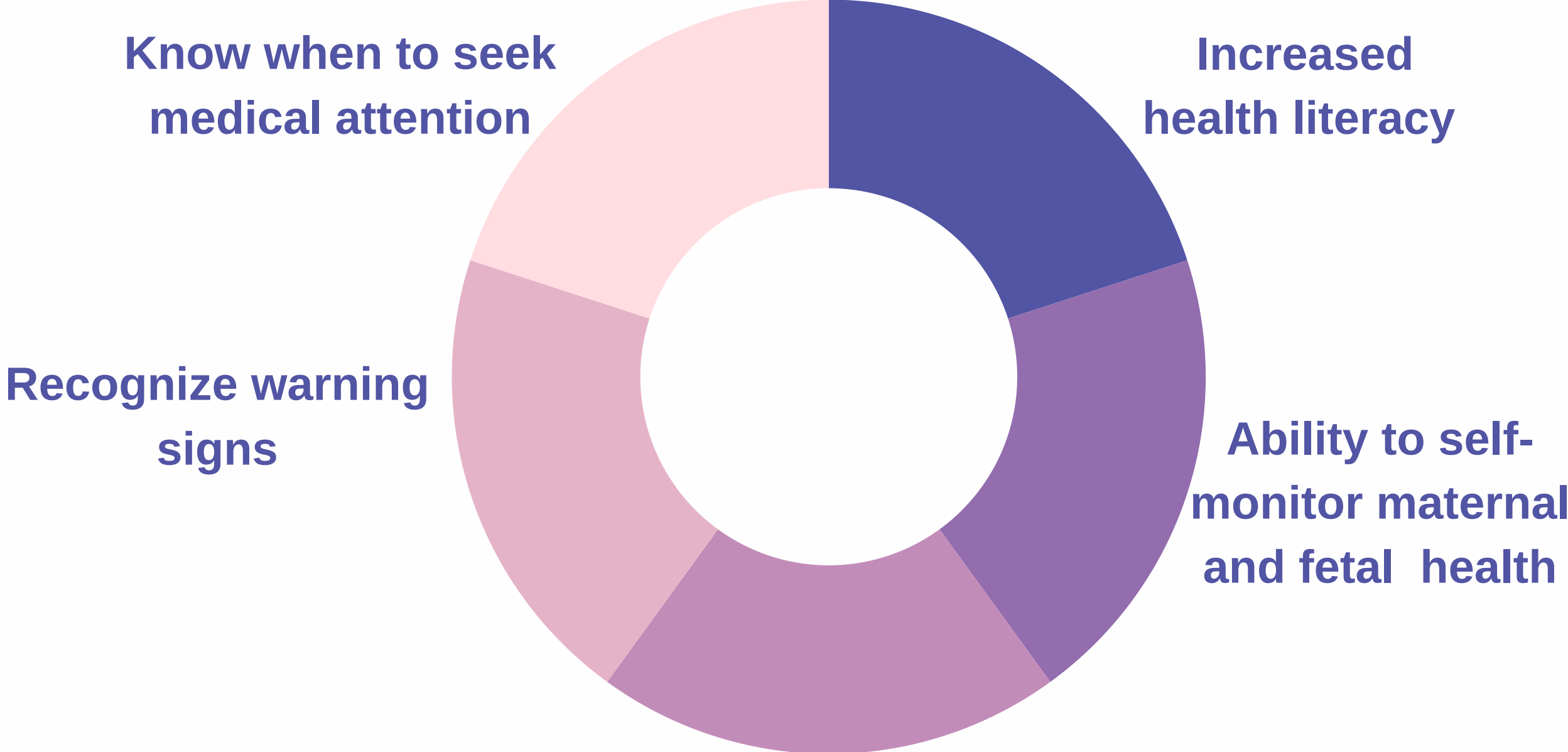


Health Literacy & Advocacy Workshops Topics

- NOV: Prematurity Awareness Month
- DEC: World AIDS Awareness Month
- JAN: Cervical Health Awareness Month, Diabetes Month
- FEB: World Prenatal Infection Prevention Month
- MAR: National Endometriosis Awareness Month
- APR: Stress Awareness Month, Black Maternal Health Week
- MAY: Preeclampsia Awareness Month
- JUN: Preterm Premature Rupture of Membranes Month; Men's Health Awareness Month
- JUL: Minority Mental Health Awareness Month
- AUG: National Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Month & National Breastfeeding Month
- SEP: Neonatal Intensive Care Awareness Month, World Suicide Prevention Day
- OCT: Pregnancy & Infant Loss Awareness Month, Health Literacy Month



Change Outcomes



Increased self-advocacy skills to demand care if denied due to provider bias, leading to increased healthcare access and improved health outcomes.



Assessment and Measurement

- Participant demographics will be collected.



- Online evaluation survey after each session or recording view to assess impact and effectiveness.



- Tracking includes number of unique participants, attendance per participant and per session, and recording views per session.



Benchmarks of Success

Success benchmarks include at least 80% of evaluation respondents affirming that the session provided information that will help them monitor or advocate for their perinatal health or that of a loved one. This indicates a positive impact on participants' health literacy and self-advocacy skills.



Snippets From Presentations



The Power of Storytelling

Mental health support changed my life. It helped me...

Sharing my story allowed me to...

In my culture, mental health was considered...

Being heard and understood made me feel...

By sharing my story, I hope to...

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Body

Recognizing effective systematic change will take years or even a decade to be implemented, LA2L is determined to reduce the time it will take to address racial disparities and inequities by highlighting the importance of integrating personal lived experiences and public health practices as a public health strategy.

Presentation Highlights

**Presentations are
engaging**

**Participants are leaving
equipped with
information, tools, and
resources to better
navigate healthcare
system**

**Due to my
transparency and
vulnerability
participants feel
comfortable sharing
and joining in on the
story telling**

**Newly formed
partnerships**



Strengths

- Government officials endorsed our pilot



- Inspired wellness event



- Invited to:

1. serve on the City of Newark's Health Literacy Committee
2. serve as an expert panelist for the Cradle Project Conference
3. serve as a member of the health literacy coalition.

- 93% of evaluation respondents affirmed that the session provided information that will help them monitor or advocate for their perinatal health or that of a loved one

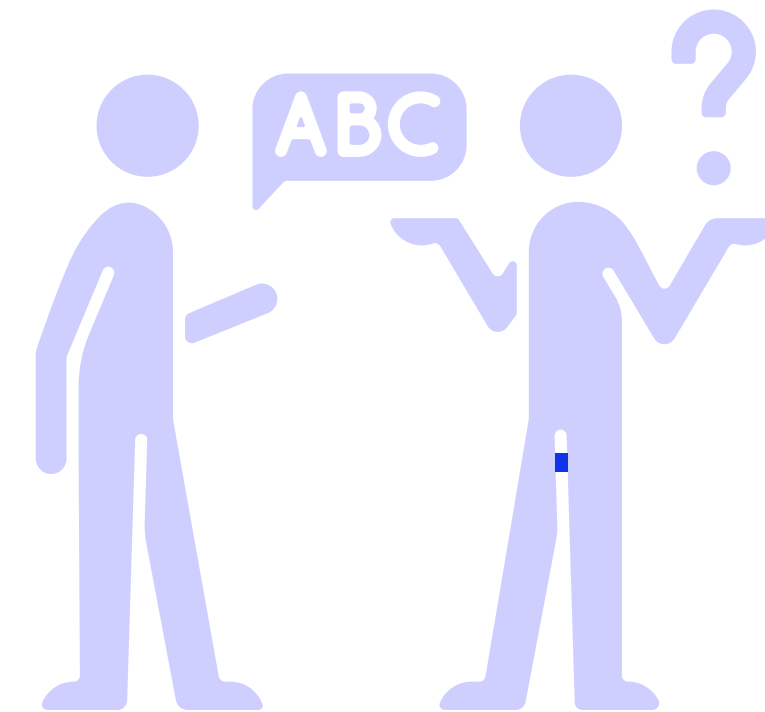


Challenges

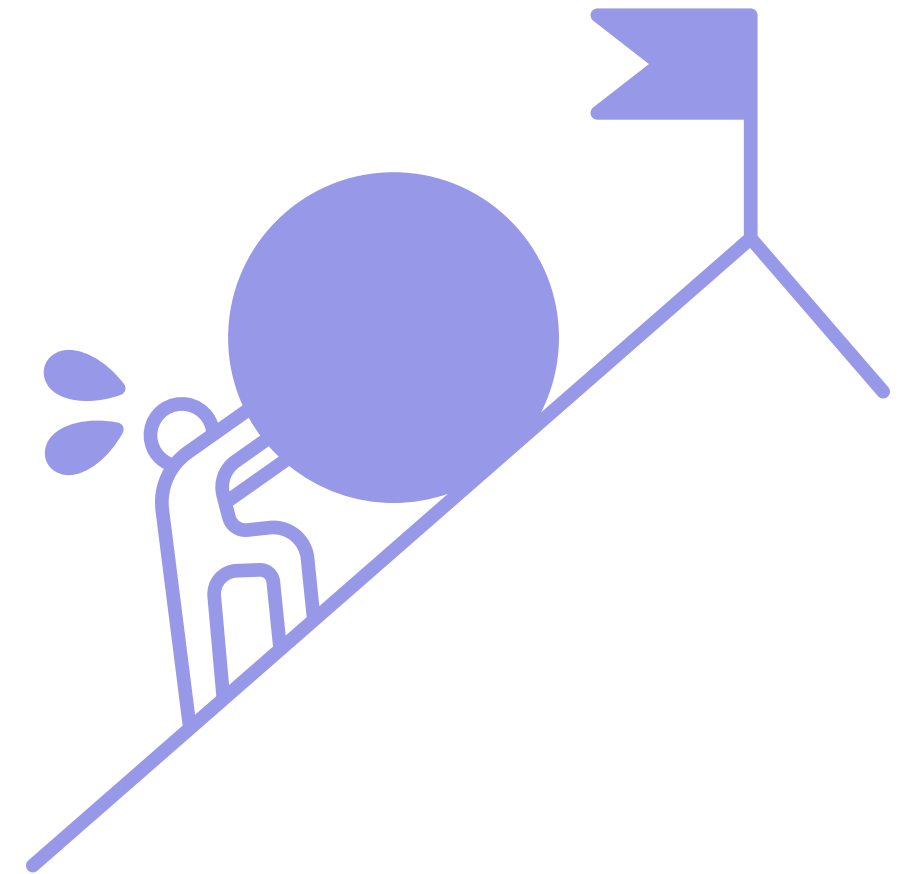
- Delays in receiving funding



- Language barriers



- Hiccups with partnerships
- Demand greater than capacity



Call to Action

It's important to recognize that we all play a role in improving maternal child health outcomes. Silo mentality makes impact harder to achieve. We are stronger when we join forces and work together.



Share:

What strategies can we implement within our communities to shift this perspective and promote greater awareness among pregnant individuals about potential health risks for both themselves and their babies?

What strategies collectively can we implement to reduce infant and maternal mortality and improve maternal child health outcomes to achieve health equity for vulnerable population ?



Questions?



Thank
you!

