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Creative. Insightful. Irrepressible.
Committed to a better world.

The **Improve** Group

Minnesota Secretary of State – Business Services
60 Empire Drive, Suite 100
St. Paul, MN 55103

March 31, 2020

Attached, please find the annual benefit report for The Improve Group, SBC for the period covering January 1-December 31, 2019. The report includes the ways in which we pursued and created the specific public benefit stated in our articles, the extent to which that benefit was pursued and created, and circumstances related to our ability to pursue and create that benefit.

Our Board certifies that it has reviewed and approved the report.

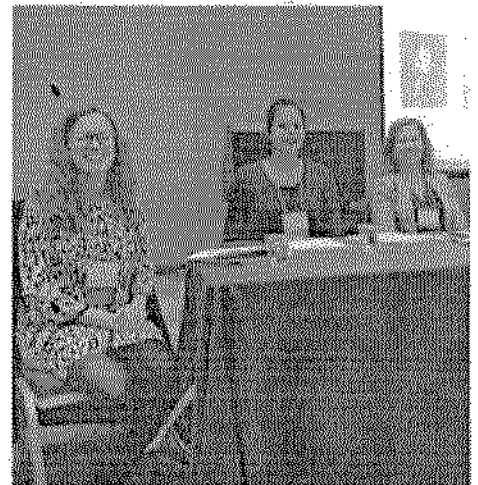
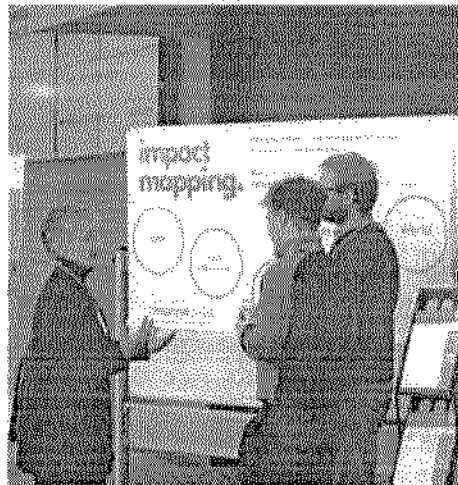
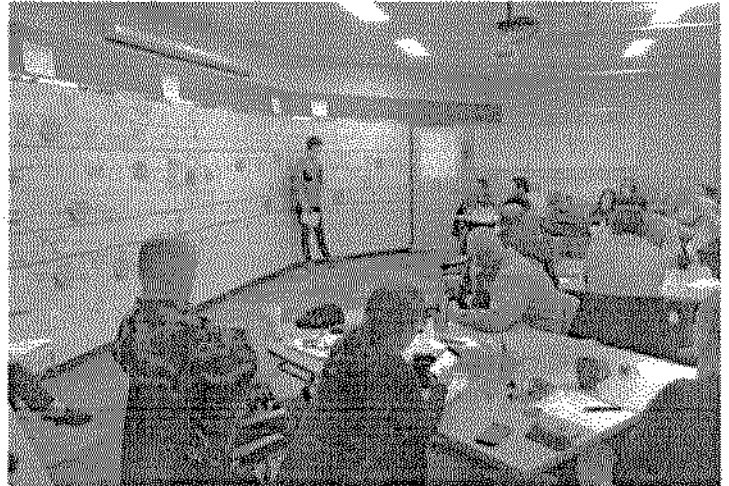
Signed on behalf of our Board,



Leah Goldstein Moses, Founder & CEO
The Improve Group, SBC



The **Improve** Group



Public Benefit Corporation 2019 Annual Report

Submitted March 31, 2020

About IG

Creative. Insightful. Irrepressible.
Committed to a better world.

Mission:

We help mission-driven organizations make the most of information, navigate complexity, and ensure their investments of time and money lead to meaningful, sustained impact.

Vision:

The Improve Group's vision is that mission-driven organizations will effectively develop a more resilient, equitable, and thriving world.

Values:

- Joy
- Excellence
- Thoughtfulness
- Building a Better World
- Innovation & Creativity
- Collaboration & Inclusiveness

Our History

Leah Goldstein Moses founded The Improve Group in 2000 with a vision to improve programs and organizations that impact the world. Twenty years later, her vision remains strong and is shared by the dedicated staff at The Improve Group. In 2016, The Improve Group became a Public Benefit Corporation to better reflect our organizational commitment to supporting partners in creating and sustaining meaningful change.

Our Team

Our team is experienced in managing complex, multi-site, multi-country projects with clients dedicated to a wide variety of areas, including health, advocacy, social justice, humanitarian aid and peace, education, housing, economic and community development, the arts and culture, self-sufficiency and financial stability.

Our Services

The Improve Group conducts rigorous studies to help organizations make the most of information, navigate complexity, and ensure their investments lead to meaningful, sustained impact. We help organizations through the following services:

Evaluation: Utilizing the right mix of tested and innovative evaluation methods essential to advancing organizational impact

Impact & Needs Research: Finding new insights through research

Strategic Planning: Aligning vision, strategy, and action to accomplish your organization's mission

Capacity Building & Training: Preparing organizations for tomorrow's opportunities

Informing Systems & Policy: Informing leaders seeking to transform systems to achieve better results

Global Service: Evaluation and research partnerships around the globe to support and sustain positive change



How we measured our impact...

Impact measurement and reporting can be an essential accountability and transparency tool for organizations working towards social impact or greater good. The Improve Group also sees it as a great communication tool for clients, and community members—as they can be assured that by working with us their resources and engagement support a wide range of positive social impact.

Methodology

To ensure credible and comparable impact data, we used three standardized metric systems to help tell our story:

1. **IRIS+ indicators** to select cross-category impact metrics that are important to our staff and work.
2. **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** to categorize and understand how our intermediary services support organizations to have impact in many different topics and sectors.
3. **B Impact Assessment** to rate our progress against other businesses and set benchmarks for improvement.



Spheres of Impact

We see our impact through these three lenses:



Internal

- Policies & practices
- Employee benefits
- Staff well-being



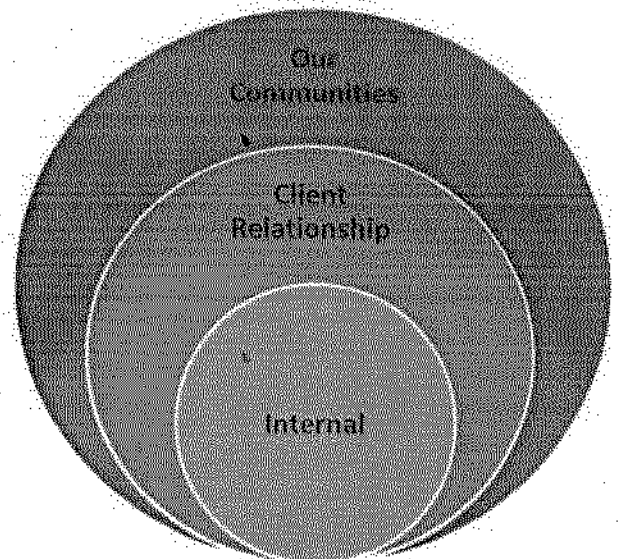
Client Relationships

- Engagement strategies
- 2019 contract portfolio



Our Communities

- Ripple effects of impact
- 2019 project highlights





Internal Impact

At The Improve Group, we believe that meaningful public benefit starts in our own house—through internal systems and processes that support our most powerful asset, our staff. Thanks to thoughtful leadership and our dedication to **Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion**, we have strong structures and practices in place that support our staff.

Our Powerhouse Staff



1.03 Our **gender wage equity** ratio. We have no meaningful differences in pay between genders.

2.86 Our **wage equity** ratio. Our highest salary is only 2.9 times more than our lowest salary.



All **29** of our staff received **40 hours or more of training**, beyond individualized professional development plans.

4.6 years of average employee tenure

26 employees are female

9 employees were promoted

3 employees have a disability(s)

7 employees are from an underrepresented group

Policies and Practices

We encourage staff to purchase fair or direct trade to improve livelihoods for underserved groups in our supply chain.

Employee benefits

401K match (up to 4%); dental; short- and long-term disability; Health Savings Accounts (HSA); life, medical and pet insurance (to which spouses and family have access); and socially-responsible investing options.

Volunteer time off (VTO)

Employees can utilize up to 16 paid hours per calendar year to volunteer with any 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. In 2019:

60 VTO hours were used

Charitable practices

Employee charitable donations are matched by The Improve Group. In 2019 The Improve Group matched \$3,947, resulting in:

\$7,894 in the community

Flexible work arrangements

The Improve Group strives to provide a well-balanced work/life environment by offering flexible work arrangements such as: a compressed work week, atypical office hours, and telecommuting.

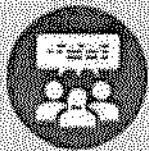


Client Relationship Impact

Our consulting services help mission-driven organizations improve impacts for their customers and participants, and our products are designed to be inclusive of underserved populations. Whether it be research & evaluation, strategic planning, or capacity building, we foster our client relationships in a way that bolsters their intended impact.

Our Client Approach

We tailor each of our projects to meet the specific needs of our clients and stakeholders to ensure maximum impact.



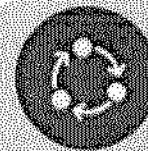
Community Engagement Strategy

The Improve Group team developed and practices a **Community-Responsive Approach™** to ensure that the unique perspectives of all affected communities are represented in the evaluation and research process. By proactively learning about and being responsive to each community's distinct characteristics, we are more likely to succeed in galvanizing positive impacts.



Stakeholder Engagement

We focus our inception phase on stakeholder engagement to ensure that our strategies fit the real-world needs of stakeholders, and to build consensus around the project's purpose and key components. Authentically including our stakeholders' voices also influences findings and recommendations in a way that strengthens the practices organizations use.



Client Feedback Systems

At the end of every project, we schedule a close-out meeting with our clients to discuss project successes, challenges, and lessons learned. This feedback loop ensures we are continuously improving our services.

"I just wanted to let you know how valuable an asset The Improve Group is to our mission. Thank you for finding such a helpful, professional and committed group of people."

2019 Client Portfolio

A stakeholder explained to one of our clients...

In 2019, out of **98** contracts, **53** were with **non-profits**, and **45** were with **public entities**.

Minnesota - Statewide 31	Minnesota - Twin Cities 18	Other State 17	Greater MN 5	Int'l 5
			Multi-State 4	Nat'l 2



Our Community Impact

As consultants, we are in a unique position whereby our services strengthen client ability to **create positive ripple effects into communities**. As a firm that brings technical expertise to a wide variety of topics and fields, we support a wide range of mission-driven organizations making impacts across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

SDG Ripple Effects

The Improve Group worked with clients on projects that had impacts in **all 17** of the SDGs. The majority of our work fell under the following four Sustainable Development Goals. We selected a project example for each to illustrate how our work strengthens client impact.



3. Good Health and Wellbeing

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) funds 10 community-based Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drug (ATOD) prevention efforts. We provide grantees with technical assistance and program evaluation services to support individual program improvement and strengthen Minnesota's ATOD prevention infrastructure. Our training and support focuses on conducting community needs assessments, designing logic models, developing data collection tools, and applying fidelity/performance measures to improve community health and wellbeing.

4. Quality Education

We provided facilitation support to develop cross-program and grantee-specific logic models for a large family foundation's teacher development initiative. Grantees are higher education institutions, community arts organizations, and school districts that work together in their communities to develop and support teachers in and through the arts. By facilitating grantees to clearly articulate their activities and outcomes, they are now better prepared to hold themselves accountable to improving teacher development.

5. Gender Equality

We work with a coalition of domestic abuse service providers to evaluate a grant program around teen dating violence prevention. We provide local grantees and the statewide initiative with community-responsive empowerment evaluation and capacity building services. The goal is for programs to have evaluation tools in place long after our contract with them has completed. This work is informing improvements to the state's prevention efforts and helping our client learn where there are opportunities and challenges for the field.

0. Reduced Inequality

We support a government agency in strengthening outcomes of its Alternative Delivery of Specialized Instructional Services (ADSIS) program, which aims to avoid inappropriate referrals to special education programs. In collaboration with our partner, we've used our capacity-building approach to help uncover new insights into how schools and districts are leveraging evidence-based practices to reduce special education referrals and mitigate inequality that has been perpetuated through the referral system.



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Steve Simon

Steve Simon
Secretary of State