



Moira Gaidzanwa, M.B.A.

Managing Consultant, The Improve Group

Moira is a connector who brings empathy, emotional intelligence, and spirituality to her work. She has 25 years of research, financial analysis, and evaluation experience and a rich background in banking, government, and nonprofits. Outside work, Moira enjoys helping women's savings clubs and advancing the Pan African Women's Philanthropy she established.

Expertise

Evaluation

Moira has led projects evaluating public policy efforts around affordable housing, supportive housing, and disparities for children of color. Her skills include facilitation, interviewing, quantitative and qualitative data analysis, program design, social impact investment portfolio management, and development of staff cultural competency. She brings an equity lens to each evaluation and is particularly adept at responding to the needs of marginalized communities.

Consulting

Moira enjoys collaborating with clients and building authentic relationships to ensure the projects she leads uncover meaningful insights. She approaches her work with cultural competency and is particularly concerned about diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Impact investing

Moira brings to our team expertise in personal, community, and social impact through mission investing. She is particularly adept at answering questions about the efficacy of mission investments in delivering financial and community benefits.

Global financial market access and savings clubs for women

Moira has a rich background in global financial market access and microlending for low-income women. This includes working in her spare time to help and found women's savings clubs.

Practice areas

Market Strategies for Social Impact; International Community Development; Evaluation Capacity Building and Empowerment Evaluation

Professional Experience

The Improve Group | St. Paul, MN | Managing Consultant | 2018-present | Lead evaluation projects and phases to make the most of information, navigate complexity, and ensure clients' investments of time and money lead to meaningful, sustained impact. Project experience includes:

Leading an evaluation of the Sherwood Foundation's 75 North Initiative, a place-based initiative that aims to break the cycle of poverty in an Omaha neighborhood through mixed income housing, a community hub, an early childhood center, and programming and services for all ages.

Collaborating with the Northwest Area Foundation on an evaluation of its Social Enterprise Initiative, which award grants to organizations in northwest states and Native nations to provide job opportunities to those facing the greatest socioeconomic and structural barriers to enter or re-enter the job market.

Partnering with the Duluth-Superior Area Community Foundation to co-develop a Theory of Change incorporating context, beliefs, and tools related to closing the opportunity gap for the organization's

Opportunity Gap Initiative, which was created to combat inequities by increasing opportunities among children experiencing poverty.

Minnesota Department of Revenue | St. Paul, MN | Temporary Assistant Revenue Director | 2017 | Coordinated work to make sure all activities resulted in collection of debts in a fair, efficient, reliable, and cost-effective manner.

Family Housing Fund | St. Paul, MN | Portfolio Data Director | 2016-2017 | Managed active multi-family and single-family loan data management through comprehensive understanding of all loans made by Family Housing Fund and measured outcomes and performance of Family Housing Fund's social lending activities against organization's goals and objectives.

Family Housing Fund | St. Paul, MN | Director of Evaluation and Special Projects | 2003-2016 | Managed a portfolio of social impact investments and collaborated with directors, investors, and major stakeholders to achieve desired program results.

Hearth Connection | St. Paul, MN | Director of Programs | 2002-2003 | Led development of operational and reporting systems for implementation of Supportive Housing and Managed Care Pilot project, a key supportive housing innovation that incorporates housing and health.

The Urban Coalition | St. Paul, MN | Vice President & Research Director | 2000-2001 | Led production of a series of groundbreaking reports on disparities in health, education, and the impact of welfare reform on communities of color in the Twin Cities. This resulted in increased access to healthcare in minority communities; changes in school suspension policies; dietary changes and expansion by food shelves; and increased outreach to minority hires by employers.

Education

University of St. Thomas | Master of Business Administration in Finance

University of St. Thomas | Mini-MBA in Nonprofit Management and Health Care Management

College of St. Catherine | Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Business Administration

St. Paul Technical College | Certificate in Database Administration

Training

Technology of Participation® Facilitation Methods | Institute of Cultural Affairs in the U.S.A.

Community Involvement

Pan African Women in Philanthropy | Founding Member | [Since 2008]

Southern African Mutual Assistance & Development Association | Co-Founder | [Since 2012]

St. Paul/Ramsey County and Hennepin County homeless advisory boards | Board Member | 2007-2015

Minnesota Public Radio Community Advisory Committee | Board Member | 2013

Women's Savings Clubs for Financial Fitness | Founder | 2016

Professional Affiliations

American Evaluation Association

Minnesota Evaluation Association