

CASE STUDY



LBG Framework: A Measured Approach

We want to support causes and organizations that deliver meaningful impacts. So when our associates chose the Youth Empowerment Program as the centrepiece of LoyaltyOne's 2020 community investment strategy, we needed a framework to help us achieve our goals.

We chose the London Benchmarking Group (LBG) measurement framework. Globally recognized, it can be applied to any company and ensures a credible approach to assessing the success of community investment. The Dow Jones Sustainability Index and Imagine Canada, among others, have referenced the framework as a model for measuring everything from cash and in-kind donations to management costs, as well as the outcome of those investments.

This approach is unique because it encourages companies to establish their metrics early on and measure their impact over time. Beyond measuring dollars donated and hours volunteered, this approach allows companies and charities to assess their progress and make decisions based on achieving their specific goals.

"The framework has allowed us to evaluate prospective charities based on their individual characteristics," says Gabriela Polanco-Sorto, LoyaltyOne's Associate Director of Corporate Responsibility. "Many charities steer away from their missions to conform to companies' funding criteria. We want the opposite: we want charities to tell us how we can help them."

Specifically, for the Youth Empowerment Program, we chose not to evaluate charities against one another. Instead, we enabled charities to chart their own impacts – to do what they do best – and report back to us on their progress. This encouraged our associates to keep an open mind when choosing charities and to focus on what matters most: positively impacting the lives of youth.

LBG Canada's Stephanie Robertson believes LoyaltyOne has adopted the framework in positive ways. "It takes courage to empower charities like this," she says. "LoyaltyOne is really focused on the depth of the Youth Empowerment Program's impact."

Still, Stephanie reminds us that measurement is a journey – it takes time, requires strong reporting and can benefit from the ongoing guidance of our community partners. "Achieving real impact is like building long-term relationships," she says. "What's important is that LoyaltyOne enables charities – through time, support and resources – to deliver great impact reporting. There will be challenges, but I do think LoyaltyOne is in it for the long haul."

