



*For Immediate Release*

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## **Second Version of Impact Reporting and Investment Standards (IRIS) Released**

*New IRIS website at [iris.thegiin.org](http://iris.thegiin.org) provides accessible information about the IRIS initiative*

*IRIS adoption to be supported by partners App-X, ANDE, GIIRS, and MIX*

October 4, 2010 – The Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN) released today the second version of the Impact Reporting and Investment Standards (IRIS), which incorporates significant enhancements to the original IRIS social and environmental reporting framework first released in July 2009. IRIS provides a common set of social and environmental metrics and definitions for reporting the performance of impact investments. The IRIS 2.0 enhancements integrate critical feedback from industry experts, funds piloting the original IRIS reporting standards, and other stakeholders who were engaged during a public comment period. These revisions make the IRIS reporting framework more relevant and accessible for the diverse businesses and funds that receive impact investment capital.

This release coincides with the launch of a new IRIS website (<http://iris.thegiin.org>) which makes it easier for companies and funds to identify specific IRIS performance indicators that pertain to their social and environmental goals. The new website also provides guidance to investors interested in adopting IRIS as a performance tracking tool across investment portfolios.

“We are extremely proud to launch this second version of the IRIS reporting standards,” said Sarah Gelfand, Director of IRIS at the GIIN. “The enhancements to IRIS represent a new level of coordination and sophistication for the field of impact measurement, and the new IRIS website gives mission-driven investors and businesses a straightforward interface for identifying the IRIS social and environmental performance measures that will help them track and improve their work. This upgrade was a truly collaborative process, and we are especially grateful for the valuable input we received from our partners.”

In addition to oversight of the reporting standards, the IRIS initiative includes the development and management of an IRIS data repository, which is a hub for IRIS-aligned performance data from organizations receiving impact investment capital. The IRIS data repository enables benchmarking and other aggregate analyses critical to the growth of the impact investing industry.

The GIIN has formally partnered with four organizations to support IRIS adoption:

- **App-X:** App-X manages Pulse, an online portfolio management tool that helps organizations track and report social and environmental performance data. The IRIS performance metrics are preconfigured into the Pulse platform, and App-x has integrated the IRIS 2.0 enhancements in tandem with this release. In a recent survey of Pulse users, 85 percent of respondents are using IRIS metrics, and 91 percent intend to share their data with the IRIS data aggregator. Pulse users can also access general information about impact investing and the IRIS initiative through the Pulse interface. Pulse is available for free through Salesforce.com.
- **Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE) Partnership:** The Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE) is a global network of organizations that invest money and expertise to propel entrepreneurship in emerging markets. To support IRIS adoption among its members, ANDE has identified a set of IRIS performance metrics pertinent to small and growing businesses receiving impact investment capital. ANDE will support its members in tracking these performance metrics across their investment portfolios. ANDE will also help its members anonymously submit their performance data to the IRIS data repository, which will enable both the GIIN and ANDE to access aggregated impact measurement. ANDE currently has 100 members, 37 of which are funds investing directly into small and growing businesses.
- **Global Impact Investment Ratings System (GIIRS):** GIIRS is a standardized rating system that generates an easy-to-understand single value for scoring an impact organization and/or impact investment fund. GIIRS uses IRIS definitions in conjunction with a set of additional survey questions it has created, and weights that information to come up with a total rating and set of category ratings. As GIIRS pilots and launches its product, it will be a valuable source of data for the IRIS data repository. GIIRS is currently preparing to pilot its product with 200 portfolio companies across 25 funds.
- **MIX:** Microfinance Information Exchange (MIX), the world's leading provider of microfinance data, will submit performance data from more than 1,800 microfinance institutions to the IRIS data repository. One key IRIS 2.0 enhancement is that the IRIS financial services performance metrics are now more comprehensively aligned with the MIX taxonomy. Not only does this alignment enable the IRIS initiative to utilize existing performance data from 1,800 microfinance organizations, it also contributes to increased reporting consistency between microfinance and other impact sectors.

Businesses and funds adopting IRIS through partnership with these organizations can anonymously submit IRIS performance data to the IRIS data repository for benchmarking and additional industry-wide aggregate analyses.

“The IRIS standards have added tremendous value to Pulse users,” said Steven Simich, who leads business development and sales for Pulse at App-X. “The Pulse platform empowers organizations to track performance, and the pre-configured IRIS metrics provide users with an independent, credible set of standards to monitor their progress towards social and environmental goals.”

“Transparent and credible social and environmental performance reporting is critical to the success of the small and growing business (SGB) sector, which is increasingly attracting impact investment capital,” said Randall Kempner, Executive Director of ANDE. “Not only do the IRIS standards help our members better understand their impact, but the data analyses enabled by the IRIS data repository will provide a first look at the scope of positive social and environmental change enabled by SGBs around the world.”

“As the impact investing asset class attracts mainstream investors, rigorous and comparable social and environmental performance data is increasingly necessary,” said Andrew Kasso, Managing Director of GIIRS and Co-Founder of B Lab, the organization overseeing the development of GIIRS. “By standardizing the language we use to report our social and environmental impact, IRIS creates credibility for impact investing and provides the foundation for additional enabling infrastructure like GIIRS ratings.”

“MIX has played a central role in impact reporting by providing access to financial and social data from microfinance institutions (MFIs) worldwide,” said Blaine Stephens, Chief Operating Officer at MIX. “By aligning with established impact reporting tools like MIX, IRIS is broadening the landscape of data available to those investors interested in achieving positive impact through their investments.”

Impact investors and investment recipients are encouraged to provide feedback on IRIS 2.0 during an open comment period this fall on the new IRIS website (<http://iris.thegiin.org>). Comments received will be considered for the next version of IRIS.

IRIS is an initiative of the Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN), a not-for-profit organization dedicated to increasing the scale and effectiveness of impact investing. The GIIN builds critical infrastructure and supports activities, education, and research that help accelerate the development of a coherent impact investing industry. This work is informed by the GIIN Investors’ Council, a diverse membership group comprised of leading impact investors. To serve the needs of the greater impact investing community, the GIIN is also launching ImpactBase, a database of impact investment funds designed to reduce search and transaction costs across the impact investing industry. For more information, please visit [www.thegiin.org](http://www.thegiin.org).

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