The leadership teams of IRIS and the Global Off-Grid Lighting Association (GOGLA) are united in their commitment to greater alignment of impact measurement metrics. They are part of an industry-wide movement to harmonize the world’s leading impact measurement metric sets, assessment tools, and methodologies.

Aligning different impact measurement standards is key to advancing the use of social and environmental performance data for impact investing decision-making and helping to alleviate the reporting burden on both investors and investee organizations. Common metrics also help avoid confusion among stakeholders and facilitate the benchmarking of data.

**What is IRIS?**

IRIS is the catalog of generally accepted performance metrics that impact investors around the world use to measure and manage social, environmental, and financial success, to evaluate deals, and to grow the credibility of the impact investing industry. It is a free resource available at [www.iris.thegiin.org](http://www.iris.thegiin.org). The Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN) hosts IRIS as one of the public goods it provides to accelerate the scale and effectiveness of impact investing.

**What is GOGLA?**

The Global Off-Grid Lighting Association (GOGLA) is a not-for-profit association created to promote lighting solutions that benefit society and businesses in developing and emerging markets. GOGLA acts as an industry advocate and supports the industry in growing the market for clean, quality, off-grid lighting and electrical systems. GOGLA’s work aims to transform lives and economies in its target markets by increasing incomes, assisting educational development, and improving health and safety. More information is available at [www.gogla.org](http://www.gogla.org).

**About the linkage between GOGLA and IRIS**

Impact measurement and management tools are most helpful when they are collaboratively developed and agreed upon by industry body groups operating in the same sector and with similar impact intentions. The IRIS and GOGLA linkage demonstrates the alignment between IRIS’s generally accepted performance metrics and the harmonized metrics for the off-grid energy sector developed by GOGLA’s Social Impact Measurement Working Group.

The metric set includes IRIS metrics that align with the GOGLA framework on a metric-to-metric basis where the underlying data that is collected can be compared. The set also includes thematically-aligned metrics, which are IRIS metrics that are relevant to off-grid energy but are not found in the GOGLA framework. For detailed information about the alignment between GOGLA’s full metric framework and the metrics in the IRIS catalog, visit [www.iris.thegiin.org/off-grid-energy-metrics](http://www.iris.thegiin.org/off-grid-energy-metrics).
Understanding the GOGLA and IRIS tools

**GOGLA:** GOGLA convened a Social Impact Measurement Working Group to produce a harmonized standard for the off-grid energy sector. This framework outlines conservatively constructed calculations for modelling a set of priority metrics, which all GOGLA members and other companies are encouraged to report on. Importantly, this framework identifies priority impact metrics relevant to GOGLA members for global reporting, establishes appropriate formulae for calculating metric values, and sources available data to propose coefficient default values (with references, expertly reviewed assumptions, and limitations outlined). Each metric outlines the definition, estimations underlying the metric, the usefulness of the metric, the calculation, and improvements planned for future work.

**IRIS:** IRIS is a catalog of standardized performance metrics. An investor can choose as few or as many metrics as it deems necessary to describe the performance of its investees and projects. IRIS includes metrics tailored to specific sectors as well as non-sector-specific metrics that make IRIS a useful resource for impact investors working around the world, in different sectors, and with a variety of social and environmental impact objectives. Investors that make investments in many sectors can use IRIS to measure and communicate their investments’ social, environmental, and financial performance, and are able to aggregate impact information across diverse portfolios.

About the GOGLA-IRIS Alignment: how are they alike, how are they different?

The metric sets of these two organizations are similar in several ways. Both the GOGLA harmonized metric set and the IRIS catalog of metrics adhere to rigorous principles for standards development, as they involve broad solicitation from diverse stakeholders and an iterative process of collaboration and revision. Compliance with either GOGLA’s framework or the IRIS metrics is not mandatory, and neither GOGLA nor the IRIS tools provide certification. Ultimately, both GOGLA and IRIS are designed to enable standardized reporting and benchmarking that will help attract investment and working capital, and may drive policy discussion, advocacy efforts, and other initiatives to enable impact investing to increase in scale and effectiveness.

The tools also differ in several ways. Significantly, IRIS permits evaluation of an investor’s portfolio across multiple sectors and across diverse activities; by comparison, GOGLA’s metric set was created specifically for the off-grid energy sector. This primary difference is reflected in the degree of alignment, which readers are encouraged to explore further by accessing the excel alignment online. Because GOGLA’s framework is industry-specific, coalescing around common impact objectives, the set of metrics is narrow enough to include metrics that are linked through research and practical experience to the industry’s desired outcomes. Further, GOGLA’s framework defines several default values that feed into metric calculations, such as defining the number of hours of light per day provided by status quo lighting products, which is possible also due to the framework’s specific focus. In comparison, IRIS metrics do not dictate calculation values, allowing the user the flexibility to define the values on their own and instead encouraging the user to footnote calculation assumptions and methodologies used where applicable.

This linkage establishes a baseline alignment that lays the groundwork for increasing harmonization across both tools through future iterations.
The GOGLA-IRIS Linkage in Action

Acumen invests Patient Capital in businesses whose products and services are enabling the poor to transform their lives. With a specific focus on energy access, Acumen is continuing to invest significantly to grow its current portfolio of off-grid energy companies serving the poor. Acumen’s Associate Director of Impact, Kat Harrison, has chaired the GOGLA impact Working Group since its inception; the group created the off-grid energy harmonized impact metrics framework, to which IRIS is aligned. The Acumen Impact team has developed a question set using Acumen’s Lean Data approach to collect data on these metrics from the customers of investee companies, so as to measure the impact of their whole energy portfolio. This information will generate significant insights for Acumen’s investee companies, providing them an opportunity to better understand their customer base and to better deliver their products/services to those living without any, or without adequate, energy. For Acumen, the IRIS-aligned GOGLA metrics are a chance to shape and support the development of good impact measurement practices in the sector, to enable aggregation, comparison, and learning for its own portfolio, and to provide critical information on customer behavior, value proposition, and satisfaction.