

THE INTERNATIONAL  
<IR> FRAMEWORK

**IIRC, 2013**



INTEGRATED REPORTING <IR>

## ABOUT THE IIRC

The International Integrated Reporting Council (IIRC) is a global coalition of regulators, investors, companies, standard setters, the accounting profession and NGOs. Together, this coalition shares the view that communication about value creation should be the next step in the evolution of corporate reporting.

The International <IR> Framework has been developed to meet this need and provide a foundation for the future.

Further information about the IIRC can be found on its website [www.theiirc.org](http://www.theiirc.org), including:

- The background to the IIRC's creation
- Its mission, vision and objectives
- Its structure and membership, and the membership of groups who have contributed to the development of this Framework
- Its due process.

The IIRC does not accept responsibility for loss caused to any person who acts, or refrains from acting, in reliance on the material in this publication, whether such loss is caused by negligence or otherwise.

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# ABOUT INTEGRATED REPORTING

The IIRC's long term vision is a world in which integrated thinking is embedded within mainstream business practice in the public and private sectors, facilitated by Integrated Reporting (<IR>) as the corporate reporting norm. The cycle of integrated thinking and reporting, resulting in efficient and productive capital allocation, will act as a force for financial stability and sustainability.

<IR> aims to:

- Improve the quality of information available to providers of financial capital to enable a more efficient and productive allocation of capital
- Promote a more cohesive and efficient approach to corporate reporting that draws on different reporting strands and communicates the full range of factors that materially affect the ability of an organization to create value over time
- Enhance accountability and stewardship for the broad base of capitals (financial, manufactured, intellectual, human, social and relationship, and natural) and promote understanding of their interdependencies
- Support integrated thinking, decision-making and actions that focus on the creation of value over the short, medium and long term.

<IR> is consistent with numerous developments in corporate reporting taking place within national jurisdictions across the world. It is intended that the International <IR> Framework, which provides principles-based guidance for companies and other organizations wishing to prepare an integrated report, will accelerate these individual initiatives and provide impetus to greater innovation in corporate reporting globally to unlock the benefits of <IR>, including the increased efficiency of the reporting process itself.

It is anticipated that, over time, <IR> will become the corporate reporting norm. No longer will an organization produce numerous, disconnected and static communications. This will be delivered by the process of integrated thinking, and the application of principles such as connectivity of information.

<IR> is consistent with developments in financial and other reporting, but an integrated report also differs from other reports and communications in a number of ways. In particular, it focuses on the ability of an organization to create value in the short, medium and long term, and in so doing it:

- Has a combined emphasis on conciseness, strategic focus and future orientation, the connectivity of information and the capitals and their interdependencies
- Emphasizes the importance of integrated thinking within the organization.

Integrated thinking is the active consideration by an organization of the relationships between its various operating and functional units and the capitals that the organization uses or affects. Integrated thinking leads to integrated decision-making and actions that consider the creation of value over the short, medium and long term.

Integrated thinking takes into account the connectivity and interdependencies between the range of factors that affect an organization's ability to create value over time, including:

- The capitals that the organization uses or affects, and the critical interdependencies, including trade-offs, between them
- The capacity of the organization to respond to key stakeholders' legitimate needs and interests
- How the organization tailors its business model and strategy to respond to its external environment and the risks and opportunities it faces
- The organization's activities, performance (financial and other) and outcomes in terms of the capitals – past, present and future.

The more that integrated thinking is embedded into an organization's activities, the more naturally will the connectivity of information flow into management reporting, analysis and decision-making. It also leads to better integration of the information systems that support internal and external reporting and communication, including preparation of the integrated report.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Integrated Reporting (<IR>) promotes a more cohesive and efficient approach to corporate reporting and aims to improve the quality of information available to providers of financial capital to enable a more efficient and productive allocation of capital.

The IIRC's long term vision is a world in which integrated thinking is embedded within mainstream business practice in the public and private sectors, facilitated by <IR> as the corporate reporting norm.

## AN INTEGRATED REPORT

The primary purpose of an integrated report is to explain to providers of financial capital how an organization creates value over time. An integrated report benefits all stakeholders interested in an organization's ability to create value over time, including employees, customers, suppliers, business partners, local communities, legislators, regulators and policy-makers.

The International <IR> Framework (the Framework) takes a principles-based approach. The intent is to strike an appropriate balance between flexibility and prescription that recognizes the wide variation in individual circumstances of different organizations while enabling a sufficient degree of comparability across organizations to meet relevant information needs. It does not prescribe specific key performance indicators, measurement methods, or the disclosure of individual matters, but does include a small number of requirements that are to be applied before an integrated report can be said to be in accordance with the Framework.

An integrated report may be prepared in response to existing compliance requirements, and may be either a standalone report or be included as a distinguishable, prominent and accessible part of another report or communication. It should include, transitionally on a comply or explain basis, a statement by those charged with governance accepting responsibility for the report.

## FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS

An integrated report aims to provide insight about the resources and relationships used and affected by an organization – these are collectively referred to as “the capitals” in this Framework. It also seeks to explain how the organization interacts with the external environment and the capitals to create value over the short, medium and long term.

The capitals are stocks of value that are increased, decreased or transformed through the activities and outputs of the organization. They are categorized in this Framework as financial, manufactured, intellectual, human, social and relationship, and natural capital, although organizations preparing an integrated report are not required to adopt this categorization or to structure their report along the lines of the capitals.

The ability of an organization to create value for itself enables financial returns to the providers of financial capital. This is interrelated with the value the organization creates for stakeholders and society at large through a wide range of activities, interactions and relationships. When these are material to the organization's ability to create value for itself, they are included in the integrated report.

## THE FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this Framework is to establish Guiding Principles and Content Elements that govern the overall content of an integrated report, and to explain the fundamental concepts that underpin them. The Framework:

- Identifies information to be included in an integrated report for use in assessing the organization's ability to create value; it does not set benchmarks for such things as the quality of an organization's strategy or the level of its performance
- Is written primarily in the context of private sector, for-profit companies of any size but it can also be applied, adapted as necessary, by public sector and not-for-profit organizations.



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following Guiding Principles underpin the preparation of an integrated report, informing the content of the report and how information is presented:

- *Strategic focus and future orientation:* An integrated report should provide insight into the organization's strategy, and how it relates to the organization's ability to create value in the short, medium and long term, and to its use of and effects on the capitals
- *Connectivity of information:* An integrated report should show a holistic picture of the combination, interrelatedness and dependencies between the factors that affect the organization's ability to create value over time
- *Stakeholder relationships:* An integrated report should provide insight into the nature and quality of the organization's relationships with its key stakeholders, including how and to what extent the organization understands, takes into account and responds to their legitimate needs and interests
- *Materiality:* An integrated report should disclose information about matters that substantively affect the organization's ability to create value over the short, medium and long term
- *Conciseness:* An integrated report should be concise
- *Reliability and completeness:* An integrated report should include all material matters, both positive and negative, in a balanced way and without material error
- *Consistency and comparability:* The information in an integrated report should be presented: (a) on a basis that is consistent over time; and (b) in a way that enables comparison with other organizations to the extent it is material to the organization's own ability to create value over time.

## CONTENT ELEMENTS

An integrated report includes eight Content Elements that are fundamentally linked to each other and are not mutually exclusive:

- *Organizational overview and external environment:* What does the organization do and what are the circumstances under which it operates?
- *Governance:* How does the organization's governance structure support its ability to create value in the short, medium and long term?
- *Business model:* What is the organization's business model?
- *Risks and opportunities:* What are the specific risks and opportunities that affect the organization's ability to create value over the short, medium and long term, and how is the organization dealing with them?
- *Strategy and resource allocation:* Where does the organization want to go and how does it intend to get there?
- *Performance:* To what extent has the organization achieved its strategic objectives for the period and what are its outcomes in terms of effects on the capitals?
- *Outlook:* What challenges and uncertainties is the organization likely to encounter in pursuing its strategy, and what are the potential implications for its business model and future performance?
- *Basis of presentation:* How does the organization determine what matters to include in the integrated report and how are such matters quantified or evaluated?



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