

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Best Practice and Market Insights

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Position Title: Best Practice and Market Insights Consultant

Type: Company

Engagement: Contract

Location: Nairobi, Kenya | Remote.

Reports To: Programme Manager

ABOUT AVPA

The African Venture Philanthropy Alliance (www.avpa.africa) is a unique Pan-African network of social investors working together to increase the flow of capital into African social investments and ensure its effective use for maximum social impact. Broadly, AVPA aims to address the SDG financing gap on the continent by not only mobilizing more philanthropic capital but also attracting private capital into social investments. We collaborate with various social investors deploying grants, debt, and equity (the full spectrum of capital) into social investments. These include foundations, corporations, family offices, individual philanthropists, angel investors, impact fund managers, PE & VC funds, bilateral and multilateral donors, governments, DFI, and non-financial service providers. Our network strives to enhance and apply innovative finance approaches and models.

AVPA has its headquarters in Nairobi, with regional offices in Johannesburg and Lagos. AVPA is aligned with thriving sister networks in Europe (Impact Europe), Latin America (Latimpacto), Asia (AVPN), and the newly launched Arab Impact Network, thus forming a dynamic global force for social impact.

BACKGROUND

The term impact investing was first coined in 2007 by the Rockefeller Foundation¹. A basic goal of impact investing is to help reduce the negative effects of business activity on the social or physical environment. It may sometimes be considered an extension of philanthropy.

Impact investments, as defined by the Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN) in 2009, “are investments made into companies, organizations, and funds to generate measurable social and environmental impact alongside a financial return.”

¹ The Rockefeller Foundation. "Bringing Scale to the Impact Investing Industry."

Impact investing is becoming one of the largest forces driving social and environmental change globally, as evidenced by the growth of impact investors, market intermediaries, and measurement frameworks amongst others (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014; Picciotto, 2011). The common theme across impact investing is creating positive social change alongside financial returns, with impact investors being differentiated by their choice of sector or funding instruments. Indeed, what separates impact investments from earlier forms of socially aligned or socially responsible investments is the intention behind the investment to have a positive effect on society as opposed to avoiding negative effects (Flynn, Young & Barnett, 2015)

The GIIN State of the Market 2024 trends, performance, and allocations report² drawing captured data from 305 impact investing organizations, each of which manages more than USD 10 million in impact assets under management (AUM) or has made more than five impact investments since inception. While impact investors in this sample invest their capital across the world, sub-Saharan Africa received 6% of impact assets under management from 39% of investors. Assessing emerging market regions, 53% of investors plan to increase their allocations to sub-Saharan Africa.

The report further captures perceptions of ongoing challenges in the industry and their views on macro-level issues affecting impact investing. Keenly highlighting three main challenges: *fragmentation among impact frameworks* (92% citing significant, moderate, or slight challenge), *difficulties in comparing impact results to peers* (87%), and *verifying impact data received from investees* (84%).

The recent growth of the impact investing sector has fostered serious challenges. For instance, it has increased the heterogeneity of impact investor profiles, each of which has its own set of goals, processes, resources, and expectations when it comes to the (non-)financial performance of their investments. This has made one-size-fits-all benchmarks exceedingly difficult to develop and potentially unsuitable to implement. Furthermore, the number, diversity, and complexity of impact measurement methodologies have also been growing alongside the impact investing sector. In 2020, the Global Impact Investors Network (GIIN) released its second edition of the State of Impact Measurement and Management Practice. GIIN surveyed 257 impact investors and found that the top six most-used IMM frameworks were:

- The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs, at 72%)
- The IRIS Catalog of Metrics (48%) and the IRIS Core Metrics (38%)
- The Impact Management Project's (IMP) Five Dimensions (33%)
- The United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI, 30%)
- The International Finance Corporation's (IFC) Operating Principles for Impact Management (26%)

While new impact measurement methodologies have been developed by impact investors, since then, other approaches have been inherited from fields with a long history of studying impact measurement, like philanthropy and academic research. As a result, it has become more challenging

² Hand, D., Sunderji, S., Ulanow, M., Remsberg, R., & Xiao, K. (2024). State of the market 2024: Trends, performance and allocations. Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN). New York. Available at: <https://thegiin.org/publication/research/state-of-the-market-2024-trends-performance-and-allocations/>

for practitioners to keep track of which impact measurement methodologies fit their purpose, especially in the absence of a credible and widely adopted standard (Busch et al., 2021).

The definition, measurement, and communication of impact remain inconsistent and poorly standardized. Without clear methods to assess and convey impact, investors struggle to refine their strategies for maximizing social or environmental benefits or to generate meaningful interest in high-impact opportunities.

Impact investing, by its nature, prioritizes positive social and environmental outcomes alongside financial returns. This requires evaluating—and sometimes balancing—both social/environmental performance and financial gains. As the social investment landscape evolves, AVPA aims to gather market insights

and promote best practices to track progress, spot emerging trends, and explore new collaborative opportunities for social investors.

The study is part of the AVPA approach to enhancing knowledge sharing and learning anchored under the AVPA Knowledge Sharing and Learning Centre with a goal: *To be recognized as the leading provider of learning opportunities and knowledge resources on Africa's social investment landscape, using events, programmes and thought capital to provide a robust learning experience for all categories of social investment stakeholders.*

Positioned as Africa's premier hub for social investment intelligence, AVPA's Knowledge Sharing & Learning Centre delivers transformative learning experiences through cutting-edge programs, strategic events, and actionable thought leadership.

The Assignment: Best Practices and Market Insights

Over the last couple of years, as impact investors have had time to test and iterate, several firms have created meaningful and efficient processes to define goals, collect data, and measure and communicate the impact of their investments. The progress made by the champions of IMM to develop and share best practices with other investors has been important for the sector's growth. However, in observing the impact investing ecosystem over the last several years, it is clear that strong IMM practices have only been embraced by a minority. Many impact investors have limited, or in some cases, avoided entirely, incorporating IMM into their investment approach. In some ways, this is understandable as impact investing is still a relatively new investment strategy, and creating a system to measure anything takes time. But as the impact investing market becomes more competitive, impact measurement will no longer be a “nice to have.”

AVPA is undertaking this comprehensive study to:

- Document best practices in impact measurement and investment approaches across Africa
- Generate market insights on emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities in the African impact investing landscape

Objectives

The case studies will:

- Showcase best practices in impact measurement and investment approaches across Africa
- Identify challenges & lessons learned
- Provide actionable recommendations for scaling impact investing in Africa

Scope of Work

The consultant(s) will:

- Highlight best practice models in IMM measurement (covering philanthropy, impact investing, corporate social investment, and private capital).
- Prioritize: Geographic diversity (East, West, Southern Africa), Sectoral diversity (fintech, agribusiness, healthcare, renewable energy, education), Investor diversity (DFIs, venture philanthropists, corporate investors, diaspora funds)
- Develop a research framework (mixed-methods: interviews, financial analysis, impact metrics).
- Conduct interviews with: *Investors (fund managers, DFIs, angel networks), Enterprises (social businesses, startups, NGOs), and Intermediaries (incubators, accelerators, policymakers).*
- Review financial data, impact reports, and market analysis.
- Validate findings with AVPA's network and sector experts.
- Develop a list of best practices for investors to consider when implementing impact measurement and management

Consultant Qualifications

The ideal consultant(s) should have:

- Proven experience in social investment research, impact investing, or development finance.
- Strong financial analysis & case study writing skills.
- Knowledge of Africa's social investment landscape
- Strong data analysis skills (quantitative & qualitative).
- Knowledge of Africa's investment ecosystem (DFIs, impact funds, philanthropy).
- Excellent report writing and presentation skills.
- Regional expertise in East, West, and/or Southern Africa.

Duration

Timeline: 30 days between July - September, 2025

Submission Requirements

Interested consultants/firms should submit:

A. Technical proposal (not exceeding 10 pages)

- A summary/profile of the consulting firm or individual consultant, including experience with similar research.
- Proposed approach and methodology
- Work plan and timeline

B. Financial proposal/Quotation

- Detailed cost breakdown

C. CVs of key team members.

How to apply

- Interested and qualifying candidates to complete the online application form here: [AVPA Consultancies](#)
- Please submit one soft copy (by email) of your technical and a tentative financial offer with a detailed cost breakdown (To compare prices, bid prices shall be converted to USD) to jobs@avpa.africa with a copy to learning@avpa.africa with the subject line: **AVPA Best Practice and Market Insights** by the **15th of July, 2025**

Language skills

The program of work requires that the consultant have a strong working knowledge of English.

Misrepresentation.

The process of AVPA making its decision is largely reliant upon the information supplied by the bidder. Should it be found that aspects of such information are incomplete, untrue, or misleading, AVPA reserves the right to terminate /disqualify the bidder.