

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

Established by UN Women and the
UN Global Compact Office

2020 UN Women
Asia-Pacific WEPs Awards
Regional Awardee Profile



Durreen Shahnaz
Founder and CEO

Impact Investment Exchange (IIX)

Impact Investment Exchange (IIX)

Country: Singapore
Employees: 11-50
Industry: Financial Services

Website
<https://iixglobal.com/>



A Pioneer in Impact Investing

IIX (Impact Investment Exchange) is a pioneer in impact investing and the global leader in financing sustainability from the ground up. A decade ago, IIX set out on a mission to build a more inclusive world as the foundation for sustainable peace and economic prosperity with the belief that the best way to do this is to create economic opportunities for women and the underserved, who are often excluded from financial markets.

Through their \$150 million Women's Livelihood Bond™ Series, IIX has transformed the financial system so that women, the environment, and underserved communities can take their place and gain a voice in the global capital markets. As of 2021, IIX has unlocked US\$215 million in capital, impacting over 100 million lives across 53 countries.

“

At a time when governments, investors, and businesses turned inward leaving behind millions of underserved women, we took a stand to do what is right, pressing on with our work creating a new financial ecosystem that works for the 99%.

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A Bold Vision for Financial Inclusion

Durreen Shahnaz, a global leader of social impact and impact investing, is the founder of IIX and the IIX Foundation. Over the past three decades, her mission has been to build a more inclusive, sustainable world by transforming financial markets and bringing underserved women to the forefront of financial markets. Her work has empowered millions of women across the globe and helped thousands of entrepreneurs, investors, governments, and impact stakeholders around the world to play a role in sustainable development.

Shahnaz has built a track record with a career spanning finance, development, media, academia, and social entrepreneurship. Starting out in finance at Morgan Stanley (New York) and Grameen Bank (Bangladesh), she moved into media at Hearst Magazines International (New York), and then research and teaching at the National University of Singapore. Before founding IIX, Shahnaz founded, grew, and sold oneNest (New York), an online marketplace for artisan goods. As a pioneer in social impact, she has led IIX to create the world's first social stock exchange, the largest crowdfunding platform for impact investing (Impact Partners), and innovative financial structures such as the Women's Livelihood Bond series. Shahnaz developed industry benchmarks such as Impact Reporting and Investment Standards (IRIS), the generally accepted performance metrics for impact investors, and is launching IIX Values, a technology-driven impact measurement, and management platform.



Shahnaz was recognized in 2021 by Forbes as one of the 50 women over the age of 50 changing the world through politics, education, and social entrepreneurship. She is also the recipient of the 2019 Sustainability Superwoman Award from CSRWorks, the 2017 Oslo Business for Peace Award, often referred to as the 'Nobel Prize for Business', the 2017 Global Steering Group for Impact Investment Impact Market Builder of the Year award, the 2016 Asia Game Changer Award, in addition to the 2014 Joseph Wharton Social Impact Award. She has been a program advisor to the Clinton Global Initiative, a 2010 TED fellow, a TED speaker.

Watch the testimonial video to learn more!

A Groundbreaking Achievement for Women's Financial Inclusion

A pioneer in gender lens investing, with the Women's Livelihood Bond™ Series (WLB) standing as the world's only gender lens bond listed on a stock exchange, Shahnaz's bold vision resulted in a coalition of partners coming together to make the bond a reality – including Australian DFAT, USAID, Canadian GAC, UNESCAP, UNCDF, DBS, Standard Chartered, ANZ, Shearman and Sterling, Latham & Watkins, and Hogan Lovells and many more.

The award-winning Women's Livelihood Bond™ (WLB) Series is the world's first gender-lens, impact investing security – delivering stable returns and sustainable impact to global investors since 2017.



To date, IIX has launched four SGX-listed bonds, mobilizing a total of US\$78 million. The ICMA-compliant Social Bond has also established a strong track record of meeting its impact targets, having generated US\$3 – 4 of social value for every US\$1 invested and empowered over 1 million women across Asia-Pacific.

IIX’s unique ecosystem approach that spans the impact economy has resulted in the world’s first and largest impact investing crowdfunding platform, Impact Partners, which connects global accredited impact investors – over US\$12 billion assets under management – to high-impact enterprises. These enterprises also receive technical assistance, investment readiness, and capital raise support, while investors are connected to pre-screened, high-impact investment opportunities. This innovative platform fosters opportunities for enterprises to create a more sustainable, climate-sensitive environment for their growth.

Building on Shahnaz’s experience as a researcher and educator, IIX created an educational arm – the IIX Impact Institute – which shares knowledge, case studies, and learnings on sustainable Investing.



Women’s Empowerment Principles



High-Level Corporate Leadership



Treat all Women and Men Fairly at Work without Discrimination



Employee Health, Well-Being and Safety



Education and Training for Career Advancement




Enterprise Development, Supply Chain and Marketing Practices



Community Initiatives and Advocacy



Measurement and Reporting

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