

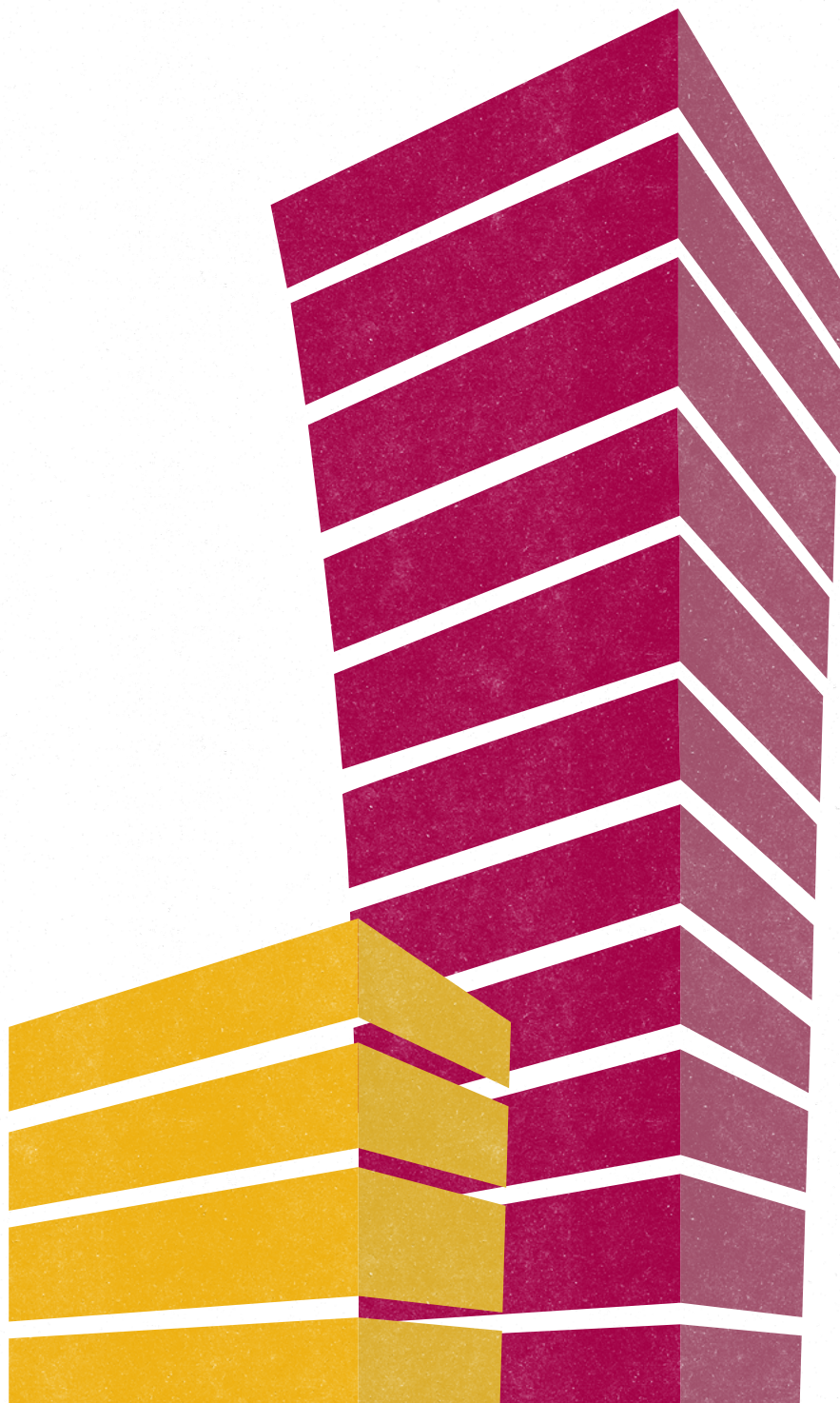


Grant Thornton

An instinct for growth™

Ind AS for Real Estate Companies

Key potential impact areas for real estate companies on transition to Ind AS





Entities in the real estate sector currently prepare financial statements based on the Accounting Standards (AS) notified by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA). Additionally, they also rely on certain Guidance Notes issued by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) for transactions specific to the industry.

In February 2015, the MCA notified the roadmap for implementation of IFRS converged Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS). Consequently, companies with a net worth of more than INR 500 crore need to report under Ind AS for financial years beginning from 1 April 2016 with comparative information for financial year 2015-16 (Phase 1). 1 April 2015 will be the transition date to Ind AS.

Companies with a net worth of INR 250 crore or more (but less than INR 500 crore), and all listed Companies need to report under Ind AS for reporting periods beginning from 1 April 2017 (Phase 2).

Few industries are likely to have significant impact in their financial accounting and reporting. Amongst these, real estate companies are expected to see significant changes in their financial reporting.

At Grant Thornton, we understand that knowledge and experience of the complex real estate sector is important to facilitate and manage the transition to Ind AS. This is also important to set up sustainable and auditable processes and documentation for continuing reporting under Ind AS.

Our professionals deliver bespoke tailored solutions and capitalise on their technical knowledge and experience to develop an effective and scalable financial reporting solution to meet the requirements. This handbook discusses few key items that are potentially expected to have a major impact on the financial statements of real estate companies. We hope that readers will find the handbook useful.

1. Revenue from construction projects

Revenue accounting for real estate companies was always a huge debate under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The debate was whether to recognise revenue over the period or at a point of time of sale of units. The term 'real estate' refers to land as well as buildings and rights in relation thereto. Entities who undertake such activity are generally referred to by different terms such as 'real estate developers', 'builders' or 'property developers'. With the objective of aligning the accounting treatment by enterprises dealing in 'Real Estate', the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) had issued a Guidance Note (GN) in the year 2012, namely '**Guidance Note on Accounting for Real Estate Transactions (GN on Real Estate)**'.

With the notification of Ind AS, a need was felt to issue a new version of this Note to make accounting consistent for real estate transactions since regulator would like to align the real estate accounting irrespective of GAAP requirement. One needs to see whether regulator will continue with the Note in future when new standard on revenue recognition Ind AS 115 'Revenue from contracts with customers' will be applicable or they will withdraw it when Ind AS 115 will be notified.

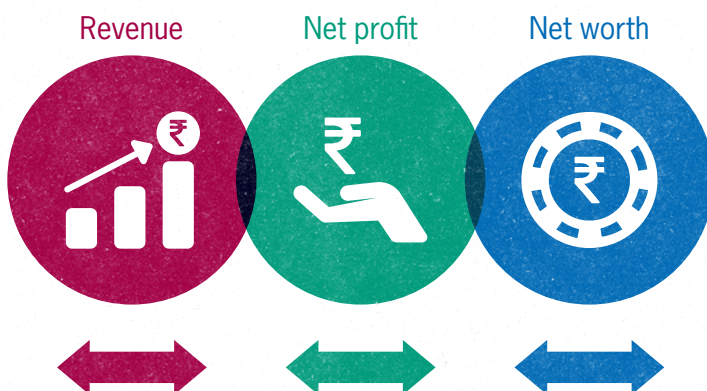
Pursuant to this, ICAI has issued a Note, namely '**Guidance Note on Accounting for Real Estate Transactions (for entities to whom Ind AS is applicable) (GN on Real Estate (Ind AS))**'.

Hence, Indian Real Estate entities, reporting under Ind AS, will also have to follow 'Guidance Note on Accounting for Real Estate Transactions' issued by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) in May 2016. This Guidance Note covers all forms of transactions in real estate.

According to the said Guidance Note, an entity can start recognising revenue on a percentage of completion basis only when:

- a. 25% of the construction and development cost of project has been incurred
- b. 25% of the saleable project area is secured by contract and
- c. 10% of the contract consideration as per the agreements of sale has been realised

Where development rights acquired in exchange of an asset, unlike the existing guidance, the GN on Real Estate (Ind AS) requires measurement of the same in accordance with the principles of exchange of assets enunciated under Ind AS 38 Intangible Assets; which requires fair value accounting, based on certain criteria.



2. Borrowing cost capitalisation

For construction projects, real estate entities might borrow funds for acquisition of land. Further borrowings might be required for construction activities, especially for commercial properties. Capitalisation of borrowing costs after the commencement of construction activities, on funds used for acquisition of land, has long been a point of contention.

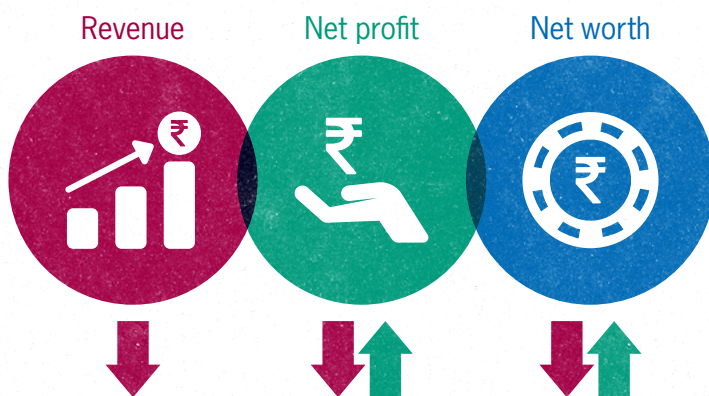
One possible view is that land can be considered as the qualifying asset and capitalisation should cease when the land is ready to use e.g. obtaining approval for conversion of an agricultural land to non-agricultural land or any other approvals necessary for commencement of construction activities on that land. Another possible view is that the project i.e. land as well as building can be considered as a qualifying asset and borrowing costs are capitalised till the completion of construction of the building.

Arguments can be made for and against both positions and in the absence of any conclusive guidance, both practices currently prevailing and may be considered acceptable. Though, one may certainly argue technically, that the land is not a qualifying asset. Most Real Estate entities tend to go for the second approach as they believe it is a better representation of their business cycles and management's intention since acquisition of land is not the end objective in most cases.

Given that the guidance under Ind AS and Indian GAAP on this matter is similar, this area will continue to be a point of deliberation between the entities and their auditors.

3. Extended credit terms

A structure that has become popular in recent times in the residential real estate sector is the 20-80 or 30-70 schemes where the buyer is required to pay 20 or 30% upfront (at the time of booking) with the balance payable at the time of taking the possession. The construction of these projects usually goes on for more than 12 months, hence under Ind AS; the same would require the recognition of the non-current receivables (or un-billed revenue) at their present value. Not only this impacts the revenue recognition on a year-on-year (YoY) basis, it also changes the classification and measurement basis in accounting as the unwinding of the discount is treated as finance income and not revenue from operation or sales.



4. Lease accounting

a. Straight lining of lease rent

One of the major sources of revenue for some real estate companies is leasing out of commercial properties. Lease rent for such arrangements are usually escalated by a contractually defined percentage after specified periods or are determined as a percentage of the revenue generated by the lessee. As per Ind AS, total lease rental for the lease term (non-cancellable period of lease in addition to extensions at the option of the lessee) in case of an operating lease is to be recognised on a straight line basis over the lease term unless another systematic basis is more representative of the time pattern of the user's benefit.

Example 4 (a) (i) Rent for a property is INR 100/ft² for the first year, INR 110/ft² for the second and INR 120/ft² for the third year, the lessor as well as the lessee have to record INR 110/ft² (i.e. 330/3=110) as income and expense respectively for all three years of the lease term. Although, similar guidance exists under Indian GAAP, varied practices prevail.

Rent determined as a percentage of revenue need not be straight lined.

There is an additional exemption under Ind AS by way of a carve out stating that if the lease rents are structured to increase in line with the expected general inflation, straight lining of lease rentals is not required. However, the guidance leaves room for interpretation as to the meaning of the phrase 'structured to increase'. Also it is not very clear how to measure 'expected general inflation' across different locations and what should be the benchmark for such indicators.

One interpretation being that the lease arrangement specifically links the lease escalations to the general inflation and the other being that the fixed increase in lease approximates to the general inflation rates.

Further, linking of lease escalations to general inflation might not be feasible from a business standpoint since lease rents are dependent on property values in the local market and not general inflation rate. For example, the property rates for Mumbai and Bangalore may not be comparable. Even within the same jurisdiction, different areas can have property rates that do not change at the same proportion.

b. Lease incentives

Sometimes, lessors provide various types of incentives to the lessee to enter into a lease agreement such as rent-free periods or initial periods at a reduced rate, etc. Such incentives constitute an integral part of the net consideration agreed for use of the asset. Typically, a lessee is given a rent free fit out period (fit out period) when it occupies a property for the first time. Payment of lease rents commences only after completion of such fit out period. Majority of entities in the real estate sector, due to varied industry practices despite of uniform guidance under both GAAPs, do not recognise lease income/expense during such fit out periods.

Ind AS contains specific requirements for accounting of such fit out periods. Lease term for the purpose of lease accounting and straight lining as discussed above would include the fit out period as well. Continuing with the same facts as example 4(a)(i) above, if the lessee was given a rent free fit out period of 3 months, the lease term for straight lining of lease rentals would be 39 months (3 years and 3 months). Consequently, lease income/expense would be recognised from the commencement of the fit out period.

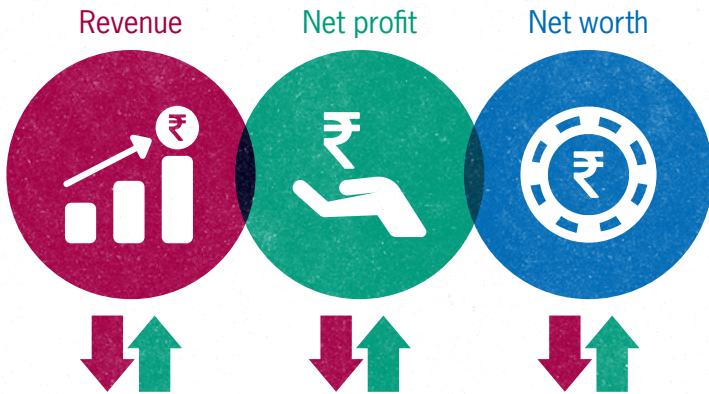
Lease incentives also include any other payments made or received, usually at the inception of the lease, by the lessee or the lessor. For example, a lessor may compensate the lessee for the cost of relocating to the lessor's premises. The amount is spread over the lease term as an adjustment to the lease rentals.

c. Lease deposits

As a practice, real estate companies collect substantial amounts from their tenants by way of interest free refundable lease deposits. Such lease deposits are financial liabilities and are to be initially recognised at their fair value (i.e. present value in this case). Subsequent accounting will be as follows:

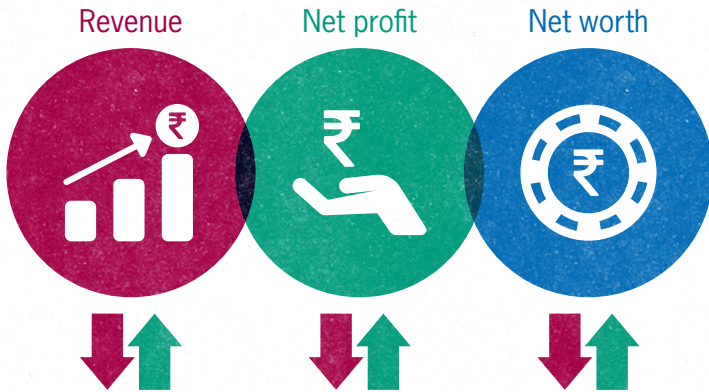
- Unwinding of discount over the tenure of the deposit is treated as interest expense.
- The difference between the fair value at inception and the transaction value of the lease is considered as lease rentals and recognised over the lease term on a straight line basis.

The cumulative impact to the income statement over the lease term is zero but there would be an impact on individual period's financial statements due to recognition of interest expense and lease income.



5. Complex control structures

Large and medium sized real estate companies usually have a complex investment structures with interests in joint ventures, partnership firms, Limited Liability Partnership (LLPs), Association of Persons (AoPs), etc. Unlike Indian GAAP, where control assessment is largely based on the proportion of equity holding in the investee, Ind AS requires control assessment based on factors such as power over relevant activities, exposure to variable returns, ability to affect variable returns through power over relevant activities, etc. rather than only voting rights. For example where a shareholder's agreement gives unilateral decision giving rights to the investor even after holding say only 40% of the share capital, the investor will still have to consolidate the investee entity as a subsidiary. In such a case, non-controlling interest (NCI) would be shown at 60%.



6. Joint arrangements

It is quite common for real estate companies to enter into joint arrangements for development and execution of projects (e.g. joint development agreements). Typically, one venturer would be contributing the land (along with all approvals) and the other venturer will be undertaking the construction and development. Classification and accounting for such joint arrangements are governed by contractual rights and obligations and not merely by proportion of holding.

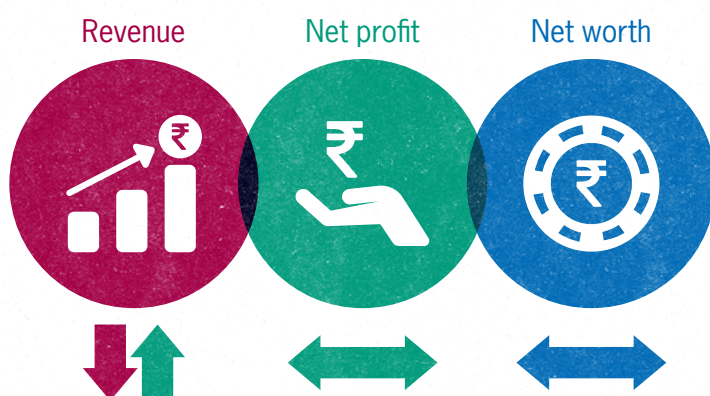
Example 6(a)(i), when an entity holds investment of more than 50% in another entity, it would currently be classified as a subsidiary. But in case the arrangement between the shareholders of the entity requires unanimous consent of two or more parties for any decisions to be made, such investment may be classified as a joint arrangement.

Joint arrangements are further bifurcated into 'joint ventures' and 'joint operations'. The classification and accounting requirements for the same have been summarised below:

Particulars	Joint venture	Joint operations
Assessment of joint arrangements	An arrangement that conveys rights to net assets is classified as joint venture.	An arrangement that conveys the rights to specific assets and obligation to specific liabilities is a joint operation.
Accounting – consolidated financials	Equity method of accounting	Recognise the investing entity's share of assets, liabilities, incomes and expenses. This is not the same as proportionate consolidation.
Accounting – separate financials	Policy choice to measure at cost or fair value	Same as for consolidated financial statements mentioned above

Real estate companies will go through a significant change in their balance sheet and income statement due to application of above requirements. Say in case of the above mentioned example of 6(a)(i), the investment gets classified as a joint venture under Ind AS. While under Indian GAAP the company would be doing line-by-line consolidation for this investment, under Ind AS it will be accounted as per equity method. Consequently under Ind AS,

- consolidated financial statements - the investment will appear as a single line item in the balance sheet wherein the share of profits/losses will be added/reduced and distributions will be deducted
- only the share of profits/losses from the joint venture will be recognised in the profit and loss account.
- assets, liabilities, incomes and expenses will not be recognised separately.



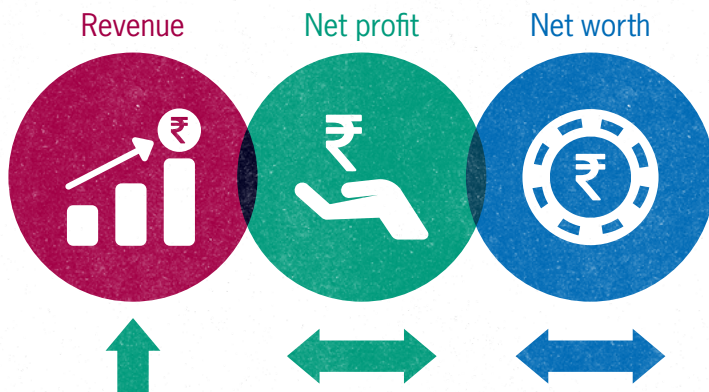
7. Non-cash consideration

Ind AS includes specific guidance on how to recognise revenue in case of barter transactions wherein goods or services are provided in exchange of other goods or services. Certain common occurrences of barter transactions in Real Estate sector are discussed below:

- Construction of a public car park to be handed over to a regulator in return for additional floor space index (FSI),
- Construction of public road on land owned by the entity in return for transferable development rights (TDR)
- Rehabilitation of slums in return for right to develop and sell the area constructed on remaining portion of land (received free of cost),
- Redevelopment of a residential building in return for right to construct and sell the additional units constructed to third parties, etc.

Most of these rights and obligations are currently not recognised under Indian GAAP due to lack of specific guidance. These are usually included in the overall cost of construction of the projects. Under Ind AS, such barter transactions are recorded at fair value of the goods or services received or given up, whichever is more clearly evident.

Further, where transferable development rights are acquired by way of giving up of rights over existing structures or open land, the development rights should be measured in accordance with the principles of exchange of assets enunciated in Ind AS 38, Intangible Assets; which requires fair value accounting, based on few criteria.



8. Asset Retirement Obligations (AROs)

ARO is the estimated costs of dismantling and removing an asset and restoring the site on which it is located. AS 29 Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets (revised) which is effective from accounting period commencing on or after 1 April 2016 has aligned the guidance on accounting for AROs with Ind AS.

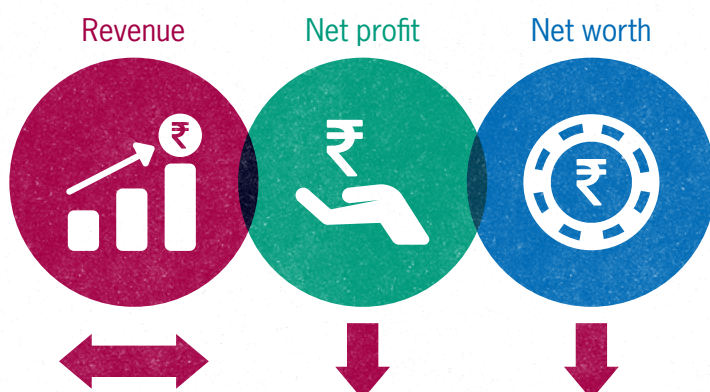
The present value of the expected cost for the decommissioning of an asset after its use is included in the cost of the respective asset if the recognition criteria for a provision are met. This would increase the gross value of the asset and consequently, the depreciation charge for the subsequent periods. Further, the unwinding of discount on the provision will also be charged to the income statement and cannot be capitalised to the value of an asset as borrowing cost. Thus, in substance, company's statement of profit and loss would be charged with depreciation and unwinding of discount.

Here is an example to illustrate the above. Say an entity has constructed building with a useful life of five years. It recognises an ARO of INR 310,461 for the present value of the cost of demolishing the building at the end of its use as required by local regulations (nominal value INR 500,000). Discount rate applicable for the entity is 10%.

The accounting implications over the period of five years have been summarised in the below table:

Year	Opening Provision	Compounded @ 10%	Interest charge	Closing Balance	Depreciation charge
1	310,461	310,461 * 10%	31,046	341,507	62,092
2	341,507	341,507 * 10%	34,151	375,657	62,092
3	375,657	375,657 * 10%	37,565	413,223	62,092
4	413,223	413,223 * 10%	41,322	454,545	62,092
5	454,545	454,545 * 10%	45,454	500,000	62,092

The guidance aims at spreading the cost of dismantling or removing an item of PP&E over the life of the asset by way of additional depreciation charge and interest expense rather than having an impact on the profit during the last year of the asset's useful life.



9. Financial instruments

Under Indian GAAP, equity and liability instruments are largely based on the legal form of these instruments and also governed by legal and regulatory requirements. Ind AS requires that a financial instrument should be classified in accordance with substance of the arrangement rather than legal form.

Real estate companies often rely on foreign loans, FCCBs, complex debt syndication arrangements, preference shares, loans from promoters and group companies, etc. for finance. The recognition and measurement criteria for these instruments are substantially different under Ind-AS. For example debt vs. equity, embedded derivative, fair valuation of corporate guarantees, etc. are some of the measurement criteria and can have substantial impact on the income statement.

Certain examples for financial instruments commonly seen in real estate companies:

a. Redeemable preference shares – Entity A has issued compulsorily redeemable preference shares to third parties with tenure of five years. Under Ind AS, such preference shares may be classified as a liability and will not be shown as part of Entity A's equity. The coupon payments will be classified as interest expense and not dividend. This will have an impact on Entity A's profit as well as debt-equity ratio since preference dividend will not be considered an appropriation from the reserves.

Loans to group companies – Entity A has given an interest free loan to Entity B, a wholly owned subsidiary, of INR 1,000 for a period of two years. In the standalone financial statements of both the companies, the loan will be measured at amortised cost. The discount rate applicable for the companies is 11%. The accounting implications have been summarised in the below table. Figures have been rounded off for the sake of simplicity:

In the books of Entity A

Year	Opening Balance	Interest income @11%	Interest income	Closing Balance
1	812	812 * 11%	88	900
2	900	900 * 11%	100	1,000

*Value of capital contribution in the Subsidiary = Transaction price 1,000 – Present value 812 = 188

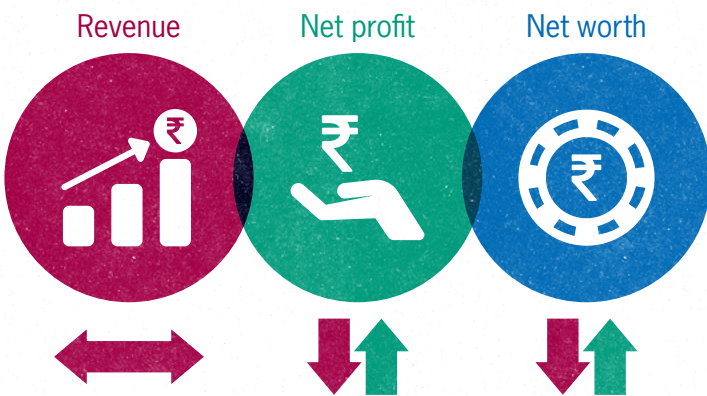
In the books of Entity B

Year	Opening Balance	Interest expense @11%	Interest expense	Closing Balance
1	812	812 * 11%	88	900
2	900	900 * 11%	100	1,000

*Value of capital contribution from the Parent = Transaction price 1,000 – Present value 812 = 188

b. Financial guarantees – Entity A, a reputed listed company, has given a financial guarantee for a loan taken by Entity B, an unlisted wholly owned subsidiary. Entity B borrowed the amount at an interest rate of 12% p.a. which would have been 14% had the loan not been guaranteed by Entity A. Therefore, Entity B has enjoyed a reduced rate of interest on the loan because of the guarantee given by the parent company.

Under Ind AS, such guarantee needs to be recognised by both the entities at fair value. Whereas in the standalone books of Entity A, this fair value will be added to its investment in Entity B, in the books of Entity B, such fair value will be added to equity held by the parent. In the consolidated books of Entity A, these amounts will be eliminated and the guarantee will be presented as a contingent liability.



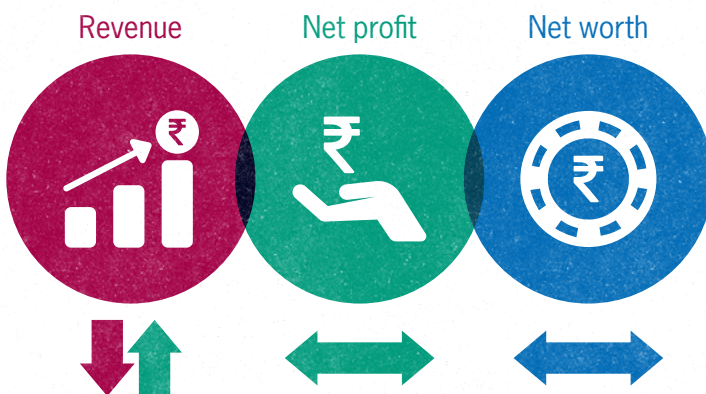
10. Principal vs. agent relationship

Ind AS contains specific requirements with respect to evaluation of whether the entity is acting as a principal or an agent in an arrangement. Indicative factors that need to be evaluated include:

- which party is the primary obligor,
- who bears the inventory risk,
- who has discretion in setting prices,
- who is exposed to credit risk, etc.

This assessment becomes important in arrangements for charges collected towards formation of society, sub-contracting of facility maintenance activities, operating service agreements for commercial properties (e.g. hotels) owned by entities, taxes and other charges collected from lessees, etc.

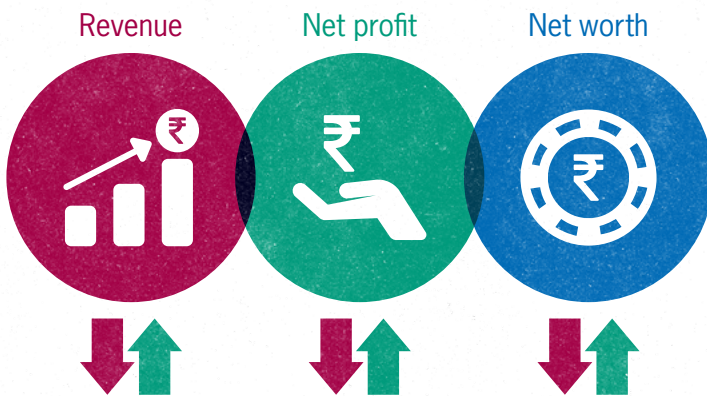
The party acting as a principal needs to recognise revenue on a gross basis and the party acting as agent recognises revenue on a net basis. For example, sub-contracting of maintenance activities, for which the lessor is primarily responsible, might not preclude the entity from being the principal in the lease arrangement as far as maintenance activities are concerned. This can have an impact on an entity's topline if it is not recognising the revenue from such outsourced maintenance services.



11. Charges towards parking, club house, amenities, etc.

In case of contracts with multiple performance obligations, the transaction price needs to be apportioned to the various performance obligations based on either their relative standalone selling prices or residual value method. Sale of parking area, membership of club house, other amenities in the contract, etc. may represent separate performance obligations or may be part of an integral to a single performance obligation. Specific assessment would be required for individual entities.

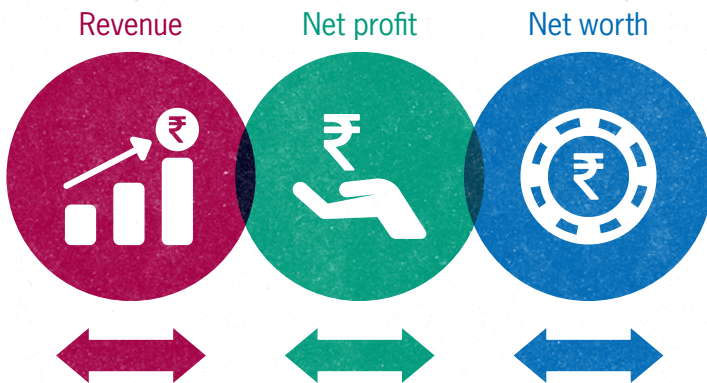
Amounts collected on behalf of other parties e.g. taxes, registration charges, society formation charges, maintenance deposits, etc. usually do not represent a performance obligation for the real estate developer and therefore, the same are not recognised as revenue. Such 'pass through' costs, where the developer is only acting as an intermediary, are recognised as liabilities when collected from customers and are settled on transfer of amounts to the relevant party.



12. Investment property

Property¹ that is held for the purpose of earning rentals or for capital appreciation or both, rather than for use in ordinary course of business or held as inventory is classified as investment property. Real estate companies that hold buildings and land with a view to earning rent income or capital appreciation need to identify and separately present such properties as investment properties in the balance sheet. Where the use of a land is not yet decided the same needs to be classified as investment property.

Measurement remains same as that for any other item of property, plant and equipment i.e. at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment. However, fair value of such properties needs to be disclosed in the financial statements. This may entail additional cost since entities might need to enlist help of external valuers to determine fair value based on specific guidance under Ind AS.



1. Land and/or building

13. Disclosures

In addition to the plethora of changes in recognition and measurement, Ind AS would require a host of additional disclosures. Two standards (viz. Ind AS 107 Financial Instruments: Disclosures and Ind AS 112 Disclosure of Interests in Other Entities) deal solely with disclosure requirements and most standards contain elaborate disclosure requirements of their own.

Compiling and auditing of these disclosures will require entities to maintain information that was not tracked before. Some of these might also require ERP system changes if the existing systems do not possess the capabilities to manage this information.

Certain disclosures might require the entities to engage external parties e.g. fair value of investment property.

Consequently, the time, effort and cost involved in preparation of financial statements can increase quite substantially.

14. Deferral of revenue standard

IASB has deferred the date of adoption of IFRS 15 from the year 2017 to financial periods beginning on or after 1 January 2018. Consequently, vide notification dated 30 March 2016, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has indefinitely deferred Ind AS 115 in India. MCA has notified Ind AS 11 (which corresponds to IAS 11 Construction Contracts) and Ind AS 18 (which corresponds to IAS 18 Revenue).

When Ind AS 115 is applied along with the relevant appendices, the impact on revenue areas covered can change as discussed below:

Area	Probable impact of Ind AS 115
Revenue from construction projects	Strong likelihood that percentage of completion method (PoCM) accounting of revenue from construction contracts will continue provided criteria mentioned in point number 1 above is met.
Extended credit terms	Accounting would be largely similar to discussion in point number 3 above.
Non-cash consideration	Accounting would be largely similar to discussion in point number 7 above. However, Ind AS 115 contains additional guidance for accounting of non-cash consideration. Application to certain types of contracts e.g. redevelopment of an existing property might lead to a different treatment due to lack of detailed guidance under Ind AS 11/18.
Principal vs. agent relationship	Accounting would be similar to discussion in point number 10 above.
Charges towards parking, club house, amenities, etc.	Accounting would be largely similar to discussion in point number 11 above.

It remains to be seen whether the Guidance Note for Real Estate under Ind AS will continue to apply post application of Ind AS 115 or whether ICAI would come out with a new GN.

15. Transition to Ind AS – first time adoption

Certain ‘one-time reliefs’ have been given to first time adopters of Ind AS by way of optional exemptions and mandatory exceptions to smoothen the process of transition. Ind AS 101 deals with such exemptions and exceptions. Amongst the same, below items will be more critical and relevant for real estate entities:

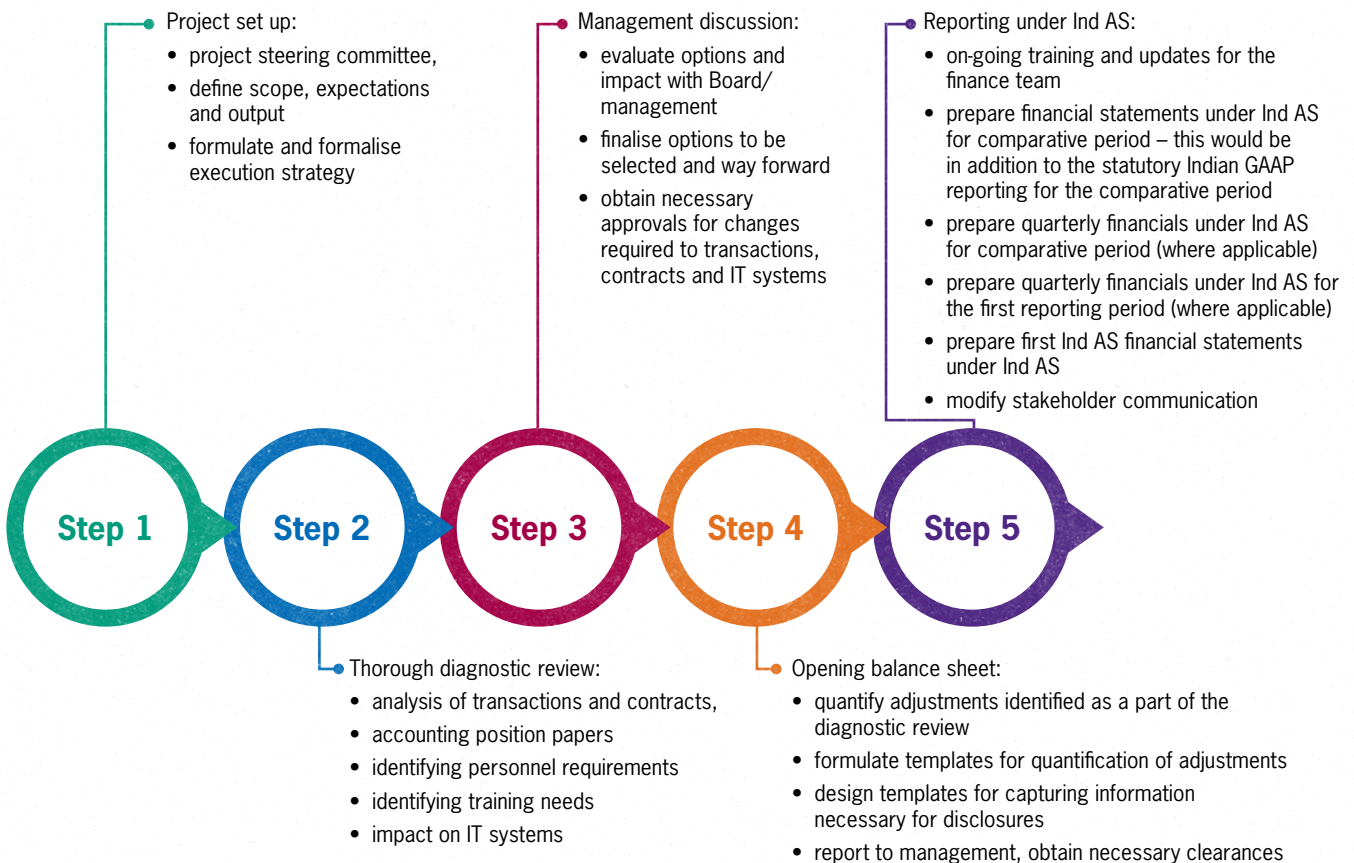
- a. Not to restate any business combinations before the transition date
- b. Consider the transition date carrying value of PP&E, intangible assets and investment properties as a starting point for Ind AS
- c. Consider the transition date carrying value of investment in subsidiary, joint venture and associate as a starting point for Ind AS for standalone financial statements
- d. Measure ARO as on the date of transition to Ind AS
- e. Not to restate revenue from contracts that have been completed before the transition date

Entities that are covered by the Ind AS transition roadmap should start evaluating the potential impact on the financial statements. There can also be impact on the direct and indirect tax positions, information systems and stakeholders’ communication.

All transactions from 1 April 2015 (1 April 2016 for phase 2 entities) will be accounted and reported under Ind AS. Any changes to the transaction structure, IT systems, MIS, SOPs, etc. necessitated by Ind AS should be identified and put into effect as early as possible.

Transition to Ind AS – broad approach

Broadly, the process of transition to Ind AS would entail the below mentioned steps for an entity:



About Financial Reporting Advisory Services

Our Financial Reporting Advisory Services “FRAS” group is a set of professionals who have significant hands-on experience in providing end-to-end solutions and support services relating to complex financial requirements in a wide range of scenario. Our suite of services in FRAS includes:

Conversion services

FRAS professionals can assist in various ways in an entity’s conversion process including:

- performing end-to-end conversion from local GAAP to International GAAP (IFRS/ US GAAP)
- conversion from International GAAP to Indian GAAP for Indian consolidation
- high level diagnostic review of GAAP differences
- suggest appropriate accounting treatment where International GAAP provides an option to choose between alternative accounting treatments
- providing profit/ equity reconciliation from local GAAP to International GAAP

Transaction-based services

Strategic business initiatives such as capital raising, business acquisitions, divestures, etc. require special attention and have far reaching implications. FRAS professionals can assist in proactively addressing these implications. Transaction-based services include:

- **Capital raising**
 - assistance in the preparation of financial information (consolidated/combined/pro forma/ carve out)
 - getting up to speed for financial reporting to meet regulatory compliance on quarterly and annual basis

- **Business acquisitions**

- assistance in drafting/review of share purchase agreement/asset purchase agreement to address and assess the impact on financial reporting
- assistance in Purchase Price Allocation accounting and preparation of opening balance sheet
- assistance in consolidation and tax accounting developing the accounting policies and procedures manual for the acquired entity

- **Financial instruments and hedging**

- review of draft investment agreement to address and assess the impact on financial reporting (such as debt vs. equity classification, investment classification, accounting options available)
- assistance in setting up the hedge accounting platform including establishing risk management policies, hedge documentation, and effectiveness of testing templates and accounting entries

- **Share-based compensation plans**

- review of draft stock compensation plans to address and assess the impact on financial reporting (such as equity vs. liability accounting, impact of group stock plans on subsidiary, modification of stock awards)
- advice on accounting for share-based transaction

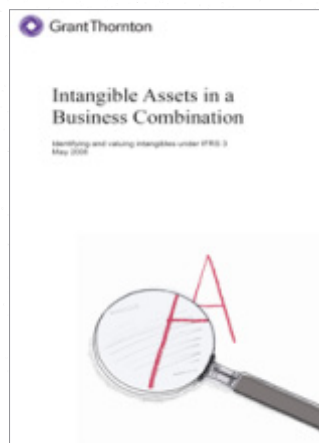
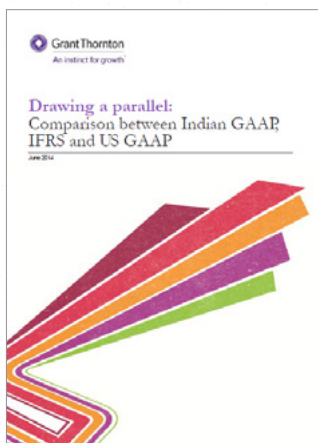
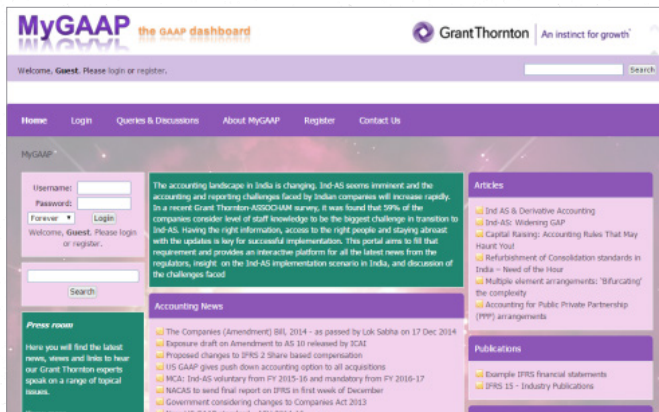
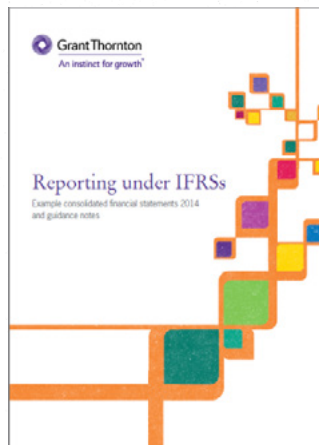
- **Post transaction advisory and support**

- developing group accounting policies and procedures manual assistance in managing the global consolidation process
- develop process and templates for collating information for dual GAAP reporting, MIS and tracking opening balance sheet adjustments

- **Other advisory services**

- On call advisory
- Industry/ technical training programs (such as basic and advanced training in financial instruments, full day IFRS/ US GAAP trainings etc.)

Selected thought leadership material



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