



**“THE NEED FOR INTELLECTUAL
EXCHANGE, THINKING OUTSIDE
THE BOX, AND COOPERATION
HAS NEVER BEEN GREATER.”**



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catalyzing CHANGE through INNOVATION

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THE NEED FOR INTELLECTUAL EXCHANGE, thinking outside the box, and cooperation has never been greater. Vast poverty and inequality contribute to global problems, such as climate change, disease, environmental destruction and armed conflict. Galvanizing societies and institutions to solve these unprecedented challenges requires a renewed effort and enhanced capacity to create and transform knowledge into reform. Consequently, just as in so many other fields, a stepped-up rate of successful innovation will be of the essence in achieving development results.

We know that ours is a world of change that will go through a massive re-thinking of its ways in the next decade. This also applies to the development profession and its recipes for reform and change. All of us are challenged to reinvent our work by adopting and adapting technology and social theory much more rapidly, or fall behind. We must develop the “Apps for Development” that can make us more efficient, effective and help us benefit the lives of many more people.

As this issue of Development Outreach demonstrates, the World Bank Institute can be a hub and convener of development practitioners with the required expertise and tacit knowledge of cutting-edge development solutions. By pooling this human capital into “network capital” through the formation of teams, partnerships, and alliances, we can facilitate the creation, deepening, and sharing of knowledge that will help transform this knowledge into workable solutions. As the new home of

Development Marketplace, we have a pipeline of innovative ideas second to none, and we are rapidly expanding the tools that can be deployed.

What is the role of the World Bank and other development banks in this rapidly changing context? We know that the answers cannot be provided by the Bank alone, nor will they be found in the outdated North–South development paradigm. To maintain our position at the forefront of assisting people, institutions, countries, and regions in addressing development challenges, the banks need to become true catalysts of innovation. We need to empower and inspire, finance and train, scan and scale.

While the World Bank Group has often fostered innovation in addressing development challenges—for example, carbon markets, and of course the Development Marketplace—these efforts will need to become more sustained and systematic in the future—part of our culture. Given the dimensions of these challenges faced by the global community, the Bank is focused now on accelerating the pace of innovation and adoption of new ideas. That’s why this issue of Development Outreach looks at what is involved with stepping up the pace of innovation to catalyze change in development. 

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