



REFLECTIONS FROM
WORLD BANK CHIEF
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kristalina Georgieva

Students wash their hands before eating prepared meal at the Hope Kindergarten Elementary School in Tarbarr Community in Buchanan City, Liberia on June 25, 2016. Photo © Dominic Chavez / World Bank



I remember well the first time I spoke with investors about World Bank bonds.

It was in the early 2000s, and I was Director of the World Bank's Environment Department. At that time, there was a lot of public debate about whether development institutions should provide debt relief to borrowing countries, and this particular group of investors was paying close attention to the discussion. Rather than asking me about our financial statements or credit strength, the investors wanted to learn more about our governance and how we use funds raised in the market to finance development projects.

Over the years we have had many similar conversations with investors, and it is through this dialogue that the World Bank has shaped the evolution of capital markets as a source of finance for sustainable development. We changed how we partner with investors and other market participants by engaging them more deeply in our business model, objectives, values and operations. And we enhanced our communications around our sustainability practices—including the World Bank's Corporate Responsibility Program and launching our Sustainability Review—and this became a model for other issuers.

The credibility we established with investors paved the way for us to pioneer the rollout of green bonds in

2008, and it has provided the foundation for other World Bank Treasury innovations that allow investors to support sustainable development. It also catalyzed broader conversations around how to integrate broader environmental, social and governance criteria in fixed income investment decisions.

I am glad to have stayed connected with my World Bank Treasury colleagues since those conversations with investors many years ago. Today, I bring this information into conversations with government partners, as part of our suite of products that offers investors an opportunity to generate financial and social returns. This includes groundbreaking bonds and swaps that insure countries against financial losses from natural disasters, pandemics, and other shocks, as well as the core treasury functions that are fundamental for our financial sustainability.

The debut of IDA in the capital markets in April 2018 is the latest installment in our 70-year story of innovation and success in the capital markets. By harnessing capital markets for sustainable development—something we have done since our first bond issuance in 1947—we can raise the financing we need to ensure a better tomorrow for future generations.



October 19, 2017. On End Poverty Day 2017, World Bank CEO Kristalina Georgieva joins staff to place the final piece on the #EndPovertyMosaic in the atrium of the World Bank Headquarters in Washington, D.C. Photo © Simone D. McCourtie / World Bank