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The IDRC Alumni provides opportunities for former IDRC employees to maintain personal and professional links, and supports continuing dialogue on development issues.

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No. 61 June 2020

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Thanks to Michèle Wilson for Translation.

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Wish to support the IDRC Alumni Association? Contributions can be made annually or over a three-year period:

1 year	\$25
2 years	\$45
3 years	\$65

Cheques payable to the **IDRC Alumni Association**.

**Return to:** Kim Daley, 452 River Rd, Ottawa, ON. K1V 1E7

**Electronic transfer** is also possible for Alumni across Canada and in other parts of the world who have Canadian accounts. For details contact Gerald Bourrier <bici@sympatico.ca>

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# From the Chair

Rob Robertson

## The Year of Living Dangerously

The year 2020 was to be a celebration of IDRC's fifty years of accomplishment. Now, that's on pause. Instead, the Centre is employing its fifty years of experience in development research to fight the pandemic in the places that are the most vulnerable to it.

For all of us daily living is the battle line; the most common and agreeable activities have become dangerous. And so it is for Centre staff who must avoid the office, negotiating with their spouses and kids for workspace in the family den or on the dining room table. The casual conversations in the hall, the elevator, and the lunch room are gone. Instead, all contacts are scheduled for a purpose and staff remain at their screens hour after hour. The regional offices are depopulated too. All foreign staff were given the option of repatriation and most accepted it. In some cases there was no residence to which they could return, and so the Centre has supported them in temporary accommodation. And of course some are burdened with home schooling their kids and dealing with annoyances like uneven connectivity.



*Covid 19: Risk factor, Population Age*

But as always, the Centre is doing more than coping. It is acting. IDRC has combined with five other federal agencies to fund 47 pandemic-related projects worth \$26.7 million, selected in just a three-week turnaround. In a project led by the University of Toronto, researchers from Brazil, Vietnam and the USA will be developing low-cost tools for the rapid diagnosis and sustained surveillance of COVID-19. This builds on work already done in response to the Zika virus outbreak. In other work focussed on the Philippines and Sri Lanka, teams will develop guidelines and training modules on managing hospital patient flow and supervision, infection control and community support of suspected cases.

The impact of the pandemic on the economies of the poorest countries has ranged from women factory workers losing their export-oriented jobs in Bangladesh, to migrant workers unable to cross borders, to street vendors having their stalls shut down. Developing countries don't have the financial resources to stimulate their economies and social distancing is more difficult in crowded cities. And key sectors, such as tourism, have been devastated. These and many more issues will be on IDRC's agenda as it enters its next fifty years, years of new dangers in need of new solutions.

Image: African Centre for Strategic Studies.

# Alumni News

## IDRC @ 50

On May 13 Jean Label sent the following message to IDRC Alumni.



Dear colleagues,

This is a very special day for all of us.

Today – May 13th – marks the day 50 years ago when IDRC was established following the passage of the IDRC Act in Canada’s Parliament. The success of IDRC over these many years is thanks to you and all those who came before you at the Centre. At no time has that been truer than now as we leverage our resources, expertise, and network of partners to put research and science at the forefront of the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To mark this milestone in the history of our organization, I invite you to watch my video message and the one from IDRC Chairperson Margaret Biggs, made available on the IDRC [Alumni Facebook page](#).

Thank you for being a key part of IDRC’s 50-year journey.

Sincerely,

Jean

Here are the links to the video’s Jean mentions and from the Honourable Karina Gould, Minister of Democratic Institutions who highlights the Centre's continued relevance in an ever-changing world.



### **BRAVO IDRC**

Alumni respond:

Lovely to have been part of the efforts.  
Jan Hatcher Roberts

Congratulations to you and IDRC on this very special day, celebrating 50 years of hard work and accomplishments. And it's exactly 30 years that we arrived to Montevideo, when we moved the Regional Office (LACRO) in November of 1989. This last December I spent Christmas in this beautiful city where I worked with IDRC for several years, and met with several of the Uruguayan colleagues that helped us in the establishment of the office!

It has been a great honor and a great pleasure to participate in IDRC. I am ready to continue collaborating with IDRC programmes around the world.

With my very best regards.

Fernando Chaparro

Après 12 années au ministère des Affaires indiennes et du Nord canadien, qui n'était pas « mon » ministère parce que le Bureau de la traduction relevait du Secrétariat d'État, j'ai passé 12 ans au CRDI. Le CRDI m'a donné un sentiment d'appartenance, mais aussi un sentiment de plus grande utilité, car il œuvrait dans un domaine qui m'intéressait et le faisait de manière avant-gardiste. Que le CRDI sache maintenir son esprit visionnaire pendant encore longtemps est le souhait que je lui fais à l'occasion de son 50<sup>e</sup> anniversaire.

Michèle Wilson

Many thanks and Happy Birthday!!

Randy Spence

Proud to have been part of this organization for 29 years.

Nancy Hutchinson

I too am proud to have been part of IDRC!

Kim Graveline Daley

It was a pleasure and honour to work at an organization with a great mission and great colleagues.

Catherine Shearer

Congratulations IDRC. I am so grateful to have had all of the experiences, adventures that I did each day, and of the people I met, and forever friends made. Here's to many years ahead.

Donna Bickford

I go back to the 'Hopper Generation' of Joe Hulse, George Brown, David Hopper and Ruth Zagorin, David Spurgeon, and all. The best years of a long life! I am happy to know IDRC has continued on that high road for 50 years. Bravo!

Clyde Sanger

Long-Live IDRC/CRDI!!

We thank you all so much for sharing this memorable milestone for IDRC! It has been and will always be an honor and privilege to be part of such an amazing research development institution which continues to be strong and relevant in forging ahead with its Mission!

For us, IDRC has been the cornerstone of our family where it all began and will forever be grateful to IDRC and will cherish our life-long friends and colleagues.

Best Wishes to All,

Pilar & Ramesh Bahtia

Colleagues and Friends

I want to wish IDRC a very happy 50th anniversary. I spent 10 years of my life working at IDRC and I made memories and friends that will last my lifetime. Congratulations to you all and keep up the good work.

All the best.

Rich Fuchs

C'était un privilège de travailler au Centre où j'ai passé les années les plus heureuses de ma carrière. Bonne fête au CRDI!  
Pauline Robert-Bradley

So proud that I too was part of this amazing place!!!  
Sonja J.V. Rensburg

So proud of IDRC. Still talking about my eight years working for IDRC in the 1980s. What a great experience to have known this organization and the significant contribution it provides to developing countries.

Michel Lalonde

There are countless and fond memories throughout my career at IDRC, bound by its progressive approach and the unwavering privilege to have worked with such dedicated and professional colleagues.  
Shaun Bona

I enjoyed both speakers, Jean. Many thanks. And although I don't tweet personally, I yesterday mobilized the UNU twitter account to evoke IDRC's work in the health field.  
David Malone

Quand on repense à nos années passées au CRDI, il est difficile, voire impossible, de séparer le personnel du professionnel, et cette confusion perdure même longtemps après qu'on ait quitté le Centre. Alors quelle difficulté accrue pour les couples? Pour nous, le nombre d'années au Centre dépasse les cinquante ans: que de souvenirs, que d'amitiés!

Ce qui nous a le plus marqués, c'est la coïncidence entre nos valeurs, nos aspirations et notre vision de la coopération au développement, et les grandes idées qui ont mené à la création de cette institution unique en son genre. Durant les années passées au Centre, nous avons été inspirés par le principe établi aux débuts de laisser la place aux diverses institutions avec lesquelles nous interagissions d'exprimer librement leurs priorités, afin d'y mieux répondre. Le personnel pouvait ainsi suivre ces pistes pour négocier des projets dont les chercheurs pouvaient réellement s'approprier.

Faut-il pleurer ces glorieuses années de la jeunesse du Centre? Pas davantage que de glorifier le passé, car il faut, comme partout ailleurs, s'adapter aux nouvelles données, que ce soit les problématiques qui évoluent, les outils dont on dispose aujourd'hui, ou les diverses contraintes du monde qui nous entoure. Nous sommes persuadés qu'à travers toutes ces longues années depuis que le Centre a été établi, le personnel a fait tout ce qu'il pouvait pour répondre aux défis du présent et continuer ainsi à contribuer aux efforts internationaux de recherche pour le développement.

Nous souhaitons au CRDI bon vent, au cours du prochain demi-siècle!  
Gisèle Morin-Labatut  
Michel Labatut

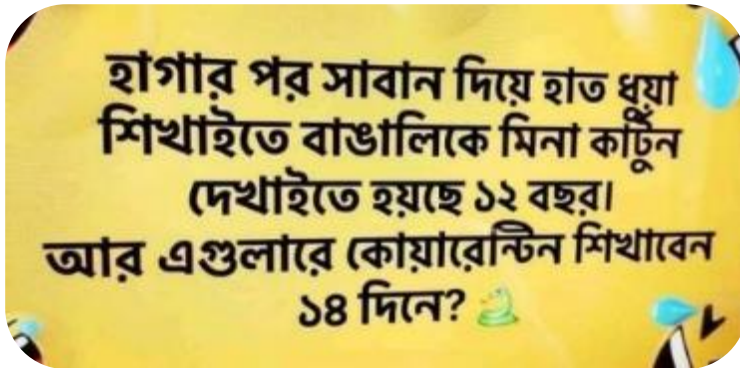
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### **Meena shows the way!**

**An IDRC capacity building story, leading to dealing with COVID-19 in Bangladesh....**Neill McKee, IDRC Communication Division filmmaker in the 1970s and 1980s, worked with Dr. Donald Sharp of the Health Sciences Division, to produce [\*Prescription for Health\*](#) in 1983. Neill and Donald also worked with experts like Dr. Mujibur Rahman of [ICDDR,B](#) in Bangladesh, and others, to ensure the technical information communicated was correct and to facilitate the filming in Asia and Africa. Besides the French and Spanish versions of the film, Neill worked with UNICEF to produce many other language versions. Millions of people viewed and discussed the film around the globe through

government film units in rural areas and slums, video shows, and TV broadcasts. It became a major global tool in the prevention of diarrheal diseases through hygiene education, sanitation systems, and clean water delivery during the **International Decade of Clean Drinking Water and Sanitation, 1981-1990**, and beyond. The most important part of the film was the visualization of the fecal-oral route of disease through animation.

Meena became a regional heroine (kind of an "Anne of Green Gables" figure) right down to the village level in many parts of the region, and all over Bangladesh. One of the most popular episodes concerns Neill's "favorite issues" from his IDRC days, [Meena's Three Wishes](#) (1993), on hygiene, water and sanitation. Audience members said that Meena is "our daughter" or "a girl from our village," rather than a Bollywood star.



Recently, Neill received this sign in Bangla, going around on social media in Bangladesh. It reads: *It took Meena cartoon 12 years to teach the Bengalese to wash their hands after shitting. And in two weeks you want to educate them on social distancing?*

Then, while looking up what was happening in Bangladesh regarding Covid-19, Neill found this article, ['Meena' teaches children how to fight the deadly virus](#) with a link to a Meena video produced by the team of artists and program specialists he helped to establish in the early 1990s. It was produced some years ago in preparation for a similar but milder virus attack, but is now being viewed and discussed in Bangladesh as the Coronavirus hits that country. IDRC's efforts in filmmaking, partnerships, and capacity building the 1980s, continue to have impact today.



## CINEMA IDRC



The IDRC films have been added to the [IDRC Alumni website](#). They are found under [Memory Lane](#).

With a few exceptions French and English versions for the films have been found.

Click for access to the [IDRC Archive](#).

Thanks to Diane Ceponkus for her help with the archive.

## David and Ruth Hopper and Ramesh and Pilar Bhatia Canada Research Fellowship 2019

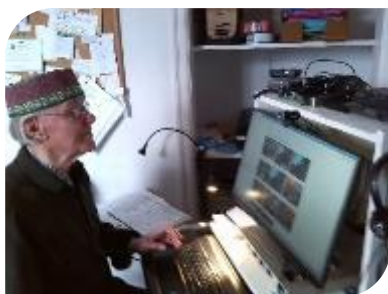


Jemima Baada was chosen from the top female candidates in the IDRC Doctoral Research Awards. She is Ghanaian studying at Western University in London Ontario in Women's Studies and Feminist Research. Her topic is: *Examining the Dual Effects of Climate Change and Multilateral Investment on Agrarian Migration in Ghana.*

Josephine P. Perez is a PhD student in Leadership Studies-Organization Development of the Psychology Department at Ateneo de Manila University, The Philippines. Her topic is: *The Filipino Women at the Peace Tables: A Positioning Analysis of Women Leadership in the Philippine Peace Process.*



### Gallery



Back room boys: HTML Inc.

Chris Smart for the Bulletin. Ed Brandon, Webmaster for the Alumni website.



*Carol Joling in Borobudur, ....stupa-fied!*

### Letters to the Editor

Wow!

Maybe I am biased because you included me in it, but I am very much impressed by the last newsletter. Fascinating.

And quite sobering to look at the page commemorating all the wonderful colleagues that cannot celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Centre.

Bravo et Merci!

Jean-Marc Fleury

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## Remembering Martha...

### Martha Stone – a personal eulogy



I loved Martha.

I loved to listen to her rich brown voice.

My motivation to try to make her laugh was just to hear that throaty chuckle.

I admired her stately bearing and dignity.

As they say, she was a private person, yet it was very easy to read (dis)pleasure or (dis)approval on her face.

It was a joy to witness the sheer happiness that shone from her after she met Ingar.

Assuming that she was an urbanite, I was surprised when she told me that she and Ingar had built a place on MacGregor Lake on “my” side of the Ottawa River. I had taken a course in willow furniture-making and made her a sign out of alder and willow for the entrance to the driveway of her new home: “VALHALLA” - (easy to do, given the absence of rounded letters, like O, R, B, C etc.). Valhalla is the great hall that serves as the home of Odin, the senior Norse god. I don't think Martha put Ingar on such a lofty pedestal, but she was happy to give her new home appropriate Viking status.

One of Ivan Head's initiatives was to create the position of Deputy Director for all the divisions. Martha and I were in the first cohort. We then adopted the practice of having a Christmas lunch together. Even when she became a Vice-President, we continued to make time in mid-December for a more relaxed exchange than those allowed during snatched moments around coffee breaks. We shared a love for the music of Nina Simone. Martha's ideal relaxation, sometimes in the small hours of the night, was to play her piano.

I was washing the dishes one evening last winter, with Nina Simone piped in loud to the kitchen and decided to track down Martha. In recent years, I have been deep into my national poet, Robert Burns, and reminded that “auld acquaintance should not be forgot.” Ironic that the champion of speedy access to reliable information should prove so hard to find. With help from Chris Smart and Caroline Pestieau, I at least had her address, but did not have any luck with either the telephone or email. So, on 6 March, I jumped in the car and knocked on her door. Her first words were “Oh, my God!”, but she was gracious enough to call off her dogs. The extent of her disability was distressing, but the voice and the humour were intact. Being in the presence of royalty, I was quickly put to work making tea and ferreting out milk, honey and cookies. She told me of a major flood in her finished basement the previous year. (I winced on her behalf at the fact that the lake 20 yards from where we were sitting seemed to be level with our feet.)

Without rancour, we discussed death and shared some information about our respective age-related health issues. There was a copy of Esi Edugyan's “Washington Black” on the table, so we moved to the relief of books. A couple of months later, I tried to lure her to the Wakefield Writers Festival, that this year was featuring, *inter alia*, Ms. Edugyan and David Chariandy. I offered a taxi service, but she did not bite.

Half of the Norse warriors slain in battle are chosen by Odin to dwell in Valhalla. The other half go to the field of the goddess Freyja in Folkvangr. I can't see Martha Stone hanging about in a field with



Freyja. I am quite confident that she hammered on the doors of the Great Hall with the butt end of her broadsword until admitted to join Ingar in Valhalla.

John Hardie

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As my fourth, and last, professional "boss lady" Martha had her own style and managed by her own rules: a) priorities were established and expectations clarified - staff reductions planned in year 1, done in year 2, and without appeals please; b) IDRC's information management expertise, i.e. MINISIS, to be promoted by attending AND presenting (talk the walk) at as many professional, especially international, meetings as possible; and, c) to listen to all staff complaints with empathy while keeping to one's own decisions.



The latter rule served me well for the next 10 years in staff negotiations at IDRC! Dutch and Caribbean partnering meshing somehow.

What can one say of the woman who probably felt that after my 3 years as FAO's Chief Librarian, I was just good enough for IDRC :-)?

Vale, Martha, and even now "Thanks for the memories".

Carole Joling

An obituary for Martha appeared in the Ottawa Citizen, April 4, 2020.



*A 1999 celebration of Martha's election as President of FID (Federation Internationale de Documentation) at IDRC with representatives from the UK, Quebec, FID Canadian National Committee (Carole), Caribbean Region, East Africa Region and Legal Council (Robert Auger and Heather Cook).*

She thoroughly enjoyed for many years her FID friends all over the world.

Carole Joling

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From France: "Among the many occasions we had to work together, one is most special ... the real usefulness of information and information systems for development. The subject was [and still is] complex, but to make things even more complicated, it was to be dealt with through a computer conference in which more than 30 specialists from 17 countries participated ... over an 8-month period. And this was relying on the technology available in 1992! She had vision and courage".

Michel Menou  
Collaborator/Editor, "Measuring the Impact of Information on Development", Ottawa, IDRC, 1993  
Les Rosiers sur Loire, FRANCE

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From Canada: "I first arrived at Agriculture Canada in 1966 and got to work with Martha on the planning of the move of the Library ... we particularly liked going for drives in her brand new Ford Mustang at lunch hour. If memory serves, she left a few years later to be Chief Librarian at Health and Welfare."

Mike Schryer

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## IN MEMORIAM



**Richard Wilson**  
1930 - 2020

Dr. Richard Wilson died on February 6, 2020.

Richard was the Director of the Health Sciences Division from 1986 -1991.

"If Richard's life were a play, it would have 6 acts. Act 1 - Babyhood - Bielefeld, Germany - birth - 3 years; Act 2 - Young Childhood - Hilversum, Holland - 3-9 years; Act 3 - Older Childhood and young adulthood - Toronto, Canada - new country, another new language. Graduation from UCC and U of T Medical School class of 5 T 4. Specialization in Obstetrics and Gynecology, on staff at Toronto General Hospital and faculty of Medicine, U of T. Marriage, 2 children.... Richard led a unique life. He impacted the lives of countless groups of people around the world, and touched the lives of many individuals personally and professionally... [read on](#) in Richards Globe & Mail Obituary.

### Colleagues Remember Richard Wilson

Richard was a very intelligent and self-confident development specialist, but one source of great pride related to his specialty in OB-GYN. On a Swissair flight from the sub-continent to Europe a Bangladeshi woman suddenly went into labour. Richard delivered the baby before arrival in Zurich. The airline kept him up-to-date on the successful progress of mother and child. Somewhere in the world today there may still be two people who owe their well-being to a chance encounter with Dr. Wilson.

Rob Robertson

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I worked with Richard on the Health Sciences Division's Special Initiatives including the Commission on Health Research for Development and later, its successor, the Task Force on Health Research for Development. I will always remember his great work ethic, and the immense energy and infectious enthusiasm that he brought to everything that he undertook.

Lilah Moore

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In the latter part of the 1980s and early '90s I had the pleasure of working with Richard at the International Development and Research Centre (IDRC) in Ottawa. He was a great supervisor and an original and creative thinker. Under his direction the Centre's Interdivisional AIDS Research Committee became known internationally for its multi-faceted approach to AIDS research – an approach that focused on human sexuality. This focus on “sexual health”, for which Richard was a driving force, was extremely important. Prior to this term gaining wide usage, there was really no overarching term for matters sexual as they pertained to health – there was maternal and child health, urology, gynecology, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, etc.

Richard Wilson had the ability to bring people together. The interdivisional committee, of which Richard took a leading role, brought together the experience and perspectives of Information, Social, and Health Sciences Divisions as well as those of Communications. The grouping of these was an invaluable asset in assisting developing country researchers to identify needs, plan, implement, and evaluate their research. IDRC was one of the sponsors of the Vth International AIDS Conference which was held in Montreal in 1989. It can accurately be said that the Centre's AIDS research focus contributed greatly to IDRC's reputation as a trail-blazer in the field of AIDS research. Its organization of a Sexual Behaviour Workshop, prior to the Montreal AIDS Conference, featured international speakers and delegates. The Workshop's published report was praised by the WHO's Global Programme on AIDS as being a crucial contribution to this area of AIDS research.

Richard felt that it was important for colleagues to know each other on a personal as well as professional level. He believed in the importance of creating a team that worked well together and sometimes organized team-building exercises outside the office environment. One memorable event was a camping trip to Algonquin Park in which professional and support staff from Ottawa as well as the regional offices participated. There is something about paddling a canoe, portaging, pitching a tent, and cooking over an open fire that gives a better understanding of another person's character – as well as your own. Richard, a man given to blazers and grey flannels, seemed to enjoy demonstrating his prowess in cleaning soot-streaked pans with river gravel - a skill apparently learned while working in Northern Ontario as a student.

Pat Trites

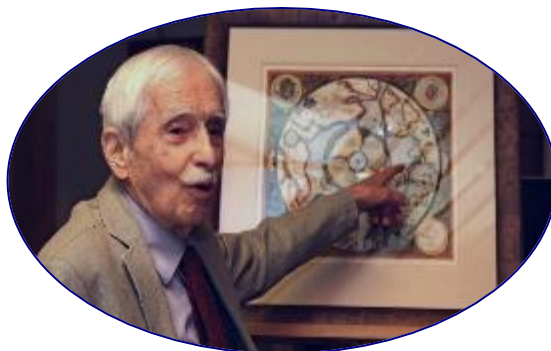
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Richard Wilson arrived in the Health Sciences division (HSD) after a leadership hiatus caused by the precipitous departure of the former director. At the time of his arrival, professionals and staff were dispirited and the morale was low. He quickly orchestrated a participatory process to reorganize the division according to more modern thinking about health, with an emphasis on people and on health promotion. While this process may have caused a measure of dismay in some HSD programs that were already leading ground-breaking research, there is no doubt that the upshot was a forward-looking division ready to address the real problems of the developing world of the time. I believe that this reorganization made possible successful later evolutions of the health programming in the Centre. Richard's forward thinking was also evident in his leadership of the Centre's Inter-divisional AIDS

committee, which had important international ramifications, with Kudos for IDRC and Canada.

Gilles Forget

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**Louis-Edmond Hamelin OC GOQ FRSC**  
1923-2020

Dr. Louis-Edmond Hamelin served on the Centre's Board of Governors from 1984 to 1988.

Dr. Hamelin was a geographer best known for his studies of Northern Canada. He created the Centre for Northern Studies at the Université Laval. He is credited with envisaging and promoting the concept of [Nordicity](#) as a factor on the political, social and economic development of Canada.

Read on:

Wikipedia: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis-Edmond\\_Hamelin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis-Edmond_Hamelin)

Wikipédia: [https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis-Edmond\\_Hamelin](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis-Edmond_Hamelin)

Radio Canada: <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1522244/deces-geographe-louis-edmond-hamelin-nord-quebec>

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**Lumpungu Kamanda Quentin**  
1939-2020

Dr. Lumpungu died on May 9. He was the Regional Direct for West Africa (WARO) from 1979 to 1984.

Graduating with his BA in economics in the DR Congo, Professor Lumpungu completed a doctorate in agricultural economics at the Ecole Supérieure Agronomique de Rennes, in France with a thesis on “Cotton culture and rural development in northern Katanga: Urbanization and concentration of economic power in Kinshasa”.

Returning to the Congo in 1971, he was appointed Professor and Director of the Institute of Economic and Social Research (IRES) and completed his career as Rector of the University of Kinshasa. He served as a consultant to several international organizations: FAO, USAID, UNDP, UNICEF, World Bank.



*Dr. Lumpungu, Fatmata Aidara Tiaw, Ivan Head:  
!0 year pins 1981*

Professor Lumpungu is remembered for his emphasis on the need for DR Congo to be self-sufficient in food, his contributions included: the upgrading of higher agricultural education and forestry research, the revival of Congolese agriculture, the development of agriculture and agronomic research, and the general problems of the food supply to cities.

Wider afield his contributions included: the integration of pygmies into national communities in Central Africa, the development of an agricultural development plan in Guinea Bissau, the organization of research scientists in Cameroon, Mali and Nigeria.

The information is from:  
[La Prospérité: Quotidien s’Actions pour la Démocratie et la Développement.](#)  
Thanks to Fatamata Aidara Thiaw

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### The IN MEMORIAM book on line

The Alumni IN MEMORIAM feature has been digitized.  
[Click](#) here to find photos and remembrances.

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### Bulletin Archive on Line



Past issues of the [IDRC Alumni Bulletin](#), from the first edition in January 2003, are available on the [IDRC Alumni website](#). Bulletins for 1 to 26 are either English or French. From 27-39 they are bilingual and from 40 on, either English or French.



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