

Of his early service as Assistant to the President, Demuth recalled, "After Eugene Meyer's resignation as President after six months of service, Mr. Harold Smith, the first Vice President, died, and the Bank drifted leaderless and in a state of dispirited confusion for over two months. During that time, I was personally in the unenviable position of assistant to two empty offices!" **Oral History:** <https://oralhistory.worldbank.org/person/demuth-richard-h> "**International Bank Notes**": <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/483041468914423403/International-Bank-notes>

**Davidson Sommers** (1946-1959) entered the Bank as a Legal Department attorney, he became successively Assistant General Counsel (1948), General Counsel (1949), and Vice President and General Counsel (1956). It was said of him that it was not a simple matter to portray Sommers' role in and contribution to the World Bank. Though a lawyer at heart, he was never permitted to be one for long stretches at a time. Soon after he came to the Bank, his wisdom, his sense of proportion and, not least, his objectivity thrust him into the role of friend and philosopher to all.

His human qualities were probably most widely observed at Staff Loan Committee meetings: his keen analysis, his ability to get to the heart of the matter, and his sense of humour which

expresses itself in offhand and underplayed remarks which illuminate all aspects of a point—or bury it forever.

During the last few months of his association with the Bank, the negotiations surrounding the drafting of a charter for an International Development Association called upon all of his many talents.

It was written of him that "Mr. (Eugene R.) Black has announced that it is not his intention to replace Mr. Sommers. Of course Mr. Black is not going to replace Mr. Sommers ....He can't."

**Oral History:**

<https://oralhistory.worldbank.org/person/sommers-davidson>

**Morton M. Mendels** (1946-1973) During his long tenure at the World Bank, Mr. Mendels was the first and only Secretary of the World Bank from its inception until 1973, after which he was briefly an adviser for the Bank and Fund Conferences Office. His wise and genial personality, combined with the experience gained during his long tenure of office, made him more than an efficient Secretary; he was also considered the guide, philosopher and friend of Governors, Directors, management and staff. **Oral History:**

<https://oralhistory.worldbank.org/person/mendels-morton-m>

### **Embracing and Enjoying the World Bank's Development Mission in My Retirement**

*By Vinod Prakash*

I have vivid recollection of sitting with my wife Sarla and sons Sanjay and Gautam during the summer of 1987. They were astonished but not shocked to learn that I would retire from the Bank during its reorganization under the Presidency of Mr. Barber Conable. They were curious to know, what would I do? Their curiosity was not unfounded because our travel on home leave were not confined to meeting just our family and friends. Indeed, every time I had gone a step further: such as visiting the

slums in Delhi, when my kids had to pull-out their napkins to avoid bad smells, and travel to Jharkhand with terrible road conditions they joked was 'Disco all the way'! They wondered that they would not have any more fun of visiting Mercedes-Benz plant in Germany, or holidays in Europe on the way to India. Our frugal habits and concurrent savings helped in a smooth transition. That's how I started my retired life at the age of 55.

Since 1977, I had volunteered for 'India Relief Fund' (IRF) while working at the World Bank, which helped me in gaining insight into ground realities of India. When the Morvi dam collapsed in Gujarat, I approached the Indian Executive Director, M. Narasimham, who graciously approached Director of Admin/Personnel, to allow me to use inter-departmental mail system for supporting my efforts to help the victims.

Many believed that the money I might be able to raise from the Bank staff, would be 'a drop in the bucket' compared to what the Bank could contribute. Undaunted by such doubts, I continued IRF for a decade. However, I realized that serving my Motherland while working at the Bank was too strenuous. That's why I decided to dedicate rest of my life towards the empowerment of marginalized people by starting 'India Development and Relief Fund, Inc. (IDRF)' as a 501 (c) (3), tax-exempt Public Charity in 1988. Since then, IDRF has been providing a platform especially to the Indian-American Community to fulfil their aspirations to help the community-based development in India.

I along with my family undertook more than 20 field-trips to India and witnessed poverty and illiteracy, but also incredible hospitality, gratitude, and perseverance by the local NGOs as well as the beneficiaries. Many incidents led to identification of new recipients of IDRF's grants. In Jharkhand, we saw four men carrying a sick person on a cot because there was no ambulance to transport the patient to a hospital. This motivated us to initiate Mobile Clinics program at affordable cost. Initially, the clinic was not serving Maoist (Naxalites)-infested villages due to safety reasons. Because of its effectiveness, the Maoists approached us to include their villages while assuring complete safety. Eventually, they became our social volunteers and productive citizens. What a transformation!

India is confronted with problems like population explosion and gender inequality. IDRF initiated a family planning program in 12 villages of Haryana. Believe it or not the natural growth rate in these villages declined from 33:1,000 to 23:1,000 (and population stabilizes at 21:1,000). What an amazing result of our hard work! We then expanded our program to 40 villages and included gender parity therein. Subsequently, this program was extended to 165 villages, included micro-credit and micro-savings through women's self-help groups. To date, 11,500 women have become entrepreneurs and are leading lives with dignity.

Rather than focusing on relief, IDRF gives priority to long-term rehabilitation, with the goal of turning disasters into opportunities for sustainable development. When earthquake struck in Gujarat in 2001, I felt as if donations were 'falling from the sky'; over three million dollars. IDRF meticulously uses these funds, deploying 95% for rehabilitation and only 5% for relief.

A Non-Resident Indian (NRI) based in the U.S. approached IDRF to build a school in his native village in Uttar Pradesh. Apprehensive that, after getting education, children will leave and settle in cities, the village elders opposed this idea. However, with IDRF's strong support, the NRI succeeded in fulfilling his dream! Today, the school provides high-quality education up to 12th grade to more than 700 children from 30 nearby villages and also offer residential facilities for staff. The school transportation has also come a long way from students walking to the school, to riding bullock carts, to tractor-trolleys, to the school's own fleet of buses.

Since IDRF's inception, I have been working as a full-time volunteer. By now, IDRF has raised US\$36.25 million from thousands of donors while keeping overheads below 4%, ensuring that 96 cents of every dollar are directly sent to deserving NGOs. **IDRF has been participating in 'World Bank Group Community Connections**

**Campaign’ for the last 5 years and is approved for 2018-19 campaign, which provides an excellent opportunity for staff and retirees to support the noble cause.** IDRF’s transparency, accountability, and financial health have won it the coveted Platinum Seal from America’s largest non-profit data resource *GuideStar*, and a four-out-of-four-star rating from *Charity Navigator* for five consecutive years. *Charity Navigator* has also rated IDRF as one of the ten “Highly Rated Charities Relying on Private Contributions”.

IDRF’s Board of Directors come from diverse backgrounds and expertise. Presently, out of seven Board members there are three Bank retirees: Prem Garg, Mohinder Gulati and me. While visiting India, our donors and Board

members make sure to visit the project sites and our partner NGOs.

Undeterred by my complete visual impairment in 2010, my zeal to empower the underprivileged in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka remains intact. My wife and I are living in Maryland and have dedicated our lives to the day-to-day working of IDRF. The Bank’s development mission has also been embraced by our sons and grandkids. All the wedding gifts of both of our sons were donated to IDRF. Even our grandkids surprised us by donating their piggy bank money for Children’s’ Education in India. In this journey of our lives together, we have realized that the experience of *‘Joy of Giving’* is unmatched!

### Does World Bank Operational Experience Make an Effective Educator?

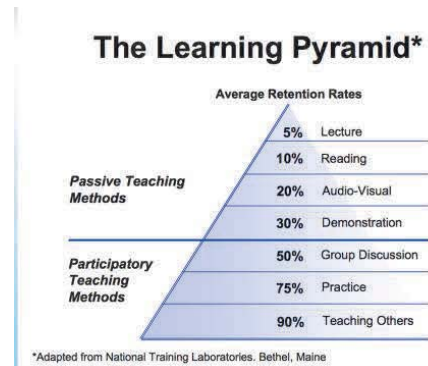
By Willy De Geyndt

Multiple options are available to retirees. Some move to a warmer climate and become active in local issues, meet up with former colleagues, organize group travel, walk, or exercise. Others write and publish, or satisfy their intellectual curiosity reading and attending conferences. Some of us enter or re-enter—as in my case—the academic world. These options are not mutually exclusive although not always time and location compatible.

For the past 14 years I have taught global health courses at Georgetown University at the undergraduate, graduate and mid-career executive levels. Operational experience is valued by students, but does it translate into becoming an effective educator and learning facilitator? Knowing your local language does not mean that one can teach it effectively to a non-speaker of your language, does it? I’ve found that global experience does not readily translate into teaching skills.

I have invited guest lecturers—retirees and Bank staff—to assist me in my courses either because I am not an expert in a specific subject matter—especially at the graduate level—or

my knowledge of the health system in a specific country is too limited. How well have the guest lecturers performed?



Applying the Learning Pyramid pictured here, the vast majority of guest lecturers use passive teaching methods. They are most comfortable standing behind a lectern, explaining—often reading—the slides projected on the screen, answering questions and assigning relevant reading material. Only two have used a participatory teaching method engaging the students by using a case method approach, assigning questions to groups, having students present and defend their findings, or assign an exercise in class that applies the concepts presented earlier.