

Dr Mpoko Bokanga

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Mpoko Bokanga is a food scientist, with a masters degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and a doctorate from Cornell University in the USA, and he has been involved in agricultural research and development in Africa for the past 16 years. Before joining AATF as its first Executive Director, Bokanga worked as Industrial Development Officer (Agro-industries) with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in Abuja, Nigeria. He also served as Research Scientist with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA, 1989-2002); as a Visiting Professor of Food Science at the Alabama A & M University in Normal, Alabama and as Research Associate with Westreco Inc., a Nestlé Research Company based in New Milford, Connecticut, USA. At Westreco, Bokanga developed processes based on immobilized microbial and enzyme systems, and at IITA, he developed technologies for processing cassava and yams into new products which were deployed in over a dozen African countries. He has co-authored or edited three books and published several papers on the biochemistry and health implications of cyanogenesis in cassava, and on the processing of root and tuber crops; he is the Coordinator of the Working Group on Cassava Safety (WOCAS), a sub-committee of the International Society for Tropical Root Crops (ISTRC) whose main function is to monitor progress in and stimulate research on the understanding and handling of issues related to cyanogenesis in cassava and their implications on cassava food safety. Bokanga is the current chair of ISTRC-AB, the African branch of the ISTRC and he is a Visiting Professor at the University of Greenwich in England (2005-2008).