



Ogobara Doumbo (1956-2018)



Professor Ogobara K. Doumbo will have a lasting legacy both as a world class researcher in Tropical Medicine and parasitic diseases, and as an inspiring and elegant man having the energy necessary to develop the most important research team in West Africa. Modest and talented, Professor Ogobara K. Doumbo died on June 9, 2018, from complications of a surgery.

Professor Doumbo came from a village in the Circle of Koro, in the famous Dogon area of Mali. He kept from his roots a profound sense of reality and humanity. His willingness to learn lead him to move alone from his village to Bamako where he lived in his uncle family. He succeeded at school and university and decided to be a medical doctor and surgeon in remote area to be able to save people from his country.

At that time, he met Professor Philippe Ranque who built the first parasitology laboratory at the faculty of medicine of Bamako in 1972 and became Dr. Doumbo's mentor. Thanks to him, "Ogo" went to Marseille, France, to get a second medical

doctorate and to Montpellier, France, for his PhD. He completed his training with degrees in Immunology, biostatistics, and anthropology.

He went back to Bamako to succeed Professor Philippe Ranque. He founded the Malaria Research and Training Center (known as the MRTC) in 1992. He understood long before others that science in Africa required abroad training and secured position back to home institution. He sent his students to USA and France and welcomed them in Bamako after their PhD. He created an amazing network of colleagues and friends, researchers being seduced by his subtlety, keenness and extensive scientific culture.

He published hundreds of high level scientific papers and gave conferences and talks around the world. His scientific contribution is outstanding, and he received many national and international awards including the Christophe Mérieux Price, International Price from the French Institute of Medical Research and many others. He was elected as a member of the Malian Academy of Sciences, the French Academy of Medicine, and became International Fellow of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene and board member of the International Federation of Tropical Medicine.

Apart from his academic contribution to the fight against tropical diseases, mostly malaria, he discreetly acted as a member of local, national and international non-governmental organisations to help poor people.

He was a great leader, a good husband and a good dad, as his wife said recently. Professor Doumbo was very keen to share his knowledge. People from his team was comparing his scientific culture to the rain: “when it’s raining everybody is wet”.

His energy, kindness and wise counsel will be remembered by many, especially the hundreds of younger academics and trainees from all over the world, he supported over his career. He didn’t have time to reach all his goals, but his team is rich of many successful and talented second to fifth generation scientists who will carry forward the banner of Malian tradition and International sciences.

Ogobara Doumbo's kindness, ideas and work ability also charmed his colleagues and partners of the IFTM Board, some of whom also benefited from his scientific collaboration in teaching and research activities in their countries. We shall miss him forever...