

Dr. Collen Masimirembwa, President and Founder of
The African Institute of Biomedical Science and Technology,
Harare, Zimbabwe.

Collen Masimirembwa graduated with an Honours degree in Biochemistry (1989) and completed DPhil studies in Biochemistry (1993) at the University of Zimbabwe focusing on the metabolism of anti-parasitic drugs. The work led to the elucidation of the metabolism of the anti-schistosomicidal drug, praziquantel. Fascinated by the then emerging field of pharmacogenetics, he conducted studies leading to a PhD in Medical Biochemistry & Biosphysics (1995) at the Karolinska Institute (Sweden) focusing on pharmacogenetics in African populations. The work led to the discovery of the molecular genetic basis of why people of African origin have a reduced capacity to metabolise and eliminate drugs which are substrates of the enzyme CYP2D6. During a two year postdoctoral fellowship at the Biomedical Centre (BMC) at Uppsala University, he worked on the discovery of molecular targets in *plasmodium falciparum* (1996-1997). In 1998 he joined AstraZeneca Pharmaceutical company (Sweden) where he worked as a Principal Scientist (1998-2007) in preclinical drug metabolism and pharmacokinetics and bioanalytical chemistry (DMPK & BAC). Collen made many innovative contributions to *in silico* and *in vitro* drug absorption, distribution, metabolism, excretion and toxicology (ADMET) especially in understanding molecular aspects of drug-enzyme interactions. In 2007 Collen assumed a permanent position as the President and Chief Scientific officer of AiBST in Zimbabwe, an institute he had founded in 2002. Human capacity building in Africa is at the core of his scientific drive hence the training of many postgraduates (MSc and PhD) and prolific publication of original research findings that have relevance to Africa's healthcare challenges. He has received many awards for his research work including a certificate of Distinction in Biochemistry from the Government of Zimbabwe and the Innovation Award from ANDi. He shares his expertise through membership to various international organisations and is a Fellow of the Zimbabwe Academy of Sciences (ZAS). He is also an honorary Professor of Clinical Pharmacology at the University of Cape Town. He has organised many continental courses on Pharmacogenetics and on DMPK and has led the institute to being recognised as a Centre of Excellence, CoE, in DMPK & Toxicology by the African Network for Drugs and Diagnostics Innovation (ANDi).