



Moringa as a Business

Presentation by Zindaba Ngwenyama, Zambia - 26/07/2018



In this article you will discover how moringa is a good business.

Zindaba shares how he and his wife discovered moringa, and started a successful business with Moringa soap. At the same time, they were able to help vulnerable women and their families through soap making.

Our Moringa Story:

My name is Zindaba Ngwenyama, proudly married with 3 children consisting of two boys and one girl. For the past 4 years we have been living on a farm, 12 kilometres to the west of Lusaka central business district. My profession is a video producer with a strong bias towards documentary making.

Having grown up being nurtured into gardening at an early age by my mother, it became only natural that eventually I would end up

being a farmer. On the other hand, my father having worked on a ranch also influenced my love for animals.



I started keeping quails, turkeys, free range chickens, rabbits and guinea pigs before I moved to the farm.

In April of 2014, we took the plunge out of our comfort zone and moved to the farm. It was not an easy move as a move from the suburbs to a farm can be quite a big change. However, where there is a will there's a way and we are now all enjoying the new life. We have been farming, rape, eggplants, spinach, pumpkin leaves, green beans and okra mostly. Being close to one of the countries biggest compounds, Kanyama, we are fortunate in that we don't have to travel to sell our produce, the market follows us.

Discovering AMH

In November of 2016, my wife told me about a group that she had been introduced to called the Africa Moringa Hub. At first it didn't make sense, but day in and day out she kept on talking about hub this and hub that. Having been introduced by a childhood friend, Monalisa Haundu, she asked if I was interested in joining. I agreed and to cut a long story short, it has been a decision that has changed my outlook on life.



We got moringa seeds and planted them but on both occasions we had floods and each of the close to 1 acre was destroyed. This was disheartening but we have kept on replanting. The marketeers who come to buy other vegetables at the farm have also expressed an interest in buying this moringa from us as a vegetable. Once we expand our hectarage we plan to tap into this market.

The presentations made on the hub were mind blowing and I was taken aback at how willing my fellow Africans were to share information.

One particular presentation by Dr. Newton got me researching. He had presented on the various opportunities in Moringa and we immediately decided that Moringa would forever be a part of our lives. I researched moringa value addition and was shocked at how possible it was for us to develop various products with moringa. From tea, paper, tablets, capsules animal feed and foliar fertiliser productions it seemed an endless list.

Starting Soap Production

We took note and listed the requirements for the various products. We settled on starting with soap production. We sourced our palm oil from the Zambia/Congolese border known as Kasumbalesa. All the other materials for our soap experiment were locally found.



The excitement was feverishly high and armed with our knowledge obtained from the hub and “Uncle Google and Aunty Youtube”, we made our first soap in March 2017. By the end of April we were now able to make Moringa herbal soap.

The other hat I put on is as an advocate for access to affordable quality sexual reproductive health commodities for all Zambians through an organisation called Medicines Transparency Alliance (MeTA). This keeps me on the road in various districts of Zambia. It gave me an opportunity to not only talk more about moringa but also test the moringa herbal soap market.

The feedback was very encouraging and orders picked up beyond our capacity. The soap also found its way across borders to South Africa, Malawi and Uganda.

Challenges

We however could not meet the demand based on a number of reasons:

- Labour and Storage: We did not have the labour, nor adequate storage space to keep up with the demand.
- Packaging: We were not yet fully satisfied with the packaging. (We have gone through 4 types of packaging.)
- Consistency: We did not have the right consistency in terms of scent, colour and cleansing effect.

Way forward

We have worked on some of the challenges and now have a consistency in the soap that we can proudly put out on the market. The product now has the right cleansing and moisturising balance.

We are also now raising the required amount of money to finalise the packaging which we hope will be ready sometime in August (first batch will be 30,000 packs.)

The process of building a room that will be used for production as well as storage has begun with purchase of raw materials such as blocks and building sand.

At the moment (July 2018), we are able to make upto 650 pieces of soap a month. We are currently making Moringa and Lavender, Moringa and Eucalyptus, and Moringa and Geranium herbal soap. It is our plan to have our Moringa herbal soap in major retail outlets across Zambia.

Training Vulnerable Women

Together with the Moringa Development Association of Zambia we are training a group of vulnerable women in the production of soap in the east of Lusaka.

These women are trained at Nkole Chanda's place. Some of them are widows and have so many dependents. The aim is to have them being able to feed themselves and their families through soap production.

Other Products

Aside from soap production, we will be going into capsule production as of September 2018, as we seek to expand our range of moringa value added products.

The gospel of moringa is one not to be ignored as it truly is green gold and grows well on our African continent.



Moringa for Baby Health

In March 2018 we were blessed with a bouncy happy baby boy. Whereas his siblings did not breastfeed much, Chikondi is gaining weight at an amazing rate through exclusive breastfeeding.

The milk production is just so phenomenal and this is thanks to moringa. My wife takes it religiously on a daily basis either as a tea or a spice in the food. This in itself is a big testimony on the efficacy of the miracle tree.

Lets eat and plant moringa and alleviate poverty.

Eat and Plant Moringa