

## Arusha MAC and The Moringa Network, Tanzania

By Sebastian Msapalla <sup>1</sup>

Sebastian Msapalla explains how RAVI, [www.linkinglearners.net](http://www.linkinglearners.net) and the Tanzanian rural marketing network are helping him to develop a network of moringa farmers.

### Arusha Market Access Company and Moringa Consultancy



Sebastian Msapalla at the Dodoma Trade Fair with Moringa Products

I run a Market Access Company (MAC) in Arusha with a network of Information Board Managers (IBMs) in the local markets. I am also the Managing Director for Moringa Consultancy Tanzania Co. Ltd., which is dealing with the development, processing and sale of moringa oleifera tree seeds and moringa leaf powder.

Moringa products assist the immune system and are used by sufferers of HIV/AIDs. Moringa helps protect against malaria and gastric ulcers and aids the control of blood sugar and diabetes. I sell moringa seed and the ground leaf powder at my shop and also at the Nane Nane and various health seminars. For local sales I have found some agents, business people who have interests and contacts to institutions promoting health within the community; they will sell the products at a commission.

### Using the Rural Marketing Network

Being part of the Tanzanian network of MACs and IBMs helps me with my moringa business. I am building up a big group of farmers starting from Arusha and moving out through Tanzania to Kenya and Uganda. I plan to start an Association of Moringa Farmers.

Presently I have a database of 300 farmers. 200 of these I have trained this year. I train these farmers under contract to supply moringa products to me. It only takes seven months from planting the seed to harvesting from the trees. When the farmers prune the tree they can harvest the leaves and seeds, once in the first year and then twice from the second year. Besides the farmers that I have trained I have contacts with farmers who were trained by NGOs in the past but who now have no link to the market.

### Orders and 'Cash on the Bag' Payments

I have potential buyers in India and The Netherlands. The order from India is for one consignment every two months of 8.5 metric tonnes of moringa seed (one container). At present we would be able to supply 8.5 metric tonnes every three months.

The challenge is to be able to pay the farmers 'cash on the bag', as there will be a delay in payment from the Indian side until the time that the export document has been issued. I will need around 6,000\$ to buy this seed from the farmers. I have approached RAVI and they are exploring the possibilities of making a loan.

### Scaling-Up Production

I also need to scale-up the production of moringa and therefore I need to use the contacts within our rural marketing network. I have already been in contact with Jane Mgina from the Southern Highlands Biashara Mapema Network who attended a workshop that I organised in Iringa for 64 farmers. I have now supplied the seed to these farmers who have decided to plant 300 acres of moringa. I hope that Jane Mgina will be a useful link to the farmers in Makumbako where we have a collection centre.

The main areas from which I can source moringa in Tanzania are: Tanga, Pwani, Dar

<sup>1</sup> Interviewed by Anne Dennig in November 2009

Es Salaam, Kilimanjaro, Arusha, Dodoma, Singida, Tabora and Iringa. I have also been in contact with Paul Nyende (AgriNet, Uganda) about supply from Uganda, and with Churchill Amatha (AgriTrade, Kenya) concerning contacts in Kakamega, Kenya.

The benefits of my being a member of the network include the market links, the business opportunities and the learning that I am receiving through the Linking Local Learners Internet platform ([www.linkinglearners.net](http://www.linkinglearners.net)). The LLL is very useful; it helps me to link with markets through members in the network and to learn about different deals and finance. I have been helped by contact with Freddy Mumbuli, Clive Lightfoot and Ueli Scheuermeier. I have a RAVI loan for a laptop and a modem, which is helping me to connect to the markets, to access emails and the Internet. I have also joined Alibaba.net, which has helped me to explore the international market for moringa.



*A moringa oleifera tree at the Arusha MAC and Moringa Consultancy*

If you are interested in being part of the Moringa Network, contact Sebastian for details. He would like to extend his operations to cover Kenya and Uganda.

Contact: Sebastian Msapalla  
Email: [moringaconsultancy@yahoo.com](mailto:moringaconsultancy@yahoo.com)  
Mobile: 255 754404919