



## RESTORING THE CHIMANIMANI FORESTS AFTER CYCLONE IDAI IN MOZAMBIQUE



### PROJECT SUMMARY

Cyclone Idai was the worst natural disaster to hit southern Africa. Hundreds of thousands of people were affected, losing crops, stored seed, household goods and, in too many cases, members of their family. One area badly affected was a group of communities living in and around the biodiversity-rich forests bordering the Chimanimani National Reserve. As raging flood waters from the mountains burst river banks, villages were flooded and wide areas of farms and forest were devastated. The change in landscape is amazing. Rivers have new courses. Whole areas of trees that afforded important protection (in normal times) against erosion/soil loss, have been swept away. In formerly fertile production zones there is now a vast expanse of sand and debris deposited by the floods. So one of the priorities for MICAIA is to work with communities on re-planting forest areas in critical zones. We will integrate 'useful' trees (native species of food and medicinal plants) along with fast-growing species. We will establish community nurseries for expansion of tree-planting by local people in the months and years to come. There will be an education component (including providing information on climate issues and sustainable land use to local schools). MICAIA will work with 5 large communities (total population 3,000+ people).

### THE CHIMANIMANI CONSERVATION AREA

**The Chimanimani Conservation Area:** Established in 2003, the Chimanimani Conservation Area (CCA) consists of a National Reserve (753km<sup>2</sup>) and a buffer zone with a population of almost 45,000 people. It is located along the border with Zimbabwe in the central province of Manica (see map in annex). The CCA is part of a unique Afro-montane ecosystem characterized by an exceptionally high diversity of habitats and species (including elephants), with high levels of endemism. The CCA's growing population relies almost entirely on land and natural resources to meet its subsistence needs.

### ABOUT MICAIA

#### THE MICAIA 'FAMILY'

Much of our work with people is led by **MICAIA Foundation**, the non-profit member of the MICAIA 'family'. Since we started in 2008 MICAIA has enabled more than 40,000 people to take action to improve their livelihoods, enhance their management of available resources, and increase their engagement in society. We also have **Eco-MICAIA Ltd**, a social enterprise, which gets involved directly when work that starts as an economic livelihood project looks like it has potential to become commercially viable. Three inclusive businesses are now within the Eco-MICAIA 'stable': NDZOU Camp (eco-lodge in the CCA), the Mozambique Honey Company and Baobab Products Mozambique. In addition, Eco-MICAIA is carrying out research and development focused on a range of other potential natural products, many with ingredients from the Chimanimani area.

#### MICAIA'S FOUNDERS AND GOVERNANCE

MICAIA was founded by Milagre Nuvunga (Mozambican) and Andrew Kingman (British) who, in 2008, left their jobs and gave themselves one year as volunteers to launch MICAIA. Their dream was to demonstrate in one place that more inclusive and sustainable approaches to development and investment can produce both profit and a far greater positive impact on people

and their communities, and then argue for taking such approaches to scale. Milagre and Andrew have between them more than 50 years of professional experience, much of it in Africa, and incorporating a range of high level appointments and entrepreneurship. They are supported in MICAIA by a board of equally experienced volunteer Trustees who provide strong governance.

---

## **MICAIA'S TRACK RECORD IN THE CHIMANIMANI CONSERVATION AREA**

This was where it all started in 2008. Months of community engagement led to a few small projects and a business plan for a community eco-lodge (NDZOU Camp). The plan was supported by the World Bank and Government of Mozambique, the community receiving \$205,000 grant to secure its 60% ownership alongside Eco-MICAIA's 40%. The evident knowledge MICAIA gained from its approach, the trust in the organization shown by communities, and the freshness of MICAIA's model, led to a number of new grant-funded projects: botanical research (with Kew Gardens); promoting beekeeping; training and supporting communities to better manage natural resources (funded by UNDP). Between 2011 and end 2018, MICAIA's work benefited 3,130 families (increased household income), added important new scientific data (37 new plant species), brought 45,000ha of forest into community managed conservation zones; created an expanded supply chain for honey (2 tons to 23 tons); and converted 500+ families from 'slash and burn' to sustainable agriculture.

## **THE PROBLEM TO BE ADDRESSED**

In communities in the south-east areas of the Chimanimani buffer zone, dramatic and deadly floods caused by the torrential rain that accompanied Cyclone Idai, left lasting damage and destruction. The short-term priorities of housing people who lost their homes, providing food to thousands of families who lost their maize crop, and taking care of the sick and vulnerable, are all part of the standard response to an emergency. What falls outside of the remit of most humanitarian organizations is helping communities recover in the longer-term. In the case of the forest-dependent communities of Chimanimani, that means helping restore damaged and destroyed natural resources. More than 80% of the population of these communities relies on the forest for medicine. More than half of the population supplement their crops with wild-harvested food from the forest. And hundreds of families need the forest to support their beekeeping. The destructive floods have caused serious damage to the natural resource base for hundreds of families across five large communities. Moreover, where the forest has been damaged, there is a heightened risk of problems from flooding and storms in future.

## **THE PROJECT**

MICAIA has played its part in the emergency response to Idai, providing food aid in the first days after the cyclone, and then giving 1,000 families seed for planting in the short winter season. MICAIA's strengths, however, lie with facilitating and supporting long-term community led development. So this project, while still part of the Idai recovery process, is focused on working with local people to support their efforts to restore the forests on which they rely.

---

## **MAIN ACTIVITIES**

1. Supply of planting materials to families for planting out around their family fields and surrounding forest areas where flood damage was particularly bad (mostly native species of trees and shrubs)
2. Supply of planting materials (mix of grasses and other plants for erosion control, fast-growing native species of trees and shrubs providing soil nutrients as well as food and/or medicine, and valuable hardwood species) for communities to plant in communal areas
3. Provision of technical support via Lead Farmers – local people trained as trainer-facilitators by MICAIA to support others in the community willing to learn about agro-forestry and more sustainable farming as well as conservation
4. Establishing one tree seedling nursery in each of the five communities to multiply seeds and seedlings and provide a source of planting material for future expansion of forest restoration

5. Providing information to schools in each community about climate change and the ways in which families and communities can be manage natural resources more effectively and sustainably to combat climate change

---

## APPROACH

MICAIA Foundation is active already throughout the Chimanimani area and we will integrate this project into our ongoing activities supporting beekeeping and agro-forestry. MICAIA has a small team of experienced Field Officers who in turn work with and support a network of Lead Farmers in all communities. Our general approach is to help build the capabilities of local people to take action in their communities to improve their livelihoods.

---

## EXPECTED RESULTS

1. 2,000 trees, all native species, will be planted in areas prioritized by local communities for restoration
2. 5 community seedling nurseries will be established and functioning
3. Community engagement in sustainable management of natural resources will enhanced, with specific involvement of young people more aware of the issues and ways in which communities can be more resilient

## SUMMARY BUDGET

The budget for the project is mostly for planting material. Personnel costs, travel, and other support costs will be covered by funding secured by MICAIA for our continuing work across Chimanimani.

	Units		\$/unit	Total \$
<b>Main species</b>				
Panga-panga	350		1.5	525
Umbawa	300		1.5	450
Mungerenge	400		3	1200
Ficus	350		2	700
Chanfuta	300		2	600
Grasses	500		1.5	750
<b>Nursery supplies</b>				775
				<b>5000</b>

# ANNEX 1: MAPS OF CHIMANIMANI

