

*Kigelia africana*

## Bignoniaceae

Indigenous

**English:** Sausage tree  
**Kunda:** Mvungula  
**Nyanja:** Chizutu, mvungula, mvunguti  
**Senga:** Chizutu

**Ecology:** A distinctive African tree from north to south, of low to medium altitudes, 0–1,800 m; in open woodlands or beside rivers. In Zambia it is common in the valleys but occasionally occurs on the plateau.

**Uses:** Firewood, timber (dugout canoes, yokes), **medicine** (fruit, bark), fodder (flowers), dye (boiled fruit).

**Description:** A semi-deciduous tree with rounded crown about 9 m, the branches hanging low. **BARK:** grey-brown, smooth, flaking in round patches on mature trees. **LEAVES:** compound, arise in **threes**, crowded at the ends of branches, 3–5 leaflets, each to 10 cm, often with a sharp tip, **surface really rough and harsh** to the touch. **FLOWERS:** on long rope-like stalks, 2–3 m, about 12 **blood-red to liver-coloured flowers**, each an upturned trumpet with folded petals and yellow lines, August–November. **FRUIT:** look like long **grey-green sausages**. They are heavy, containing several kilos of fibrous pulp surrounding the seed—only released when the fruit rot on the ground, January–March. **Hanging stalks** remain on the tree.

**Propagation:** Seedlings.

**Seed:** Not a prolific seeder, poor germination rate and slow to germinate. No. of seeds per kg: 3,400–6,000.

**treatment:** Not necessary.

**storage:** Use fresh seeds.

**Remarks:** Unripe fruits are poisonous. Baked fruits are used to ferment beer. Slow growing.

