

Indigenous

- Common names: Eng: river bean, sesbania; **Haya:** mbondo; **Kere:** muzuzume; Nyam: luminu, vulengo; **Suku:** zuzuma; **Zinza:** muzuzumo.
- Ecology: One of many useful African Sesbania species which survive waterlogging and fix nitrogen. It is found on stream banks and beside seasonal ponds. It tolerates acid and saline soils.
- Uses: Firewood, poles, fodder (leaves), shade, mulch, nitrogen fixation, soil improvement, soil conservation, fibre (young stems).
- Description: A deciduous, short-lived shrub or tree to 8 m. BARK: red-brown, young shoots hairy. LEAVES: compound to 12 cm long, **each leaflet to 2 cm, oblong, tip notched, narrow.** FLOWERS: **pale yellow, speckled maroon in few-flowered sprays to 15 cm long.** FRUIT: abundant bunches of **thin pale brown pods** with separated sections so **seeds rattle within.**
- Propagation: Wildings, direct sowing.
- Seed info.: No. of seeds per kg: about 110,000. The species is a prolific seeder with a germination rate of 65% in about 16 days.
- treatment: not necessary, but hot water then soaking for 24 hours can increase the germination rate.
- storage: seeds can be stored for long periods.
- Management: Very fast growing; pruning, short rotation, coppice when young.
- Remarks: Genetic diversity allows for some end-use selection. The species harbours rootknot nematodes and has great potential for intercropping on small farms and for fallow improvement. Branches are cut as fodder for pigs and goats and also for mulch.

