

Sorindeia madagascariensis

Anacardiaceae

Indigenous

COMMON NAMES: Digo: Mkunguma; Duruma: Msanzanza; Giriama: Mkunguma; Malakote: Mwebebe; Pokomo: Munyambembe; Swahili: Mtunguma, Mkunguma; Taita: Mkunguruli; Taveta: Mundaraha.

DESCRIPTION: An evergreen tree to 20 m, or occasionally more. **BARK:** Grey-brown, **flaking**. **LEAVES:** Compound, divided once into up to 15 leaflets, **lower leaflets smaller**, each leaflet hairless, usually with an **asymmetrical base**. **FLOWERS:** In **long, loose, branched flowering heads**, 20–90 cm long, from **older wood**. Like many of the members of this family, the species is **dioecious** (male and female flower parts on separate plants), each flower yellow with some pink near the base, **small**, hardly 5 mm. **FRUIT:** 1–2.5 cm long, in clusters, **oval and fleshy**, green, ripening to yellow-orange.

ECOLOGY: Distributed in Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique and the Mascarene Islands. In Kenya, found in riverine vegetation, especially along the lower Tana River, coastal forests, in areas with high groundwater, usually on sand or loam, 0–1,500 m. Agroclimatic Zones II–III. Fruits ripen in August–September at the coast.

USES: Firewood, edible fruit.

PROPAGATION: Seedlings.

SEED:

storage: Seeds lose viability quickly, should not be stored.

REMARKS: The only member in its genus found in Kenya.

The fleshy ripe fruit has a pleasant flavour. Rated as one of the best indigenous fruits by the Pokomo and Malakote.

FURTHER READING: Beentje, 1994; Kokwaro, 1993; Maundu et al., 1999; Ruffo et al., 2002.

