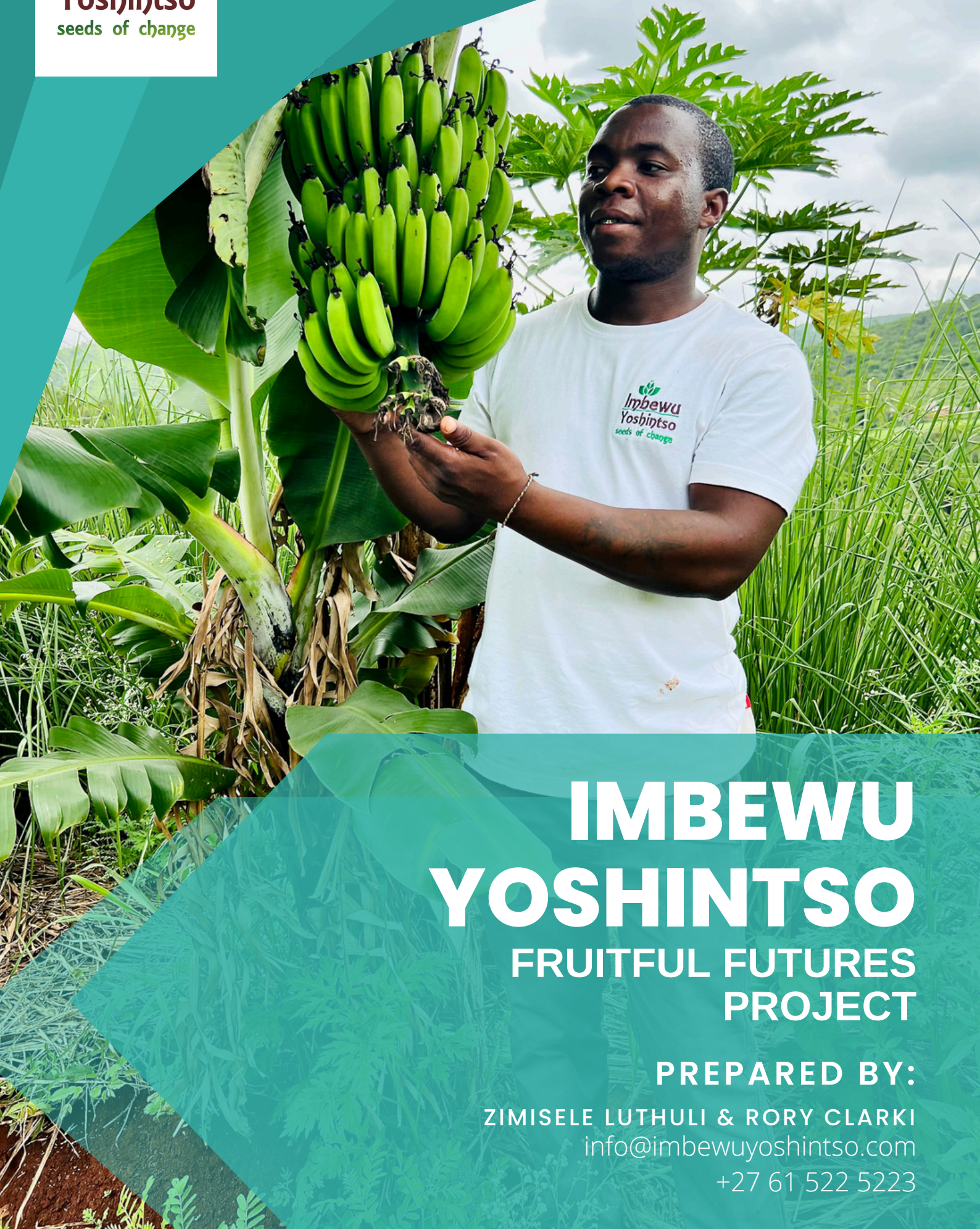




IMBEWU YOSHINTSO

FRUITFUL FUTURES PROJECT

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Image: Future Farmers during a Permaculture training. Imbewu partners with the Future Farmer Organisation in a youth Development program

INTRODUCTION

1. Organisation Overview: Imbewu Yoshintso

Mission Statement:

Imbewu Yoshintso is dedicated to fostering sustainable development in rural communities through agroecological training, food security initiatives, and income-generating projects. We empower communities to achieve self-sufficiency while promoting environmental stewardship and resilience against climate change.

Core Activities:

- **Agroecological Training:** We provide hands-on training in sustainable farming practices, including permaculture, agroforestry, and organic farming, enabling communities to cultivate nutritious food while preserving the environment.
- **Food Security Programs:** Through partnerships with local and international organisations, we implement projects that enhance food security, ensuring that vulnerable populations have access to healthy, locally-grown food.
- **Income Generation Initiatives:** We support rural communities in developing sustainable income streams, such as small-scale agriculture and fruit tree cultivation, helping to alleviate poverty and improve livelihoods.
- **Community Development:** Imbewu Yoshintso works closely with communities to strengthen their capacity for self-reliance, providing training, mentorship, and resources to build resilience and adapt to changing environmental and economic conditions.



Image: Siyabonga standing next an orange tree planted at one of the creche gardens in the Manayoni project gardens

2. Introduction

The **FRUITFUL FUTURES PROJECT** is a collaboration between Imbewu Yoshintso and the African Conservation Trust (ACT). This initiative aims to plant 2,000 fruit trees in the homesteads of ACT and Imbewu beneficiaries, creating a dispersed orchard network that will provide a sustainable source of income, enhance food security, and reduce wildlife conflicts in communities surrounding key protected areas Imbewu and ACT operate in.

ACT's Role: The African Conservation Trust is a key implementing partner of the Social Employment Fund (SEF) under the Presidential Employment Stimulus program. ACT currently employs 2,500 people across four provinces, including 500 individuals around the Sabi Sands Game Reserve.

Imbewu Yoshintso's Role: Imbewu Yoshintso serves as the primary implementing partner in the FRUITFUL FUTURES PROJECT, leveraging the extensive network and community relationships cultivated by ACT in Mpumalanga, alongside its network of farmers and lodges in the Manyoni region. This collaboration builds on a longstanding partnership, particularly within the framework of the Social Employment Fund (SEF), which has been instrumental in delivering agroecological training and sustainable development initiatives to key communities. Please see the ACT letter of support in the appendix.

Building on this established foundation, Imbewu will lead the execution of the fruit tree planting initiative by directly engaging with ACT's beneficiaries. Responsibilities include providing specialised training in agroforestry techniques, distributing high-quality fruit trees, and ensuring each homestead is equipped to maximise yield and sustainability. Additionally, Imbewu will oversee the mentorship and follow-up phases, supporting participants throughout the growing and harvesting cycles.

This collaboration allows Imbewu to access ACT's extensive beneficiary network, while ACT's endorsement adds credibility and enhances community buy-in for the project.

3. Background and Rationale

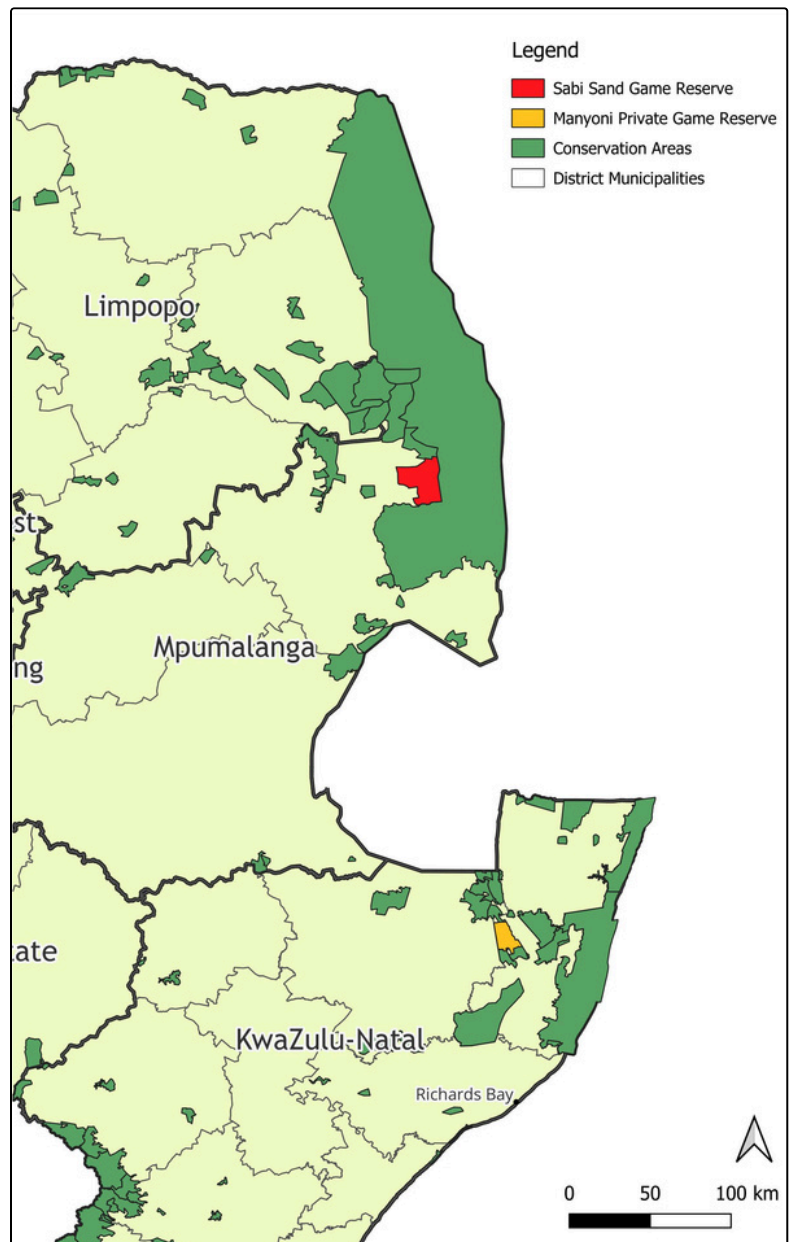
In the communities surrounding key conservation areas such as the Sabi Sands Game Reserve (part of the Greater Kruger National Park) and the Manyoni Private Game Reserve, poverty, limited economic opportunities, and human-wildlife conflicts are persistent challenges. These regions, while rich in biodiversity, are also marked by significant socio-economic struggles, making it difficult for local populations to secure sustainable livelihoods.

Community Context:

The communities in these regions are located adjacent to vital conservation areas that play a critical role in protecting and preserving South Africa's natural heritage. However, the proximity to these areas often exacerbates existing socioeconomic challenges. With limited opportunities for generating income, many households face severe financial insecurity, which is further compounded by frequent human-wildlife conflicts. These conflicts not only threaten the safety of community members but also contribute to the degradation of local ecosystems as people are forced to encroach on protected areas for resources.

Current Situation:

Both Imbewu Yoshinto and the African Conservation Trust (ACT) have established networks of farmers and beneficiaries who are already engaged in food security initiatives. These efforts have laid a strong foundation, yet there remains a critical need to enhance the capacity of these communities to generate sustainable income. While current projects have made strides in improving food



security through vegetable and crop production, there is an urgent necessity and opportunity with Lodges within the reserves to develop solutions that also offer long-term economic benefits.

Project Opportunity:

The planting of fruit trees in the 150 proposed homesteads presents a unique opportunity to address these challenges holistically. Fruit trees are not only a source of nutrition but also represent a long-term, renewable source of income for these communities. By integrating fruit tree cultivation into existing food security projects, we can create dispersed orchards that will enhance household income, improve food security, and mitigate human-wildlife conflicts. This approach will empower beneficiaries to sell surplus fruit to local markets and lodges, thereby creating a steady stream of income that contributes to the overall economic resilience of the region.

The Value of Fruit Trees in Climate Change Adaptation:

In the context of climate change, fruit trees offer a particularly valuable solution for small-scale farmers. Unlike annual crops, fruit trees are perennial and resilient, often flourishing in conditions where other plants may fail. Their deep root systems allow them to access water from deeper soil layers, making them more resistant to drought and capable of thriving under unpredictable weather conditions. For small-scale farmers, this resilience is critical, providing a reliable source of food and income even during periods of climatic stress. Furthermore, fruit trees contribute to environmental stability, supporting biodiversity and reducing soil erosion.



Image: Imbewu Agroforestry Demonstration Garden at Sekhane Village outside Manyoni Private Game Reserve. Show casing the value of agroforestry in a dry landscape.

4. Project Objectives

The primary objective of the FRUITFUL FUTURES PROJECT is to empower 150 households in communities surrounding key conservation areas by planting fruit trees in their homesteads. This initiative aims to create a network of dispersed orchards that will provide a sustainable source of income, improve food security, and contribute to environmental conservation. By integrating agroforestry practices, the project will enhance the resilience of these communities against climate change and reduce human-wildlife conflicts. Ultimately, the project seeks to transform these homesteads into productive, self-sustaining ecosystems that support both the economic well-being of the families involved and the ecological integrity of the surrounding protected areas.

Specific Objectives:

- **Income Generation:** Enable each beneficiary to earn approximately R1,000 per month or R12,000 per year through the sale of surplus fruit to local lodges and markets.
- **Nutritional Enhancement:** Improve the health and well-being of community members by providing fresh, nutritious fruit directly from their homesteads.
- **Wildlife Conflict Mitigation:** Reduce human-wildlife conflicts by offering alternative income sources that keep communities engaged in sustainable, non-invasive activities.
- **Environmental Conservation:** Promote environmental stewardship by integrating fruit trees into homestead and communal land use, contributing to biodiversity and land productivity.

Project Impact Overview:

2000

Total Fruit Trees to be Planted

68,000 kg

Total Estimated Annual Production of Fruit

R12 000

Projected Annual Income per Household

R1 800 000

Estimated Annual Contribution to Local Economies from Fruit Sales

150

Households Expected to Benefit (Approximately 750 Individuals)

42

Days of Training Planned

5. Project Implementation Plan

Tree Selection and Distribution:

Each of the 150 homesteads will receive the following*:

- 3 Banana Trees
- 3 Papaya Trees
- 3 Orange Trees
- 3 Moringa Trees
- 1 Grapefruit Tree
- 2 Granadilla Vines
- 2 Cape Gooseberry Plants

**If some homesteads are too small to accommodate the allocated trees the surplus trees will be planted in communal areas.*



Image: Deep mulching from Vitiver (support species) growing around a mango tree planted by Imbewu

Agroforestry and Permaculture Integration:

- The fruit trees will be planted following permaculture principles, supported by nitrogen-fixing plants, mulching species, and natural pest control species to create a self-sustaining ecosystem.
- Trees will be planted professionally with compost, bone meal, and organic fertilisers to ensure excellent production and long-term healthy growth.



Image: Imbeu student receiving a certificate from one of the many permaculture trainings we have conducted

Training and Support:

- **Agroforestry Training:** Beneficiaries will undergo a 4-day course in agroforestry, where they will learn about sustainable cultivation practices, tree maintenance, and ecosystem management.
- **Fruit Preservation and Value-Adding Course:** A 2-day course will be provided to teach beneficiaries how to preserve fruit and create value-added products, increasing the potential for income generation.

- Financial Literacy Training: A 1-day financial literacy course will equip beneficiaries with the skills needed to manage their earnings effectively and reinvest in their orchards.
- Mentorship and Follow-Up: Continuous mentorship and follow-up support will be provided to ensure the success of the establishment of the trees and the project.

Market Linkages:

- Partnerships will be established with local lodges and markets, particularly those in the Sabi Sands and Manyoni areas, to ensure a reliable outlet for surplus fruit.*



Image: beneficiaries during mentorship program



Monitoring and Evaluation:

The following will be evaluated to measure the impact of the project:

- Tree Planting and Survival Rates:
- Beneficiary Participation and Training Completion:
- Early Yield Production:
- Market Linkages and Income Potential:
- Community Engagement and Feedback:
- Environmental Impact and Wildlife Conflict Reduction:

Image: Dried fruit, canned peaches and jams made by beneficiary showcasing the value of food processing to livelihoods

*Imbewu in Partnership with Zululand Conservation Trust is already selling produce to seven lodges in the Manyoni Game Reserve.

Two Lodges: Londelozi in Sabi Sands and, Sensiri Plains Safari Lodge in Manyoni have both written a letter of support for the project. Please find attached in the appendix.



Image: One of the current 500 beneficiaries in the Mpumalanga Sabi Sands area. She propagates her own fruit trees from seed.

Early harvest and year-round production:

Our carefully selected tree varieties ensure that beneficiaries begin to see the fruits of their labour early in the project timeline. With species like banana, papaya, and Moringa, beneficiaries can expect their first harvests within 6 to 15 months, providing an early source of income and nutrition. While full production for certain trees like oranges and grapefruit will take up to 5 years, the diversity of our tree selection means that fruit will be available throughout the seasons, offering consistent access to fresh produce and income opportunities year-round. This approach ensures that participants benefit from both short-term gains and long-term sustainability.

Tree/Plant	Time to First Fruit Production	Time to Full Production
Banana	18 months	18-24 months
Moringa	6-8 months	18 months
Papaya	7 months	18 months
Orange	3-4 years	5-6 years
Grapefruit	3-4 years	5-6 years
Granadilla (Passion Fruit)	9-12 months	18-24 months
Cape Gooseberry	6-8 months	1-1.5 years
Vetiver (For Mulching)	6-9 months	Continuous harvesting possible
Pigeon Pea	5-7 months	1 year (continuous yield in some climates)

6. Project Timeline & Milestones

- Phase 1: Planning & Engagement (Months 1-2)**
- Stakeholder Meetings (Month 1): Engage stakeholders to define roles and secure commitments.
 - Beneficiary Meetings (Month 2): Introduce the project, secure buy-in, and finalise participants.
 - Training Preparation (Month 2): Develop and schedule agroforestry training sessions.
- Phase 2: Training & Procurement (Months 3-4)**
- Agroforestry Training (Month 3): Provide training on sustainable cultivation practices.
 - Financial Literacy Training (Month 3): Equip beneficiaries with essential financial management skills.
 - Procurement (Month 4): Source and prepare distribution of plants and trees.
- Phase 3: Implementation & Planting (Months 5-6)**
- Distribution (Month 5): Distribute plant materials to all beneficiaries.
 - Planting (Month 6): Assist beneficiaries in planting and establishing their agroforestry plots.
- Phase 4: Follow-Up & Mentorship (Months 7-9)**
- Mentorship (Months 7-8): Provide ongoing support and assess the progress of planted trees.
 - Value-Add Training (Month 9): Train beneficiaries in processing and adding value to their produce.
- Phase 5: Expansion & Sustainability (Months 10-12)**
- Product Mentorship (Months 10): Support in the creation and marketing of value-added products.
 - Market Engagement (Month 11): Facilitate connections for sales to lodges and local markets.
 - Monitoring & Final Review (Month 12): Conduct endline evaluation and document key learnings.

PROJECT TIMELINE

Phase 1	Planning and Initial Engagement (Months 1-2)
Phase 2	Training and Procurement (Months 3-4)
Phase 3	Implementation & Planting (Months 5-6)
Phase 4	Follow-Up & Mentorship (Months 7-9)
Phase 5	Expansion & Sustainability (Months 10-12)

7. Budget and Funding Requirements

Budget Overview

The Fruitful Futures Project is designed as a financially sustainable initiative that will deliver long-term benefits to 150 households across communities surrounding key conservation areas in South Africa, impacting the lives of approximately 750 individuals. The carefully developed budget ensures that all aspects of the project—from the initial planting of fruit trees to training and ongoing support—are fully funded and executed to achieve the desired outcomes. The total budget is R1,497,500 and covers one full year of operation.

There is an option to extend funding beyond the pilot year, which would allow for the scaling of the project to other critical game reserve areas and additional beneficiaries in those communities. This extension would take the original beneficiaries through the full production cycle, helping them establish market links to lodges once the trees reach maturity, and expanding the project's reach to more vulnerable households.

Please see the budget that follows and the accompanying filled DG Murray project Excel sheet template.

Financial Accountability and Impact Assurance

Imbewu Yoshintso has a proven track record of managing successful projects funded by both local and international donors. Our experience in project management ensures that funds are allocated efficiently and transparently. We have previously (and currently) collaborated with esteemed organisations such as the African Conservation Trust (ACT), the Zululand Conservation Trust (ZCT), and the Foundation for Human Rights (FHR) on similar initiatives. These partnerships have fortified our capacity to deliver impactful and sustainable outcomes. The detailed budget below reflects our commitment to maximising the return on investment for every rand spent, ensuring that each aspect of the project contributes to the overarching goal of empowering communities through sustainable income generation and food security.

Social Return on Investment (SROI) Statement:

Based on conservative estimates, this project is expected to generate an income of R1,800,000 annually for the participating communities. An initial investment of R1,497,500 translates to an SROI of 120%, meaning that for every R1 invested, the project generates R1.20 in income by the first year of full production. This demonstrates not only the sustainability of the project but also the significant financial impact it will have on the local communities.

FRUITFUL FUTURES PROJECT BUDGET

Description	Unit	QYT	Cost	Total
Plant material				
Bannana	Each	450	R 45,00	R 20 250,00
Moringa	Each	450	R 120,00	R 54 000,00
Papaya Trees	Each	450	R 45,00	R 20 250,00
Orange Trees	Each	450	R 160,00	R 72 000,00
GrapeFruit	Each	150	R 160,00	R 24 000,00
Vetiver	Each	450	R 25,00	R 11 250,00
Grannadilla	Each	300	R 25,00	R 7 500,00
Cape Gooseberry	Seedling Plugs	300	R 6,00	R 1 800,00
Pigeon Pea	Seedling Plugs	2400	R 4,00	R 9 600,00
Delivery of Plants	Beneficiary	150	R 120,00	R 18 000,00
Tree Planting Amendments				
Compost	30dm Bags	750	R 45,00	R 33 750,00
Gypsum, lime, bone meal etc.	Bag	150	R 50,00	R 7 500,00
Organic fertiliser	Bag	150	R 150,00	R 22 500,00
Delivery of planting amendments	Beneficiary	150	R 50,00	R 7 500,00
Training & Mentorship				
Agro-forestry Course 4 Day	Course	6	R 40 000,00	R 240 000,00
Financial Literacy 1 Day	Workshop	6	R 10 000,00	R 60 000,00
Fruit Preservation & Value Add 2 Day	Course	6	R 20 000,00	R 120 000,00
Operational costs				
Project Manager	Months	12	R 21 000,00	R 252 000,00
Community Facilitator	Months	10	R 8 000,00	R 80 000,00
Travel	Months	12	R 20 000,00	R 240 000,00
Accommodation	Nights	60	R 600,00	R 36 000,00
Communications	Months	12	R 800,00	R 9 600,00
Project Admin fee (10% of total)		1	R 150 000,00	R 150 000,00
Total				<u>R 1 497 500,00</u>

Illustrative Example: The Hypothetical Impact of the Fruitful Futures Project

This hypothetical scenario analysis illustrates the potential long-term benefits of sustainable agroforestry initiatives for families involved in the Fruitful Futures Project. It demonstrates how short-term employment can lead to sustained economic growth and community development.

The Mthembu Family's Journey

The Mthembu family, living near the Sabi Sands Game Reserve in Mpumalanga, received training in agroforestry and planted ten fruit trees around their home. These included oranges, bananas, and gooseberries—chosen for their resilience and market value.

Years 1-2: Foundation and First Harvest

- In the first two years, the Mthembus earned an income that covered 50% of their household expenses, while the trees began yielding fruit, reducing grocery costs by 20%. By the end of Year 2, they were selling 40% of their produce locally and to nearby lodges, increasing their overall earnings by 25%.

Years 3-5: Growth and Stability

- By reinvesting 15% of their earnings, the Mthembus expanded their operations, increasing income from fruit sales and value-added products like gooseberry jam by 50% by Year 3. Their consistent supply of fresh fruit to the lodges boosted their reputation and income. Their success inspired a 10% rise in community participation, and by Year 5, their agroforestry activities covered 80% of household expenses, ensuring financial stability.

This illustrative example shows the ripple effects of our sustainable agroforestry Fruitful Futures project. It highlights how, with strategic planning, families like the Mthembus can achieve a 50% income increase within three years and financial stability within five, positively impacting their lives and communities.

8. Conclusion

The FRUITFUL FUTURES PROJECT is a practical and well-timed initiative that builds on established relationships and strong community networks. Our collaboration with the African Conservation Trust (ACT) and our ongoing partnerships with local lodges in the Manyoni Private Game Reserve mean that the foundations for success are already in place. These lodges have been purchasing produce through our networks for 2 years already, and with the expression of support from Lodges in Sabisands ensures a ready market for the fruit that will be grown through this project.

What sets this initiative apart is its focus on planting fruit trees, which not only addresses food security needs but also provides long-term benefits. Fruit trees are resilient and well-suited to withstand the challenges of climate change, making them a reliable source of income and nutrition even in unpredictable conditions. By planting these trees, we're helping communities build a sustainable future.

This project isn't just about planting trees; it's about making a meaningful difference by using the resources and relationships we've already developed. By supporting the FRUITFUL FUTURES PROJECT, you'll be helping us to take advantage of this unique opportunity to improve livelihoods, enhance food security, reduce wildlife conflict and contribute to climate resilience in these communities.



9. About Us -The Team

Zimisele Lithuli: Holds an international Permaculture Design Certificate under Geoff Lawton and an Agro-ecology NQF2 accreditation. As the lead facilitator for the past eight years, he has trained hundreds of individuals in Permaculture and EOA and is a Director of Imbewu.

Siyabonga Ngcobo: Is an accomplished facilitator holding a National Diploma in Community Extension. With three years of hands-on experience managing Imbewu Market Garden & Nursery, he has acquired a wealth of expertise in the field.

Rory Clark: As a registered AgriSeta assessor, the Project Coordinator holds an NQF 2 certification in Agro-ecological Farming Practices & has 14 years of experience in creating curriculums, teaching students in Permaculture & EOA.

Junior Mlandu: Our facilitator holds a National Diploma in Farming Management and has a wealth of knowledge in high-value crops under tunnel production. Junior's expertise also covers organic seedling and microgreen production.



**Zimisele
Lithuli**
OPERATIONS
MANAGER (DIRECTOR)



Rory Clark
PROJECT CO-
ORDINATOR
(DIRECTOR)



**Siyabonga
Ngcobo**
IMBEWU COMMUNITY
SUPERVISOR



**Junior
Mlandu**
IMBEWU
FACILITATOR