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Zimbabwe | Smallholder Technology  
& Access to Markets Program (STAMP)

## SNAPSHOT

# Macadamias Transform Subsistence Farming

**With effective technical assistance and support, small-scale farmers can grow and produce macadamias on par with commercial farms.**



*Photo by Fintrac Inc.*

Lucious Mhlanga proudly displays his healthy macadamia plant. Mhlanga could earn more than \$600 a year from his 0.1 hectare plot, creating a sustainable and profitable farming business for his family.

**“This is my investment bank for my children and my grandchildren.”**

*Lucious Mhlanga, smallholder farmer*

### Telling Our Story

U.S. Agency for International Development  
Washington, DC 20523-1000  
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

USAID’s Smallholder Technology and Access to Markets Program (STAMP) has been working with 160 communal farmers in rural Chipinge district for the past 21 months, helping them establish 0.1 hectare plots of high-value macadamia plants.

Macadamias have the dual benefit of being both nutritious and lucrative, presenting ways to improve health and earning potential. Macadamias can provide a gross margin return of \$6,184 per hectare when in full production.

These farmers had previously been growing maize and small vegetable crops for home consumption. They also grew tea for sale to Tanganda, but were not earning much due to low tea prices and had abandoned their tea plantations.

With support from USAID-STAMP, the farmers are receiving seedlings and fertilizer from program partner Tanganda. USAID-STAMP agronomists provide ongoing technical assistance in agronomic best practices. The farmers learned to prepare their fields using good agricultural practices such as mulching and composting, which help improve yields and quality.

The crop is still growing, and the first harvest is expected in three to four months. Farmers are enthusiastic about their earning potential thanks to a strong national and international market. They have expressed interest in expanding their macadamia plantations using their new income.

To ensure year round income and food security, the farmers are also planting maize, sweet potatoes, and fruit trees, employing the same good agricultural practices they learned from USAID-STAMP.

Smallholder Lucious Mhlanga is optimistic about his farming business, expressing delight that he can grow high-value crops he previously thought out of his league.

“I am happy to be a part of this project. It is like a dream come true,” he said. “I always thought macadamias were only grown by big companies like Tanganda and Makandi. This is like my investment bank for my children and my grandchildren.”

The farmers expect to pick around 1,200 kilograms per hectare during their first harvest, a number that is expected to jump to 3,000-5,000 kilograms in subsequent years. The average price on the local and international market is \$2.00 per kilogram, meaning these previously subsistence-level farmers could earn more than \$10,000 per year when their macadamia crops are in full production.