

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF TWO INDIGENOUS FRUIT TREES:  
*STRYCHNOS COCCULOIDES* AND *SCHINZIOPHYTON RAUTANENII* TO THE  
PEOPLE OF RUNDU RURAL WEST CONSTITUENCY IN NAMIBIA**

**Selma N. Elago**

Okahandja National Forestry Research Center, P.O. Box 396, Okahandja, NAMIBIA

**&**

**Lisias Tjeripo Tjaveondja**

Okahandja National Forestry Research Center, P.O. Box 396, Okahandja, NAMIBIA

**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this research was to assess the socio-economic importance of two indigenous fruit trees: *Strychnos cocculoides* and *Schinziophyton rautanenii* in Mile 20 village, Rundu rural West constituency, Kavango region, Namibia. Specifically, the study assesses the contributions of indigenous fruits to household's cash income and the reduction to food insecurity. *The study used an emergent, exploratory, inductive qualitative approach* where semi-structured interview, observation and self-designed household survey questionnaire were used for primary data collection. The researchers also conducted documents review and also collected qualitative information from forestry experts in the Kavango region to complement the other methods. To get the targeted sample from the three hundred household population, the village was stratified into four zones of North, South, East and West. Simple random sampling was used to select thirty-one households from all the zones. The result of the study indicate that the majority of the rural households in Mile 20, Rundu rural West constituency, benefits from the consumption and the sale of Indigenous fruit trees (IFs). More than one benefit is obtained from the sale of indigenous fruits and generating cash income essential for purchasing the required households goods. Some of the important benefits identified included paying school fees for their children and other dependents, purchasing livestock such as goats, sheep, cattle, and pay hospital bills for family members. The results also show that the IF contributes positively to food security especially during the periods of food shortages and poor harvesting years. Households' members have experienced changes in their livelihood and wellbeing as a result of the income generated from the sale of indigenous fruits.

**Keywords:** Indigenous fruit trees, food security, cash income, rural households, Namibia.