ABDP KISII CASE STUDY

Strategic Diversification Through Aquaculture - Mr. Geoffrey Ong'uti

Core Best Practices Demonstrated

1. Leverage Community Networks & Structured Training

- ***Peer-to-Peer Learning:*** Start by exploring existing networks. Geoffry discovered aquaculture through a friend in a Small Aquaculture Group (SAG).
- ***Capacity Building Before Implementation:*** Do not dig blindly. Before stocking, Geoffry underwent comprehensive training covering:

  - *Pond construction specifications*
  - *Fish husbandry (handling and care)*
  - *Overall pond management and biosecurity*

2. Maximize Subsidized Start-Up Packages

Geoffry minimized initial capital risk by utilizing group-led start-up support. A standard baseline inventory for a successful launch includes:

- ***Infrastructure:*** 1 high-quality pond liner (prevents water seepage).
- ***Input Material:*** 1,000 high-quality fingerlings.
- ***Feed Security:*** Eight 25-kilogram bags of specialized fish feed (ensures correct nutrition through the initial growth cycle).

3. Track Performance Metrics (The 9-Month Cycle)

Geoffrey's first cycle serves as an excellent benchmark for small-scale tilapia farming performance:

Metric	Baseline / Result
Initial Stocking	1,000 fingerlings
Harvest Yield (at 9 Months)	900 fish (90% survival rate)
Total Biomass	250 kilograms
Average Weight per Fish	~278 grams
Gross Revenue	KES 120,000

4. Reinvestment and Horizontal Diversification

Rather than consuming the initial KES 120,000 profit, Geoffry used it as seed capital to insulate his household from single-commodity market shocks.

[Initial Fish Revenue: KES 120,000]

- ***Livestock:*** Purchased 1 dairy cow (daily cash flow via milk)
- Infrastructure: Roofing materials for brick-making shed (weatherproofing)
- ***Alternative Agribusiness:*** Beekeeping (low-labor, high-margin honey production)
- ***Aquaculture Expansion:*** Capital to stock and dig a second pond

5. Multi-Species Stocking & Staggered Harvesting

In his second pond, Geoffry implemented an advanced management timeline by combining species with different growth rates to ensure continuous income and biological control:

- Stocking Ratio: 500 tilapia fingerlings + 100 catfish.
- Staggered Cash Flow:

  - *Month 5 (December): Harvest catfish (quick turnaround, fast growth).*
  - *Month 9 (April): Harvest tilapia (longer maturity cycle).*

6. Institutionalizing Family and Youth Labor

- Shared Responsibility: Geoffry's wife manages day-to-day feeding regimes and runs an integrated kitchen garden (using nutrient-rich pond water for irrigation). This reduces hired labor costs and ensures high operational consistency.

The Ultimate Takeaway: Aquaculture shouldn't just be a replacement for crop farming; it should act as an economic engine. By converting quick fish profits into livestock, circular infrastructure, and apiculture, smallholders can build a resilient, zero-waste, climate-smart farming ecosystem.

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