



Dynamique des Jeunes Leaders pour la Paix et le Respect des Droits Humains

DYJEPREDHU asbl

Dynamics of Young Leaders for Peace and Respect for Humans Rights

CHANGEMENT **TRANS**FORMATION **IMPACT**

Creating Salted Fish Products in Eastern DRC

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PROJECT TECHNICAL PROPOSALS

I. Project Summary

1. Title of the project: Creating Salted Fish Products in Eastern DRC

2. Contact details:

• Name of the organization: Dynamic of Young Leaders for Peace and Respect for Human Rights, “DYJEPREDHU asbl” in acronym

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3. Organization Mission Statement

Our Mission

Our mission is to combat food insecurity and economic vulnerability in Eastern DRC by transforming the regional fisheries sector through sustainable, climate-smart food preservation. By processing highly perishable fresh catches into high-quality, shelf-stable salted fish (**Makayabu**), we eliminate post-harvest waste, bridge the gap left by a deficient cold-chain infrastructure, and deliver affordable, nutrient-rich protein to urban and rural households. We are dedicated to creating a predictable, profitable market for local artisanal fishermen while driving industrial growth, employment, and women’s economic empowerment across the Kivus.

Project Beneficiaries

1. Primary (Direct) Beneficiaries

- **Artisanal Fishermen:** At least 150 local fishermen at Lake Kivu and Lake Edward landing sites who gain a guaranteed, year-round off-take market, protecting them from predatory pricing and seasonal revenue collapses.
- **Women Fish Traders & Micro-Retailers:** Over 50 women (*Mamas Kalach*) in urban markets like Virunga and Alanine who secure a reliable, shelf-stable inventory that does not rot overnight, safeguarding their daily business capital.

- **Processing Facility Employees:** 20 local youths and women hired directly at the processing center, receiving stable monthly wages, technical training in food hygiene, and fair labor conditions.

2. Secondary (Indirect) Beneficiaries

- **Urban and Rural Consumers:** Low- and middle-income households in Goma, Bukavu, and surrounding landlocked territories who gain access to a continuous, affordable, and sanitary source of high-protein animal nutrition.
- **Local Fishing Cooperatives:** Community-led fishing management units that benefit from structural business partnerships, helping them reinvest in safer boat gear and sustainable fishing practices.
- **The Regional Agribusiness Economy:** Local suppliers of coarse salt, wooden pallets, and packaging materials who experience increased demand through our localized supply chain network.

Total cost of the project: US \$ 22,000

- **Bank account: Dynamique des Jeunes Leaders pour la Paix et le Respect des Droits Humains, DYJEPREDHU asbl**

Goma Agency -DRC

No. 1272-28000-23526760001-87

Following code: TRMSCD3L

Context and Justification of the Project

1. The Regional Context of Eastern DRC

Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), particularly the North Kivu and South Kivu provinces, is home to a rapidly growing population centered around urban hubs like Goma and Bukavu. The region is blessed with rich aquatic resources, including Lake Kivu and Lake Edward, which yield thousands of tons of fresh Tilapia and Catfish annually. Fish represents the primary and most affordable source of animal protein and essential micronutrients for millions of local inhabitants, making the fishing sector critical to regional food security and the local economy.

2. The Infrastructure Crisis and Cold Chain Deficit

Despite high production potential, Eastern DRC suffers from a severe lack of cold-chain infrastructure.

- **Electricity Failure:** The local power grid is highly unreliable, and off-grid refrigeration relies on expensive diesel generators.
- **Logistical Bottlenecks:** Poor road networks connect landing sites to urban consumer centers. Transporting fresh catch under tropical temperatures without insulation causes rapid bacterial degradation.
- **Post-Harvest Loss:** Up to **40% of the daily catch spoils** before it ever reaches a consumer, destroying economic value and shrinking the available food supply.

3. Socio-Economic Vulnerability of Fishing Communities

The high perishability of fresh fish traps artisanal fishermen and small-scale traders in a cycle of economic vulnerability.

- **Forced Price Drops:** Because fresh fish cannot be stored, fishermen are forced to sell their daily catch at giveaway prices during peak seasons to avoid total loss.

- **Income Instability:** This market volatility prevents local fishing families from generating stable, predictable incomes to invest in better equipment or household welfare.
- **Gender Disparity:** Women dominate the retail and informal processing sectors (micro-retailers). They bear the heaviest financial burden when fresh inventory rots overnight.

4. Justification for Salted Fish (Makayabu) Production

Introducing an organized, high-quality salted fish processing business directly addresses these systemic failures through a low-cost, climate-smart technological intervention.

- **Zero-Electricity Preservation:** Salt curing combined with sun-drying removes water content, stopping bacterial growth entirely. It creates a shelf-stable product (**Makayabu**) that lasts up to 6 months without an hour of refrigeration.
- **Drastic Waste Reduction:** By processing fresh fish immediately at lakeside landing sites, this project slashes post-harvest losses from 40% to under 5%, preserving biomass and economic value.
- **Market Stabilization and Food Security:** A durable product can be transported safely over long distances to remote, landlocked territories. This stabilizes food prices throughout the year, eliminates seasonal shortages, and reduces the region's heavy reliance on expensive imported frozen fish.
- **Economic Empowerment:** The venture creates a reliable, structured off-take market for fishermen, guarantees steady profits, and generates direct employment in processing, packaging, and regional distribution specifically empowering women micro-distributors.

Detailed Project Objectives

1. Primary Objective

The central goal of this project is to establish a modern, sustainable, and scalable salted fish (**Makayabu**) processing facility in Eastern DRC. By utilizing locally

sourced Tilapia and Catfish, the project aims to eradicate post-harvest losses, create a robust and shelf-stable food supply chain, and stimulate economic growth within lakeside communities without relying on electricity-dependent cold chains.

2. Specific and Measurable Objectives

Production Capacity & Dehydration Efficiency

- **Process 5 to 10 Tons of Raw Fish Monthly:** Establish a reliable supply contract with local fishermen to consistently purchase and process fresh catch during the first year of operation.
- **Standardize Moisture Content:** Achieve a strict **sub-15% moisture level** across all production batches using elevated solar drying racks, ensuring a total shelf life of up to **6 months** at room temperature.
- **Minimize Salt Waste:** Implement a precise dry-salting ratio (1 kg of salt to 3 kg of fish) to lower input costs while maintaining food safety standards.

Waste Reduction & Supply Chain Optimization

- **Slash Post-Harvest Spoilage:** Reduce fish spoilage rates at target landing sites from the current **40% down to under 5%** by setting up processing units directly adjacent to the shores of Lake Kivu.
- **Expand Distribution Range:** Build a distribution network capable of transporting preserved fish up to **300 kilometers inland** to isolated rural territories without any quality degradation.

Economic Empowerment & Job Creation

- **Guarantee Stable Income for Fishermen:** Provide a permanent, year-round off-take market for at least **150 artisanal fishermen**, protecting them from seasonal price crashes.
- **Create Direct and Indirect Employment:** Hire and train **20 full-time processing workers** (focusing on youth) and integrate **50 women micro-retailers** into the urban distribution network.
- **Boost Household Revenues:** Increase the average monthly income of participating female fish processors and retailers by at least **35%** within 12 months.

Market Penetration & Food Security

- **Supply Affordable Protein:** Deliver regular shipments of high-quality, hygiene-certified salted fish to open-air markets in **Goma and Bukavu**, reaching over 10,000 households.
- **Introduce Premium Product Lines:** Develop a vacuum-packed, boneless **Makayabu fillet** line specifically targeting 10 local supermarkets and catering to middle-class urban consumers.
- **Displace Expensive Imports:** Capture a **5% share of the local preserved fish market** in North and South Kivu, directly reducing the region's reliance on imported dried fish from East Africa.

Project Mission and Core Values

1. Mission Statement

Our mission is to combat food insecurity and economic vulnerability in Eastern DRC by transforming the regional fisheries sector through sustainable, climate-smart food preservation. By processing highly perishable fresh catches into high-quality, shelf-stable salted fish (**Makayabu**), we eliminate post-harvest waste, bridge the gap left by a deficient cold-chain infrastructure, and deliver affordable, nutrient-rich protein to urban and rural households. We are dedicated to creating a predictable, profitable market for local artisanal fishermen while driving industrial growth, employment, and women's economic empowerment across the Kivus.

2. Core Values

Uncompromising Food Safety and Quality

- **Standardized Hygiene:** We strictly enforce rigorous sanitation protocols from the moment fish land on the docks through every stage of processing, gutting, and curing.
- **Premium Production:** We refuse shortcuts, utilizing only clean, food-grade coarse salt and dedicated solar-drying racks to guarantee uniform taste, texture, and a safe six-month shelf life.

Eco-Friendly and Climate-Smart Innovation

- **Zero-Emission Preservation:** We embrace methods that require no fossil fuels or grid electricity, utilizing natural sunlight and traditional curing science to protect the environment.
- **Responsible Sourcing:** We partner exclusively with sustainable, licensed artisanal fishermen to protect the delicate aquatic ecosystems of Lake Kivu and Lake Edward from overfishing.

Grassroots Empowerment and Inclusivity

- **Fair Off-Take Agreements:** We guarantee fair, stable, and predictable buying prices for fishermen, buffering vulnerable families against volatile seasonal market crashes.
- **Gender Equity:** Recognizing that women drive regional food markets, we intentionally position female traders at the center of our distribution network, providing them with reliable inventory and business skills.

Community Resilience and Shared Prosperity

- **Local Economic Growth:** We keep wealth within the DRC by prioritizing local labor, local raw materials, and domestic supply chains over expensive foreign food imports.
- **Nutritional Security:** We are deeply driven by our social responsibility to make clean, long-lasting animal protein accessible to the most remote and economically marginalized populations in the region.

Phase 1: Preparation, Sourcing, and Setup (Months 1 – 3)

- **M1: Licensing and Compliance:** Secure food processing permits, environmental clearance, and business registration from local provincial authorities in North/South Kivu.
- **M1: Site Acquisition:** Rent a secure processing yard and warehouse space close to the landing sites of Lake Kivu (e.g., Goma or Bukavu outskirts).
- **M2: Infrastructure Buildout:** Construct elevated wooden and mesh solar-drying racks. Install concrete wash stations and secure indoor brining zones.
- **M2: Supplier Contracts:** Sign formal purchasing agreements with local artisanal fishing cooperatives to guarantee a steady raw fish supply.

- **M3: Equipment Procurement:** Purchase food-grade plastic brining bins, industrial cutting knives, digital weighing scales, and heavy-duty polythene heat-sealers.

Phase 2: Staff Training and Pilot Production (Months 4 – 5)

- **M4: Team Recruitment:** Hire 20 operations workers, including specialized fish cutters, washers, salting technicians, and a quality control supervisor.
- **M4: Hygiene and Safety Training:** Train all staff on strict food handling protocols, cross-contamination prevention, and optimal fish gutting (butterfly cut) techniques.
- **M5: Trial Salting Batches:** Run small-scale test batches to calibrate salt-to-fish ratios, monitor sun-drying timelines, and test final moisture levels.
- **M5: Packaging Design:** Finalize brand labels, nutritional printings, and airtight bag sizes for both bulk market pieces and premium fillets.

Phase 3: Commercial Launch and Scale-Up (Months 6 – 9)

- **M6: Full-Scale Launch:** Begin continuous industrial processing, targeting the processing of 5 tons of raw Tilapia and Catfish per month.
- **M6: Open-Market Distribution:** Launch bulk sales to pre-mapped female micro-retailer networks in Goma (Virunga Market) and Bukavu (Alanine Market).
- **M7: Supermarket Integration:** Introduce the vacuum-packed, boneless **Makayabu fillet** premium line into local urban grocery stores and supermarkets.
- **M8: Supply Optimization:** Evaluate drying rack efficiency against seasonal weather shifts; adjust protective plastic sheeting protocols for sudden rains.
- **M9: Mid-Term Quality Audit:** Review batch consistency, shelf-life performance, and customer feedback to fine-tune curing times.

Phase 4: Market Expansion and Optimization (Months 10 – 12)

- **M10: Production Capacity Boost:** Scale up operations to process 10 tons of raw fish monthly by adding more drying racks and expanding supplier networks.
- **M10: Inland Distribution:** Establish logistics partnerships to transport shelf-stable products further inland to remote, landlocked communities.
- **M11: Cross-Border Trade Testing:** Initiate cross-border trade trial shipments into neighboring markets (e.g., Rwanda or Uganda border points) to tap into regional demand.
- **M12: Annual Evaluation:** Measure overall impact against initial KPIs, focusing on post-harvest waste reduction statistics and supplier income growth rates.

1. Capital Expenditures (CAPEX) — \$9,200 (46%)

These are one-time investments required to build the production infrastructure and purchase processing equipment.

- **Facility Setup & Site Renovation (\$3,500):**
 - Concrete pouring for wash stations and brining zones.
 - Construction of 15 elevated wooden and wire-mesh solar-drying racks.
 - Security fencing, locks, and basic facility shelter roofs.
- **Processing Equipment (\$3,200):**
 - 30 heavy-duty, food-grade plastic brining bins (100L each).
 - Industrial stainless-steel cutting tables and professional scaling/gutting knives.
 - Digital hanging and platform weighing scales (up to 150 kg capacity).
 - 2 heavy-duty, commercial impulse plastic bag heat-sealers.
- **Cold Chain & Sourcing Logistics (\$2,500):**
 - 10 high-density insulated plastic ice crates for fresh fish transport from docks.
 - Down payment or purchase of basic warehouse transport handling equipment (pallets, trolleys).

2. Operational Expenditures (OPEX) — Three-Month Runway — \$7,800 (39%)

This working capital covers raw materials, labor, and utilities during the initial launch phase before sales revenue stabilizes.

- **Raw Materials Sourcing (\$4,200):**
 - Purchase of fresh Tilapia and Catfish directly from fishing cooperatives (\$3,200).
 - Procurement of food-grade coarse sea salt or rock salt (\$1,000).
- **Direct Production Personnel (\$2,100):**
 - Wages for 10 seasonal/part-time fish cutters, washers, and drying technicians (\$700/month).
- **Facility Operations & Overhead (\$1,500):**
 - Warehouse/yard space rental fees adjacent to landing sites (\$350/month).
 - Clean water utility supply, chlorinated treatment tablets, and basic electricity (\$150/month).

3. Packaging, Marketing & Legal Compliance — \$1,800 (9%)

This covers product presentation, branding, and regulatory compliance required to sell in local markets and supermarkets.

- **Branding and Packaging Materials (\$800):**
 - 5,000 thick, transparent polyethylene plastic bags and premium printed brand labels.
- **Administrative Permits and Licensing (\$600):**
 - Local business registration, hygiene certifications, and provincial food processing permits.
- **Market Launch and B2B Promotion (\$400):**

- Logistics for distributing promotional samples to female market leaders and local supermarkets.

4. Emergency Contingency Fund — \$1,200 (6%)

- **Unforeseen Expenses (\$1,200):**
 - Reserved for sudden price fluctuations of salt, emergency facility repairs during heavy rainstorms, or unexpected transportation bottlenecks.

Financial Summary Table

Budget Category	Description	Cost (USD)	Percentage
CAPEX	Infrastructure & Equipment	\$9,200	46%
OPEX	Raw Materials & 3-Month Labor	\$7,800	39%
Commercialization	Packaging & Legal Permits	\$1,800	9%
Contingency	Emergency Cash Reserve	\$1,200	6%
TOTAL		\$20,000	100%

Done in Goma, August 03, 2026

For DYJEPREDHU asbl

 
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