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# Pack 100, Item 2

Type: Drama

January 2015

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# The need for firewood to warm yourself reminds you where you left the axe *(Chikumbutsa nkhwanga ndi chisanu)*

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### Notes to broadcaster

*The need for firewood on cold nights reminds you where you left the axe* is a two-episode drama about fish farming. At the end of each part, there is a dramatized interview with a fish farming expert who explains how to dig a fish pond, how to feed fish and how to multiply fingerlings.

The dramatized interview with the scientist is based on actual interviews with an aquaculture scientist.

You might choose to present this drama as part of your regular farming program, using voice actors to represent the speakers. If so, please make sure to tell your audience at the beginning of the program that the voices are those of actors, not the original people involved in the interviews.

Or you could use this drama as research material or inspiration to create a program on fish farming in your own area. You could use an expert in fish farming from your area to talk about the situation in your country.

If you talk to farmers and fish farming experts, here are some issues and questions to explore:

Is there a good market for pond-raised fish in your area?

What does a farmer need in order to start raising fish? What equipment, land, soil conditions, access to water, labour availability, etc.?

Is it beneficial for fish farmers to co-operate in collective fish production or marketing? How?

You could present one episode each week for two weeks. After each program, you could follow up by inviting a local aquaculture expert to take phone-in and text-in questions and comments from local farmers on the materials in this drama.

Estimated time for the first episode, including intro and outro music: 25 minutes. Estimated time for the second episode, including intro and outro music: 25 minutes.

**CHARACTERS**

BETHA: Fish farmer and husband of Mary, the village headwoman

MARY: Headwoman of Bauleni village and Betha’s wife

CHISALE: Brother in-law of Betha and brother of Mary. Farmer who grows irrigated crops.

TOBIAS: Farmer, friend of Chisale and Betha

KWENDA: Fish expert from Bunda College

SIGNATURE TUNE UP, THEN FADE DOWN AND HOLD UNDER BELOW

**PRESENTER:** Welcome to the first episode of a two-part drama entitled *The need for firewood to warm yourself reminds you where you left the axe* or *Chikumbutsa nkhwanga ndi chisanu* in the Chichewa language.

I am your presenter, \_\_\_\_, and I will be bringing you an episode of this drama every \_\_\_\_ afternoon for the next two weeks on (name of radio station).

The drama includes a dramatized discussion with an aquaculture scientist. After the drama, we advise you to speak with extension agents and ask them for more advice. If you have a question on a subject that you do not understand, send an SMS or a Whatsapp message to the following numbers, \_\_\_\_\_. And don’t forget to like our Facebook page so you can send us your questions and comments.

SIGNATURE TUNE UP THEN CROSS-FADE INTO BELOW

**NARRATOR:** Did you know that fish protein is one of the best kinds of protein, and that eating a lot of fish will not give you heart or blood pressure problems? Did you know that fish have a lot of iron, which helps our children’s brains develop? Did you know that fish are especially good for pregnant women because iron is vital for foetal growth?

Today, we present the first episode of a two-part drama that shows farmers the benefits of raising and eating fish. Later in the program, I’ll present a dramatized interview with an aquaculture scientist. But now, enjoy the drama!

SIGNATURE TUNE UP AND CROSS-FADE INTO BELOW

**SCENE ONE**

**SFX:** BIRDS, SOUNDS OF WETLANDS

**BETHA:** Mary, my wife, let us feed the fish we are about to harvest.

**MARY:** Betha, my husband, you can feed these big ones while I feed the young ones in the other pond. (SMILING) I like the small ones. Mothers feed their babies, and I will feed these one-month-old fish.

**BETHA:** (CHUCKLING) You like the babies … is it because you are a mother and like to breastfeed human babies?

**MARY:** Yes, we mothers know how the mother fish feel after separating from their young ones. And I feel pity for the young ones.

**BETHA:** (CHUCKLING) But fish don’t breastfeed! I like the big ones because I know we will eat them or sell them soon.

**MARY:** I think you like the big ones because you are the first to choose a piece on your plate!

**BETHA:** Is that so? … I thought you let me choose first because you love me, and because you always have me in mind when preparing food.

**MARY:** Oh yes, definitely … I prepare better meals when I visualize what you like, my husband. And I save the biggest piece for you.

**BETHA:** Then why are you saying I am greedy because I always get the bigger pieces? (CHUCKLING) When I choose the smaller piece, you are disappointed!

**MARY:** Yes, because I am worried that I didn’t prepare your favorite dish. It is disappointing … But I didn’t think you noticed that I got disappointed.

**BETHA:** How can I not notice when you force me to take the bigger piece? You even force me to take the bigger piece when I give it to my son.

**MARY:** (CHUCKLING) To be honest, I do not like to feed the big fish because I think the people of the village will steal them again.

**BETHA:** What do you mean?

**MARY:** Our fish are not profitable. It is like we are just sharing them with relatives; giving them away. We have no fish vendors to buy from us, no good market … and because fish go bad quickly, we just exchange them for maize in the village. So why not just grow maize instead?

**FX:** SOUND OF METAL SHOVEL AND BUCKET IN A WHEELBARROW.

**CHISALE:** Hello, Betha and my sister Mary.

**BETHA:** Hello, my in-law Chisale. Where are you and your friend Tobias going?

**CHISALE:** (A BIT ARROGANT) Can’t you see that we are going to our gold mine, the place where we find real cash – our irrigated gardens?

**BETHA:** What makes you think irrigation is a gold mine?

**CHISALE:** I make 50,000 kwacha for every one thousand cobs I harvest. How much do you make from the fish in your pond? If you didn’t have some irrigated fields, you would have to borrow money from us.

**BETHA:** Have you been conniving with your sister? She was just saying the same thing. Tobias, did you hear what your friend said?

**TOBIAS:** Betha, you definitely know that fish are zero. You know that with irrigation, every five planting beds give us at least a hundred cobs. And when we plant these new hybrid varieties that give two cobs per plant, we get even more cobs and more money.

**CHISALE:** (SCOFFS) How much can you earn from a fish pond?

**MARY:** I was just telling him this. Do you hear, Betha, my brother has similar points to mine. We really made a mistake by digging five fish ponds. That was a waste of land, especially with our high yields we get.

**CHISALE:** Tell him, my sister.

**TOBIAS:** It’s not too late, our friend … we can help you reclaim some of this land and plant some irrigated crops.

**BETHA:** People, you are making me angry … Leave now!

**CHISALE:** I think your husband’s head is not working well these days. We are helping him but he is mad at us ...

**MARY:** (FRUSTRATED) Why are you angry? They are giving us advice! If we are not careful, these upcoming young farmers may get rich while we stay poor! Open your eyes!

**BETHA:** No, my wife. Raising fish is easy money. You do a lot of work for one year to set up the ponds, and then you are free and you just harvest … other than feeding your fish properly. According to the experts, you can get twice as much harvest from a fishpond than from a crop field of the same size.

**TOBIAS:** Then where is your money? Betha, you dug these ponds in 2007 when people were hungry, and you gave us food to help you dig the ponds. What results can you point to from raising your fish?

**BETHA:** Look at my wife’s skin … how smooth it is. As if she doesn’t work. What do you think is the cause? What about my children, how healthy and intelligent they are.

**MARY:** So you think my good health is from eating fish?

**BETHA:** How many times in a week do you eat fresh fish? And how many times do other women in the village eat fresh fish?

**CHISALE:** So you eat fish every week. Does that mean you need five ponds? Can’t you bury some of them and just keep one or two to feed the family?

**BETHA:** (ANGRY) Leave now! If there is a problem, it concerns my family, not yours. Has your sister ever told you she went to sleep hungry?

**CHISALE:** But you wasted our land, my in-law ─ you wasted our fertile soil. Now I know that you are lazy – you did not want to farm! You wanted easy money. But that is not happening.

**BETHA:** Go away! Just wait and see how things will turn out. Even when I get old, I will still be harvesting fish.

**CHISALE:** I told you he is crazy. Let’s take him to the mental hospital!

**MARY:** Probably you are right; he is crazy. But you gave me a good idea. I will come with my children to bury some of these ponds. The soil here was indeed fertile.

**BETHA:** (ANGRY) Try it, Mary – you’ll see what I will do to you.

**MARY:** You will do what? Do what? I will report you to the police if you try beating me.

**BETHA:** Have I ever beaten you? Your brother is simply trying to confuse you.

**MARY:** But he is telling the truth! The best plan is to bury some of these ponds.

**BETHA:** Don’t we have enough land for irrigated farming below our ponds? Why would we bury ponds if we already have enough land for other types of farming? Do they earn more money than us, even from irrigated farming?

**MARY:** (SLOWLY) Ok, you are talking sense. Yes, we have some land we can use for irrigated farming. And which we use already …

**BETHA:** You see? We cannot simply destroy things because they are not profitable today.

**TRANSITION MUSIC**

**SCENE TWO**

**FX:** SOUND OF A COCK

**BETHA:** Is that the sound of a cock, my wife?

**MARY:** Yes, it is the first cock, so it is around 2 a.m. Are you travelling this morning, my husband?

**BETHA:** I am not travelling. But I will bury one of the fish ponds and use it for other things.

**MARY:** What? I thought you refused that yesterday!

**BETHA:** I think it’s wise.

**MARY:** No, it is not wise. What you said yesterday was wise. We are getting old; we shall need some easy farming. We cannot go back and forth from one plan to another.

**BETHA:** I know that we are not getting any younger. That is why I want to make more than enough money before we get old.

**MARY:** Yesterday you were wiser. You said we need to wait until we see the eyes of a snail *(tidzaona manso a nkhono)* (*Editor’s note: This is a proverb in Malawi which means “until good things happen.”)* We are the only ones with a lot of fish in the village and the surrounding area.

 I suggest we keep all our ponds, like you said. If there is any other farming that goes well together with our fish farming, let's do that, so that all our lands are fully utilized.

**BETHA:** Hmmmh … (LONG PAUSE) (SHOUTING) Yes!

**MARY:** What is wrong? Or what is right?

**BETHA:** (SHOUTING) I’ve got it! I have got it!

**MARY:** You have got what?

**BETHA:** (SHOUTING) Thank you, Mary, my wife.

**MARY:** Hey, Betha, it’s early in the morning and you are shouting – you will wake the children. Lower your voice and tell me … what are you thanking me for?

**BETHA:** (NORMAL VOICE BUT STILL EXCITED) You just reminded me what I saw missionaries do at Nkhoma. We will do integrated white man’s farming.

**MARY:** White man’s farming? What makes it white man’s farming? (LAUGHING) Just because you saw a white man doing it?

**BETHA:** Whatever … I mean integrated farming. You are just brilliant! I would have buried my ponds today if you hadn’t had a brilliant idea.

**MARY:** Tell me what integrated farming is.

**BETHA:** Do you remember that I was at Nkhoma Mission School when I was in class 8?

**MARY:** Yes, you told me that.

**BETHA:** The missionaries were doing integrated farming.

**MARY:** Ok, but what is integrated farming?

**BETHA:** It’s doing more than one type of farming, and arranging your farm so that each type of farming benefits the other.

**MARY:** Ehee, tell me more …

**BETHA:** We will plant bananas close to the fish ponds ─ but not close enough to shade the ponds.

**MARY:** Ehee, bananas … keep talking …

**BETHA:** (TALKING TO HIMSELF) The banana plants will benefit from the water in the soil around the pond and from the rich nutrients in the pond water which we use to irrigate the bananas. At the same time, the banana trees will prevent too much pond water from evaporating. The banana leaves and trunks are good food for fish and pigs ... We will have to buy pigs to feed on the banana trunks when we harvest the bananas …

**MARY:** It sounds good!

**BETHA:** (INTERRUPTING AS IF HE HASN’T HEARD HER) …and use 30 kilograms of pig or goat manure instead of the 10 kilos of chicken manure that we spread in the pond every week to help the plankton grow, and to make the water green, not transparent.

**MARY:** Brilliant! Where was this idea all these years? Pigs multiply quickly and make a lot of manure – and a lot of money! (TRIUMPHANT) That’s the Betha I know! I was wondering why you were going to bury a pond. I thought it was because you had run out of ideas. That wasn't like you.

**BETHA:** So today I will start digging the pits for bananas. I am going right now!

**MARY:** Let’s plant two varieties – plantains and those dwarf varieties –` the quick-maturing ones with large bananas.

**BETHA:** The one where the banana bunch reaches the ground if you don’t stake it!

**MARY:** Yes, that is my favourite!

**BETHA:** Mine too!

**MARY:** I will join you to dig the planting pits.

**BETHA:** How many can you dig?

**MARY:** I can dig two holes today.

**BETHA:** Then I will dig three, which gives us five holes for a start. THEY LAUGH

**SFX:** Sound of door opening and closing crossfading into transition music

**TRANSITION MUSIC**

**SCENE THREE**

**SOUND OF MUD BEING PUT IN PAIL**

**BETHA:** The prices for fish were better this time.

**MARY:** I noticed a difference too.

**BETHA:** People were willing to pay any price we asked.

**MARY:** There must be something wrong at the fish market.

**BETHA:** When did you last go to the market to see the prices for fish from the lake?

**MARY:** It has been a long time since I checked. I guess fish from the lake are expensive now. Maybe that is why people were willing to pay the prices we wanted. Anyway, I will check.

**BETHA:** (STRAINING WITH EFFORT) Hiiiii … Please take this bucket. Huwiii (TIRED AND SHOUTING) How many more beds do we have to apply this mud manure to?

**MARY:** (OFF-MIC, SHOUTING) Only three beds left.

**FX:** SOUND OF WHEELBARROW AND PAILS ` APPROACHING

**CHISALE:** My in-law, Betha, and my sister Mary – what are you doing?

**BETHA:** Oh, my in-law Chisale, we are applying manure to the beds of our irrigated crops, including our bananas.

**CHISALE:** Hey, look at that big banana bunch! It’s bigger than the one in the government orchard. What did you do?

**MARY:** It’s bigger because we’re applying manure and because of the type of water that we use to water them.

**CHISALE:** Are there different types of water? Is it magic?

**BETHA:** No magic, my in-law. I add pig manure to the pond once a week so plankton will grow in the water.

 That’s what the fish feed on. And I water my crops with the nutrient-rich water from the pond outlet.

**CHISALE:** So the mud and the water are full of nutrients from pig’s droppings?

**MARY:** Exactly. As for bananas, we do not have to tell you how profitable they are.

**CHISALE:** When you were digging the pits, we thought it was another madness. But every week you harvest some bananas, and every four months, you harvest fish from each of your five ponds. And you sell pigs at least three times a year. You are earning more than ever before. I salute you. Soon you will be rich!

**BETHA:** No, do not salute me … I am mad, and you people are earning more than me from irrigated maize.

**CHISALE:** (UNCERTAIN) Is that a joke?

**MARY:** It is not a joke. You said that my husband is crazy and that we were wasting our land.

**BETHA:** And you said I should bury the ponds. Do you know I did not sleep that day?

**KWENDA:**  (OFF-MIC) Excuse me, madam…

**MARY:** Yes, sir, can I help you?

**KWENDA:** (COMING ON-MIC) Yes. I am looking for Mr. Betha, a fish farmer. Do you know him?

**MARY:** It’s my husband, that man in the pond over there.

**KWENDA:** Thank you, madam. I am Kwenda from SADC Fish Node at the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

**BETHA:** (COMING ON-MIC) You are most welcome. What brings you here?

**SCENE TRANSITION**

**SIGNATURE TUNE**

**NARRATOR:** Mr. Betha and his friends will be back next week in the second and final episode of our drama.

Today, I am in the studio with Mr. Justice Banda, the Fisheries Officer.

**BANDA:** How are you, listeners? I know that most of you farmers keep fish just for food, but do you know that fish can bring in cash just like any other crop or livestock? Fish are very profitable.

**NARRATOR:** If farmers want to keep fish in a pond, what do they need to do?

**BANDA:** They need a piece of cleared land that is somewhat sloping and has enough water. The soil must be able to hold water. They need to clear the bush and dig a pond. It’s simple.

**NARRATOR:** How do they dig a pond?

**BANDA:** You dig and press the dug-out soil on the sides of the pond to seal the holes. One end of the pond should be one and a half metres deep and the shallow end half a metre deep.

**NARRATOR:** How many fish should they put in the pond?

**BANDA:** You add fish according to the size of the pond. For every square metre, you add five fingerlings. For example, for a pond which is 20 metres by 10 metres, or 200 square metres, you need 1000 fish.

**NARRATOR:** How do you feed the fish?

**BANDA:** Fish are easy to feed. Some farmers feed them with maize bran and Napier grass, and some feed them with soya flour. It depends on what you can afford. The fish eat the trunks and leaves of banana plants too.

**NARRATOR:** For fish to compete with a cash crop like tobacco, how many ponds does a farmer need to dig?

**BANDA:** A farmer needs at least five ponds of 20 by 10 metres if you want large sums of money like tobacco. The good thing is that you harvest fish two or three times a year. That gives a fish farmer an advantage. And the labour needs are the same or lower than tobacco.

**NARRATOR:** Thank you, Mr. Justice Banda.

**FX:** SIGNATURE TUNE UP AND UNDER

**NARRATOR:** We will be back next week with more drama from Bauleni village and Mr. Betha the fish farmer.

**FX: S**IGNATURE TUNE UP AND OUT

**PRESENTER:** *The need for firewood on cold nights reminds you where you left the axe* was produced by \_\_\_. Thank you for listening. You can now send SMS messages to our lines or messages to Facebook and WhatsApp. Next week, we will answer any questions you have from this week’s program.

# Episode 2: The stick of a child is the one that is used to kill a snake

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**Messages for this episode**:

1. Prices for fish can change anytime, depending on supply and demand.
2. It is advisable for fish farmers to also produce fingerlings or have a reserve of fish to sell in the next growing season.

## CHARACTERS

BENGO: Fish seller at the market

MARY: Headwoman of Bauleni village, wife of Betha

ALES: Mrs. Tobias

NABANDA: Mrs. Chisale and in-law to Mary, the village headwoman

BETHA: Husband of Mary, the village headwoman

KWENDA: Fish Node Extension Officer

**PRESENTER:** This is the second and last episode in a series of dramas on fish farming which I (name of presenter), your presenter, am bringing to you on (name of station). Episode 2 is called *The stick of a child is the one that was used to kill a snake, or* *Kandodo kamwana ndiko amaphera njoka* in the Chichewa language.

 After the drama, we will respond to the questions you asked after the previous program. If you have a question or did not understand something about today’s issues, send an SMS to the following phone numbers \_\_\_\_\_. You can also send a WhatsApp message or like our Facebook page at \_\_\_\_\_ so that you can send a Facebook message. We will now begin the drama.

SIGNATURE TUNE UP AND CROSSFADE INTO BELOW

**SCENE ONE**

**NARRATOR:** I am sure those of you who listened to the first episode of our drama know something about how to dig a fish pond. Today, we will concentrate on how to take care of fish and multiply fingerlings.

MRS. MARY BETHA, MRS. NABANDA CHISALE AND MRS. ALES TOBIAS AT THE TRADING CENTRE

**FX**: SOUND OF MINBUS CALLERS AND HORNS UNDER MARKET AMBIENCE

**BENGO:** Nabanda, Mary and Ales, you are my customers. Don’t buy from those people, come buy from me.

**NABANDA:** (APPROACHING) Don’t worry, Mr. Bengo, we are coming. (ON-MIC) So, Mr. Bengo, why have you made smaller heaps this time? How much are these small heaps of dried fish?

**BENGO:**  One hundred kwacha each. But since you are my good

customers, I will give them at 250 kwacha for three heaps. Mary and Alex, how many do you want?

**MARY:** Deal with Nabanda first.

**NABANDA:** What? Instead of increasing the price, you have reduced the quantity?

**BENGO:**  Why not? The bigger heaps are double the cost. Fish at the lake are expensive. Fishermen say things are expensive for them too.

**NABANDA:** I will go back empty-handed. I will buy fresh fish from my in-law, Mary.

**BENGO:** Village headwoman, I hear you have fish ponds. When are you harvesting?

**MARY:** Yes. I am harvesting again next month.

**BENGO:** Please come to tell me the exact date when you are harvesting. I will go to the lake only when there are no pond fish to buy.

**MARY:** So you want to snatch my fish from me?

**BENGO:** No. You can profit when you inform us in advance. We know

the market and can compete with those other buyers who buy for home use.

**MARY:** I think you are right. Why didn’t we inform you when we were harvesting so that you could compete?

**ALES:** Do not talk as if you are talking to kids – how much do you

pay?

**BENGO:** We measure with that bucket. If the bucket is filled, it weighs 10 kilograms and we buy at 8,000 kwacha for small tilapia, 9,000 for medium and 10,000 for big tilapia.

**MARY:** Wow, I harvest 15 of those buckets. That means I harvest 150 kilos of very big and well-fed *chambo* per pond.

**BENGO:** I can link you to hotels if you agree to give me ten

per cent. They give us such high prices that you cannot believe your ears – if your tilapia are big enough.

**NABANDA:** They grow big. I will tell my husband that we should join this fish farming. My in-law, you are destined for riches.

**ALES:** I will not miss it.

**NABANDA:** Mary I thinkpeople scrambled for your fish last time you harvested because they are aware that the price of fish is rising at the market. How can I start fish farming?

**MARY:** Come to a meeting at my chief’s court tomorrow. Mr. Kwenda from Bunda College is coming to talk about fish farming.

**ALES:** I will not miss it.

TRANSITION MUSIC

**SCENE TWO**

**FX:** CROWD OF PEOPLE AT THE CHIEF’S PLACE

**CHISALE**: Quiet! Quiet, people … quiet, people!

**ALES:** (WHISPERING) Silence! Chisale is speaking.

**CHISALE:** Respect to the village headwoman of Bauleni, who happens to be my sister Mary.

### SFX: LAUGHTER

### VOICES: We know that she is your sister. Just speak. We have other things to do.

**CHISALE:** (LOUD VOICE) Respect to the visitor from Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources. In my own capacity, I welcome you all. I now call upon the village headwoman of Bauleni village, Mrs. Betha, to ask Mr. Kwenda to address us.

 (LOUD VOICE) Let’s clap hands as our chief rises.

**FX:** CLAPPING HANDS IN UNISON ONCE EVERY THREE SECONDS

**MARY:** (LOUD SHOUT) Thank you, my people, thank you. Respect to Mr. Kwenda from Fish Node.

 Thank you, my people, for coming in large numbers and for keeping order. I will speak after Mr. Kwenda has spoken. (IN LOWER VOICE) You can speak to my people.

**KWENDA:** (LOUD, AT THE TOP OF HIS VOICE) I am Kwenda from NEPAD Fish Node at Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources. I hope I can answer some of your questions.

**ALES:** Yes, sir.

**KWENDA:** It will not be me speaking to you. It will be me asking and you answering. And sometimes you asking and I will answer. I will want one person to speak at a time.

**ALL:** Okay.

**KWENDA:** How did fish farming come here?

**TOBIAS:** It came with a NGO in 2007, when there was a famine.

**BETHA:** It did not come alone. The NGO brought irrigated farming together with fish farming.

**TOBIAS:** We chose irrigated farming and Mr. Betha chose fish farming, I guess because he was already doing irrigated farming.

**KWENDA:** But why is Betha the only one with ponds? Don’t you want fish farming?

**ALL:** We want it.

**KWENDA:** One at a time, please. If you want it, why don’t you have ponds with all this good land and plenty of water around you?

**NABANDA:** We did not want it because there was no market for fish. Mr. Betha was giving us enough to eat and even to dry for later use, because he was selling cheaply.

**ALES:** We heard that there is a market for fish now at the trading centre. We couldn’t even buy dried fish from the lake a few days ago, they were so expensive!

**KWENDA:** Do you have the technical know-how to dig a pond?

**CHISALE:** We are experts at digging ponds. We dug Betha’s pond for wages and learned in the process. We have equipment like pangas, shovels, wheelbarrows, and picks. The NGO left them; they are at the chief’s house.

**ALES:** We simply need to decide to dig one. We know we need to make the pond a half metre deep at the shallow part and one and a half metres deep at the deeper side.

**KWENDA:** You know already. When will you start digging the ponds?

**NABANDA:** Today, after this meeting.

**SFX:** LAUGHTER

**NABANDA:** (SHOUTING) Why are you laughing?

**KWENDA:** Do not laugh. Just stand up and tell me when you will start digging yours.

**ALES:** For me and my husband Tobias, we will start digging tomorrow.

**KWENDA:** Please dig. We have come to give you new technologies that are improving fish production. I saw that Mr. Betha put some bamboo branches in the pond. Do you know why?

**ALES:** No, we do not know.

**NABANDA:** I asked Mary, our chief. She said they do that to prevent predators such as birds from catching the fish.

**KWENDA:** That is true. You can put those in the pond to prevent predators, but you can also cover the pond with transparent plastic. You can cover half or the whole of it. It protects fish and at the same time heats the water and the fish grow faster because of the warmth.

**BENGO:** Okay! I saw that my friend did that. I will do that too.

**KWENDA:** You should also make sure that the water is green, not transparent, so that birds and other predators cannot see the fish. You can do that by adding manure to the pond.

**NABANDA:** How much manure?

**KWENDA:** It depends on the type of manure. You should add at least 10 kilos if it is chicken manure, 10 kilos of pig manure, 20 kilos of goat manure, or about 25 kilos of cattle manure for a standard-sized pond of 20 by 10 metres. You add it once a week. When you add manure, the plankton in the pond grows, and this is the fish’s main food. Of course, you have to pay attention to the amount of plankton in the pond to ensure that you don’t add too much manure. That could hurt the fish. Will you do that?

**ALL:** We will manage that.

**KWENDA:** Thank you, Chief. I will come to see what is happening and give you tips once every six months. Thank you.

**MARY:** Thank you all for coming. I will not delay you any longer. I heard some of you will start digging today. After the closing ceremony, you can go home and start digging.

TRANSITION SONG

**SCENE THREE**

SOUND OF WATER BEING POURED INTO A BUCKET

**BETHA:** Mary, my wife, look at this long list of people wanting fingerlings! How can we supply all these people?

**MARY:** Let’s assign one pond to producing fingerlings.

**BETHA:** Yes, that is a good idea.

**CHISALE:** (COMING ON-MIC) Are you catching my fingerlings, my in-law?

**BETHA:** No, these fingerlings are not yours. They are for a farmer from another village who came earlier than you. Look at the list. Which number are you?

**CHISALE:** (AMAZED) Number fifty-one? This can’t be true! Why, my in-law?

**BETHA:** I keep improved tilapia and they grow bigger than other species. That is why people are scrambling to buy fingerlings from me.

**CHISALE:** I should be the first. I am your relative!

**BETHA:** That cannot happen; it would be a breach of contract. After all, I am not supplying fingerlings directly to farmers. I have a contract with the NGO that gave me these fish to supply farmers.

**MARY:** The fish are giving us gold in the same way your irrigated plots give you gold.

**CHISALE:** That was a joke, my sister. Please forgive me.

**MARY:** We forgive you, but the fact remains that the fingerlings are fully booked.

**KWENDA:** (COMING ON-MIC)Betha and Chisale, I overheard you arguing about something. What’s wrong?

**CHISALE:** Mr. Kwenda, you arrived at the right time. I dug my fish pond, 20 metres by 10 metres. The water is there but he is refusing to give me fingerlings. What do I do?

**MARY:** We are not refusing. We are overwhelmed by the demand.

**KWENDA:** I understand. Fish are expensive now and everyone wants to have a pond of their own so they have cheaper fish and earn a living. So I will teach you how to multiply fingerlings.

**BETHA:** Is there a special way to multiply fish?

**KWENDA:** Yes. You can place adult fingerlings in a separate pond for breeding. They will lay the eggs and fertilize them in that pond. The female fish keep the eggs in their mouths after the eggs are fertilized by the males. The newly hatched fingerlings can then be raised and fed separately until they reach 5-10 grams and can be added to the regular pond.

**BETHA:** Is that why you said we need to dry our ponds completely and start fresh every three years?

**KWENDA:** Yes. Some fish farmers dry their fish ponds every six months to add new fingerlings. To multiply fingerlings, you need to separate the big male and female fish in clean water in a small pond which is well-protected from predators such as birds and otters. You can cover it with a net, or with plastic.

You give these fish special protein-rich fish feed which can be made from soy or fishmeal-based.

**BETHA:** Then you are done?

**KWENDA:** You are done. You give the fingerlings good food like soya or fishmeal-based feed in powder form to make sure they grow fast. When they are 5-10 grams, you can sell them or add them to your grow-out ponds.

**BETHA:** Chisale, I will give you the broodstock. Broodstock are mature fish that are used for breeding. Just dig your own small pond for breeding and multiplying. We have just learnt together how to do it and we can remind one another.

**CHISALE:** Thank you; that is kind of you.

**MARY:** Your in-law loves you. We always wish you well, but you always discourage us.

**CHISALE:** I am sorry. Whatever I said was with the goal of helping you and my in-law. But my ideas were wrong.

**BETHA:** I understand you, my in-law. Go and dig a small manageable pond and then I will give you broodstock.

**CHISALE:** Thank you very much. Thank you.

SIGNATURE TUNE UP AND FADE OUT UNDER BELOW

**NARRATOR:** This is the end of our two-part drama on fish farming. Next week we will give you answers to any questions you have about today’s program. Today, I am again in the studio with Professor Justice Banda, an aquaculture and fisheries researcher and scientist. .

 What can you tell our listeners about multiplying fingerlings?

**BANDA:** Kwenda explained very well how to multiply tilapia. Tilapia are clever fish; they keep the eggs in their mouths. One mother can give birth to three thousand young ones. That many fish will fill two or three ponds all by themselves, provided that you prevent a lot of young ones from dying.

**NARRATOR:** How can you prevent young fish from dying?

**BANDA:** Bymaking sure that you remove the mother from the small pond at the right time. But when the female has the eggs in her mouth, you should remove the male. After seven days or so, the young fish come out of her mouth and can swim on their own. Then you should remove the mother immediately. Feed the young ones with purchased high nutrient feed. Or you can make high-nutrient feed yourself from protein-rich foods like soy or fishmeal.

**NARRATOR:** Thank you, Professor. What is the benefit to fish farmers of multiplying fingerlings themselves?

**BANDA:** It helps reduce the cost of fingerlings. We have found that there is often a shortage of fingerlings. So breeding fingerlings and reducing the mortality rate of fingerlings in the pond is a good practice.

**NARRATOR:** Thank you, Mr. Justice Banda.

**FX:** SIGNATURE TUNE UP AND UNDER

**PRESENTER:** Today’s episode, *The stick of a child is the one that was used to kill a snake* was produced by \_\_\_. Thank you for listening. We will now open our SMS lines. With us today is (name of expert). He/she can answer your questions about good fish farming practices. Our phone numbers are \_\_\_ and our SMS lines are \_\_\_.

PHONE-IN SEGMENT

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Daniel Chauluka, chairman of the village development committee at Mtonya village and local village reporter for Real Real (*Chenicheni Nchiti*) in Traditional Authority Mkanga, Mulanje.

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