

PRODUCTION, PROFITS & PLANNING



**Rothindranath Mazumder
is setting an example for
his neighbors**

"I never expected such production, never thought this huge production and profit were possible," said Rothindranath Mazumder. Rothindranath is a young prawn-carp farmer of Abhoynagar, Jashore, who

started farming after finishing his degree. He is the first member of his family to take up prawn-carp farming and has been pursuing it for the last four years. He has been cultivating rice in his gher during the dry season and then prawn and carp in the rainy season following traditional methods. In addition, he grows vegetables and bananas on the pond dike. This young farmer works hard to make a better living, but the profit from his prawn-carp farming was poor and he was looking for some improved technology to increase his production.

When one of his relatives introduced him to SAFETI, he became interested to learn about the improved prawn-carp farming methodologies the project is promoting. As one of 25 farmers in his local group, he received the three modules of training on Semi-Intensive Prawn-Carp Polyculture. Seeing his enthusiasm and willingness to invest in adopting the technology, SAFETI selected his 80-decimal (0.8 acre) gher as the demonstration site for the other 24 farmers in the group.

Rothindranath showed his commitment by excavating his gher (pond) to remove bottom mud and increasing the depth by 3.5 feet. This work will serve him for the next five years. He prepared a separate nursery and stocked it with 9,000 prawn post larvae (PL) in May 2018. That was the first time he had used a separate nursery stage. After

nursing, he transferred the juveniles to the main gher and also stocked it with 300 carp. Rothindranath said, *“I have learned so many important things about farming. Before, I used to release PL directly in the gher, and did not know that prawns can die because of the black mud. This year I removed the black mud from the pond bottom and then disinfected with lime. I used prebiotics for encouraging natural feed production in the pond and only then did I release the PL.”* This season his total expenditure was BDT 114,000 (US \$1,317), including the five-year depreciated cost of the pond excavation and netting. He was able to harvest 360 kg of prawn and 337 kg of carp — three times last year’s production — and sell them for BDT 209,000 (US \$2,415), making a profit of BDT 95,000 (almost US \$1,10). In previous years he would have just broken even, or at most made a profit of BDT 20-50,000 (US \$230 to 577).

Most of the surrounding farmers stayed with traditional methods last year, as they were not confident enough to invest in the new technology. When Rothindranath netted his pond for the first time to check the growth and health of his stock, his neighbors were surprised to see what came out. They started taking advice from him and followed a few of the SAFETI steps, such as regular feedings, from then on. SAFETI arranged a Farmers’ Field Day and highlighted Rothindranath’s harvest as a good example of what is possible with the methodology. Visiting farmers as well as the Upazila Fisheries Officer of the Department of Fisheries congratulated Rothindranath on his results.

“Until now farmers had to be satisfied with harvests of around 1 kg per decimal,” Rothindranath said. “But after seeing my production this season, most of them have become interested to invest and follow this technology. Now they know producing several times more is possible, and they are telling me that they will listen to me and follow my instructions.”

