

## SIX STEPS TO SUCCESS



**Din Bandhu Biswas and his neighbors admire the harvest**

*“My neighboring farmers were surprised to see my production. They stocked PLs before I did, but I harvested and sold my prawn and carp before them. I have harvested double compared to my previous year’s production, but the others did not get good production,”* said Din Bandhu Biswas, Moshihati, Abhoynagar, Jashore.

Din Bandhu Biswas has been involved in prawn-carp polyculture for the last 25 years but often faced losses due to poor production. Throughout his farming life, he has been following traditional

methods but experienced disease problems such as delayed molting, broken antennae and external fouling that always led to poor harvests. He never heard of the need for good pond preparation or the use of bio-secure nurseries, so he always stocked post larvae (PL) directly into his gher without any preparation work. He did not know which fish species are well-suited to rear with prawns so he would stock different types of carps, and of different sizes in the same gher.

When the SAFETI team discussed with him about improved prawn-carp farming methodology, he showed interest in joining the local group that was being formed. He attended all three trainings provided by SAFETI and became convinced to adopt and invest in the improved prawn-carp farming methodologies developed and promoted by SAFETI. He was well respected by the other group members, and considering his willingness to invest and adopt new technology, SAFETI appointed him as the demonstration farmer of his semi-intensive prawn-carp polyculture group.

In accordance with the SAFETI guidelines, this season he removed the black mud from the pond bottom of his 42-decimal (0.42 acres) gher and dried it, used bleaching powder and installed blue net fencing for biosecurity. He bought 4,000 prawn PL from a known PL trader, and stocked and reared

them in a separate nursery before transfer as juveniles to the main gher. He also followed SAFETI advice to stock 165 rui, catla and silver carp with the prawns. He fed them good quality feed regularly and used lime, dolomite and probiotics as recommended by SAFETI. He also learned how to encourage natural feed production in the pond using prebiotics. *“The SAFETI staff kept visiting me during the whole farming period and guided me on better farming practices. They used to come once every 15-20 days and taught me how I can increase growth and production. Thanks to their support, I was able to make a great harvest in only five and a half months,”* said Din Bandhu.

Din Bandhu harvested 180.5 kg of prawns and 177 kg of carp, which he sold for BDT 196,446 (US \$2,270). Neighboring farmers, especially those in the area south of his village, became interested when they saw his production and have been asking him for advice. Many now want to adopt and invest in the improved farming methodologies developed and promoted by SAFETI.

Din Bandhu used to cultivate rice in his gher during the dry season but he does not want to this year as labor costs are high and production poor. Instead, he plans an early stocking of prawn PL in March.

*Din Bondhu explains, “Careful PL rearing is the most important thing I have learned from SAFETI. If PL becomes diseased or unhealthy in the early stages, it is very difficult to make them healthy again later.” He also commented, “Last year I could not follow all the six key steps due to a family problem, but if SAFETI continues to provide me support, this year I will follow all the steps properly. SAFETI trainings are very helpful for the farmers. If this project had started before, we could already be benefiting, and our village would be developed.”*

