

Biddut Dhali is an Inspiration to other Farmers



Biddut Dhali sampling his prawns

Biddut Dhali is a prawn farmer from Sabokhali Village, Chitalmari Upazila, Bagerhat District, who has been farming prawns for the past eight years. He is a member of a marginalized farming family and always dreamed of obtaining a government job. After receiving a Diploma Degree in Agriculture in 2012, he sought any type of job for several years, but was unsuccessful. Finally, he gave up looking for a government or other job and resorted to agriculture as his income-earning occupation.

Being an energetic and enthusiastic individual, he worked at his father's gher when young, which provided him with experience in traditional shrimp and prawn farming practices, but did not include any modern science/information-based technology. In addition to shrimp and prawn farming, he began rice and vegetable cultivation, but was unable to raise himself out of poverty. He cultivated a traditional shrimp-prawn mix in his 27 decimal gher (0.11 ha) and often realized poor harvests due to lack of sufficient knowledge about shrimp and prawn farming. Last year, he harvested only 1-1.5 kg/decimal and his total production was just 40 kg. He did not know about proper management practices, did not use good quality feed and had no knowledge about biosecurity, which was a major factor in his inability to control the outbreaks of disease that limited his harvests. He also had no understanding of how to maintain the water quality of his gher.

When the SAFETI team offered to help him learn and apply improved prawn-carp farming methodology, he eagerly joined a local farming group in October 2018 and attended all of the three module trainings on "Semi Intensive Prawn-Carp Polyculture Farming." He also took part in an exchange visit to successful farmers that convinced him to invest in adopting new

technology and management practices. He followed all the guidelines diligently, and at the end of the season, he harvested 285 kg of prawns and 80 kg carp from his gher.

The primary basis for his success and the more than six-fold increase in production was his adoption of SAFETI's "Six Key Steps for Successful Prawn Farming." Biddut said, *"Shrimp and prawn cultivation is like a hidden treasure if it is done the proper way, and I have found my hidden treasure by following the six key steps of SAFETI."*

Now Biddut is preparing his pond for this year using SAFETI-promoted technology. Importantly, after seeing his success and the major increase in his harvest, neighboring farmers regularly come to him for guidance and have been inspired to follow the SAFETI methods.

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*A report by Md. Gias Uddin, CODEC
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