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Lead Farmers: changing into way of safe and good quality shrimp

A Story of Success under BEST-BFQ, UNIDO Program

“After receiving training now I know better the way of producing good quality and health friendly shrimp through application of Good Aquaculture Practices. I feel honour I can help others shrimp farmers in my locality. I am really happy with the services”

- Subash Chandra Mondol, Lead farmer, Koikhali union, Satkhira



A happy lead farmer at his farm

Context

At present, Bangladesh ranks fourth among the top aquaculture production countries and contributes about 2.6% in global production. Among the aquaculture, the shrimp sector plays the most crucial role in generating foreign exchange which is the second largest export earner after garments. However, without improve small scale shrimp farmers’ access to technical knowledge, technical services, particularly towards the production of quality and safe shrimp production and decreasing disease risks, the safe and quality shrimp production could not be enhanced. To mitigate these issues the BEST-BFQ, UNIDO has made significant contribution towards building the food safety capacity of shrimp sector of Bangladesh to intensify of GAP expansion through developing local expertise creating lead farmers. Initiating the unique Lead Farmers Program implemented by the BEST-BFQ, UNIDO project becomes an ideal approach. This is a good approach for the development of fisheries sector and helps the department to disseminate new technologies & ideas by the lead farmer’s in the remote locality. Lead Farmers make aware and enhance the capacity of the local shrimp farmers, which will ultimately help better access of Bangladesh shrimp and shrimp products to global market and increase export earnings.

Objectives

- To create awareness on Good Aquaculture practices (GAP) through extension services
- To disseminate the necessary information to the local farmers and act as contact farmers to produce safe and quality shrimp product.
- To follow good aquaculture practice that significantly facilitates higher shrimp production by reducing disease incidence and improving product quality.
- To enhance the capacity of the local shrimp farmers that ultimately helps better access of Bangladesh shrimp and shrimp products to global market and increase export earnings.

Impacts

- In total, 170 Lead Farmers were selected from 850-trained GAP shrimp farmers covering 26 Upazilas of 07 District.
- All 170 lead farmers received GAP training. After receiving training they become motivated to produce safe and quality shrimp in their respective farm and started working as extension worker to disseminate new technology to the nearby other shrimp farmers of his locality to produce safe and quality shrimp following Good Aquaculture Practice.
- BEST-BFQ, UNIDO organized two days residential follow-up training for 70 lead farmers of Khulna region to update their knowledge to acquire recent information and technology on Good Aquaculture Practice.

- The Lead farmers are not only acting as extension agent they themselves also became a good shrimp farmer cultivating shrimp in their Gher after receiving training. Their farm now has become as demo in their respective union and people come to their farm to observe physically and learn lessons from direct observation.

Subash Chandra Mondol, is one of the successful lead farmers in Koikhali union and now he is an icon in their locality for achieving incredible growth (about 400%) in shrimp production in Shyamnagar upazilla of Satkhira. He produced 400 kg shrimp from 4.66 ha pond attaining about 86 kg/ha at 2013 whereas at 2014 he has got a tremendous success attaining production 2000 kg (429 kg/ha). His successful production in growth has come with proper intervention of GAqP, trained from BEST-BFQ. His poor production at 2013 made him so worried to quit from this business. However, after implementing GAP now he is able to increase his production and as well as able to produce safe and health friendly shrimp.

Before receiving training, I could not manage my farm properly as drying pond in appropriate way, nursing the shrimp PL before stocking and monitoring the water quality regularly. Moreover, water depth was very low in most of the farming area, which reduce the PL survivability and lead to lower production. However, after receiving training from this project now I am fully aware about GAqP and always try to maintain it into my Gher. At beginning of 2014, before stocking the shrimp, the PL has been nursed with proper management and my Gher have been prepared with maintaining appropriate rules. Moreover, at fixed interval I have checked the water quality regularly. Finally, I have come to success in increasing shrimp production and thanks for the kind help through this project in my locality. To communicate with DoF officials at upazila level is not easy and it is time consumable for the local farmers. All problems are not always possible to solve & communicate over phone. I frequently visit Upazila and meet with Upazila fisheries officer. The updated information received from Fisheries Officer or BEST project I immediately discussed with our local shrimp farmers in my village. They follow my advice and the shrimp production increased in their Gher. Now the shrimp farmers of my locality get the better shrimp price because they produce quality shrimp. -said Subash Chandra Mondol, Lead farmer, Koikhali union, Satkhira.

Like Mr. Subhash Chandra Mondol, most of the Lead shrimp farmers are now getting benefits from adopting new aquaculture technologies, disseminates technology and updated information to the local shrimp farmers. As increasing their incomes, living standards, social status as well as finding out the way of sustainability now they feel themselves responsible on society.



GAP training for shrimp farmers



Lead farmers follow-up training