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# New digital tools aspire to improve sustainable shrimp production in Bangladesh

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

## Digital tools make biosecurity training 'more engaging and accessible,' leading to improved sustainable shrimp production

Researchers at the University of Exeter have developed a new set of digital training tools that could improve sustainable shrimp production in Bangladesh.

The shrimp industry is hugely important for the Bangladesh economy, employing around 3.5 million people. It's a key source of dietary protein for the Bangladeshi people, and the industry has expanded rapidly over the past 40 years.

However, it now faces increasing losses from disease – partly due to poor biosecurity (preventing the introduction and spread of harmful organisms), which has substantial economic, social and environmental costs, the researchers said.

“Our project aims to help the Bangladesh shrimp aquaculture industry become more sustainable by



A set of digital tools makes biosecurity training “more engaging and accessible,” improving sustainable shrimp production in Bangladesh. Photo courtesy of the University of Exeter.

improving biosecurity,” said project lead Professor Charles Tyler. “We know from animal production in other global regions that good biosecurity helps to prevent disease and reduce the need for chemicals and drugs.”

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In response, the research team has developed a set of digital training videos, a self-assessment app and monitoring sheets, all of which aim to make biosecurity training “more engaging and accessible.”

“If we can support the shrimp industry to improve biosecurity in Bangladesh, this should in turn increase productivity and lower the impacts on biodiversity loss, pollution of water systems and the risk of antimicrobial resistance,” said Tyler.



## Crouching Tigers: Bangladesh shrimp farming at a critical juncture

With improved programs and branding opportunities for its black tiger producers, Bangladesh shrimp farming eyes a more profitable future.



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The digital tools created by the Exeter research team are for shrimp hatcheries, which produce larval shrimp and supply the entire industry of more than 300,000 farmers across Bangladesh. They have been produced in collaboration with shrimp hatcheries and in-country partners WorldFish and the Centre for Communication Action Bangladesh.

“Most biosecurity training materials are not aimed at low-income, extensive farming systems, which are commonly found across Bangladesh, and they are usually technical and text-based, so not very appropriate or readily accessible,” said lead researcher Dr. Kelly Thornber. “By working with in-country partners, we have identified pragmatic solutions that are simple and relatively cheap to implement.”

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### Author

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RESPONSIBLE SEAFOOD ADVOCATE

[editor@globalseafood.org](mailto:editor@globalseafood.org) (<mailto:editor@globalseafood.org>).

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