



Occupational Safety and Health Risks for Female Workers Engaged in Shrimp Processing Industry in Bangladesh

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Introduction

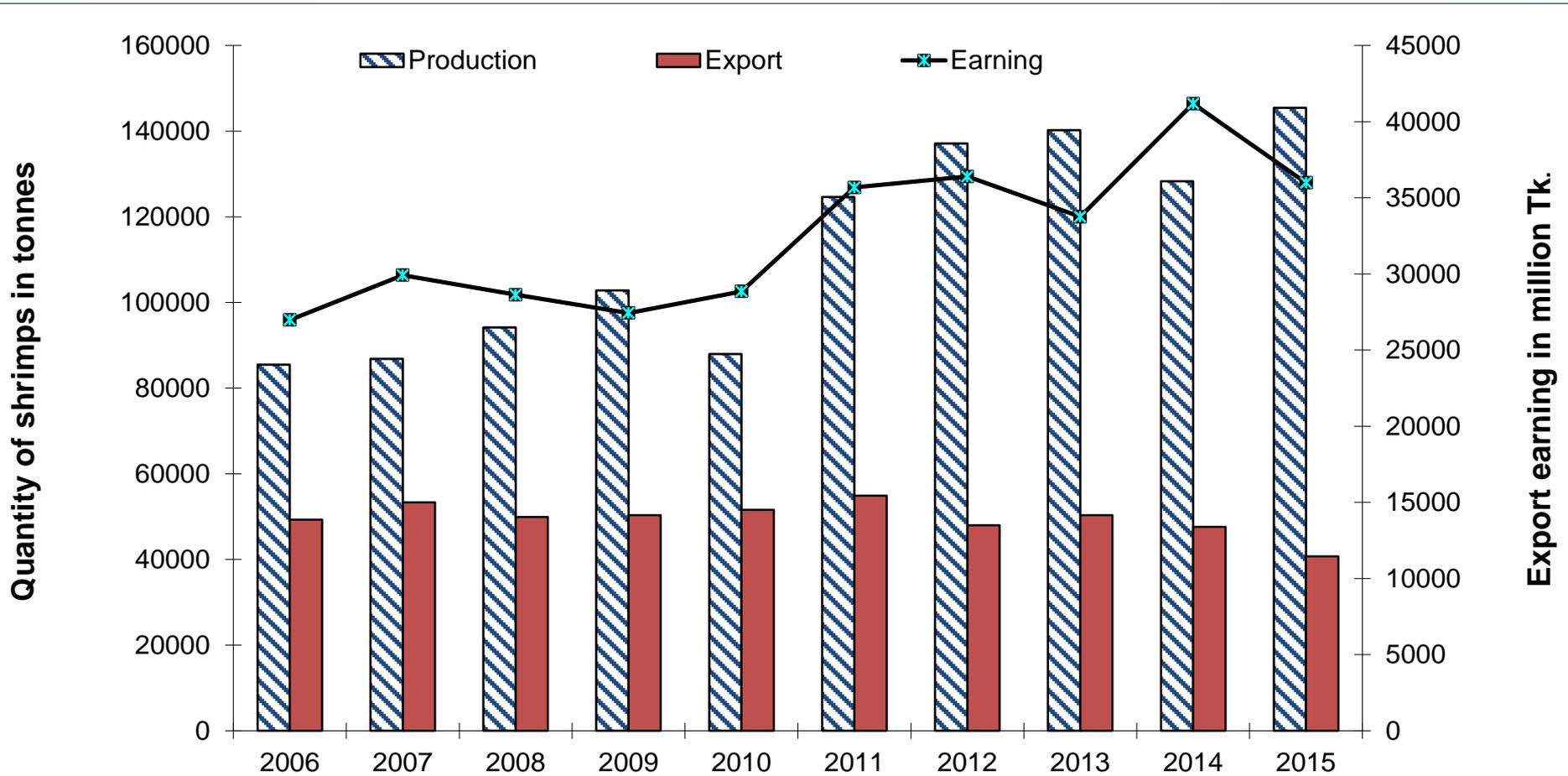
- Shrimp industry plays an important role in the economy including employing a good number of women after the garment sector
- Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) issue became 'talk of the town' recently
- International buyers and consumers are worried about the OSH status of shrimp workers
- Shrimp export is facing a dwindling trend and now 7th in position from 2nd in 2009



Objectives

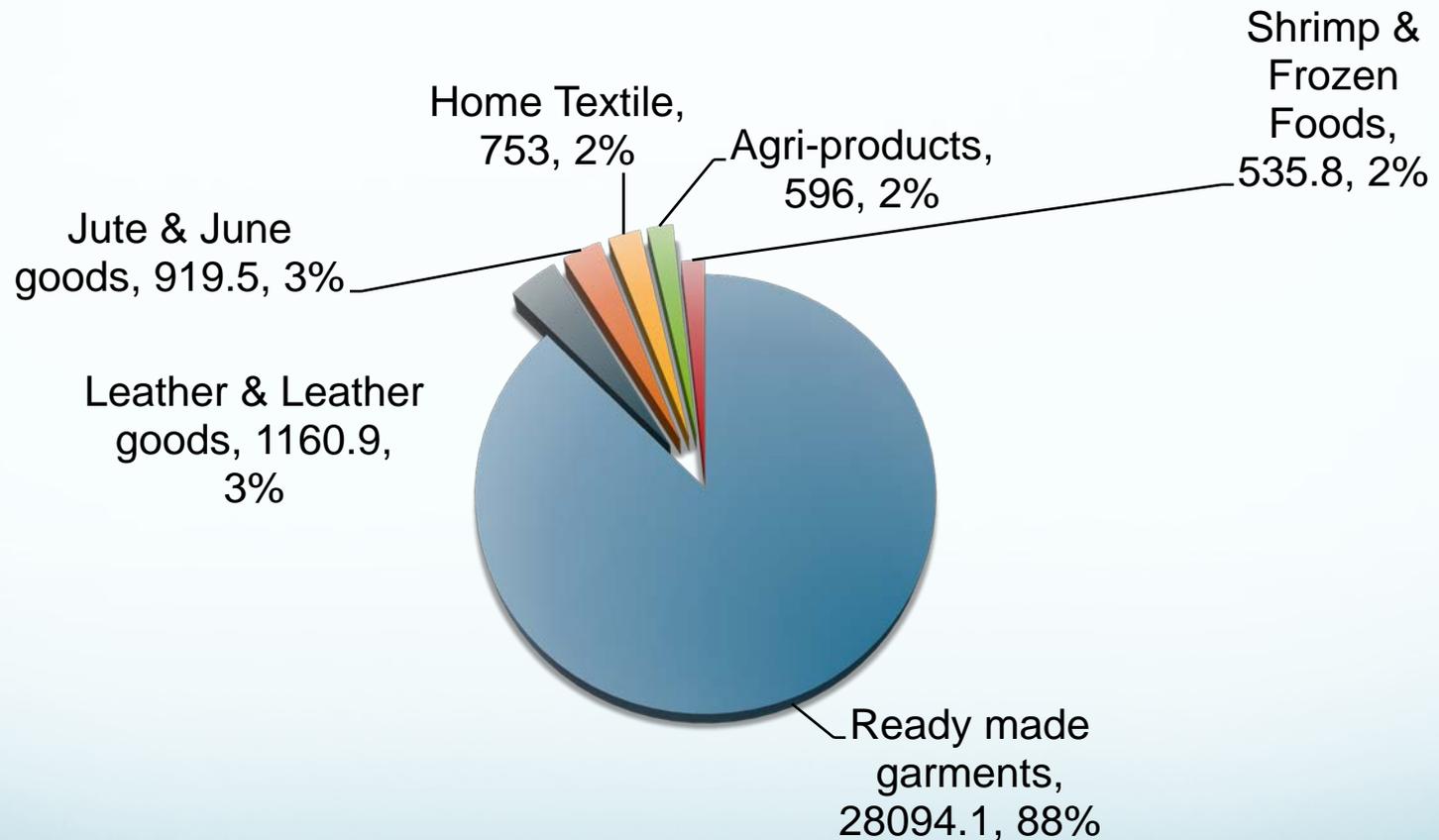
- To give an overview of OSH status in relation to female workers across the shrimp processing industry
- To give an account of OSH risky area affecting female workers
- To recommend ways to improve the OSH situation across the shrimp processing sector in Bangladesh

Role in the Economy



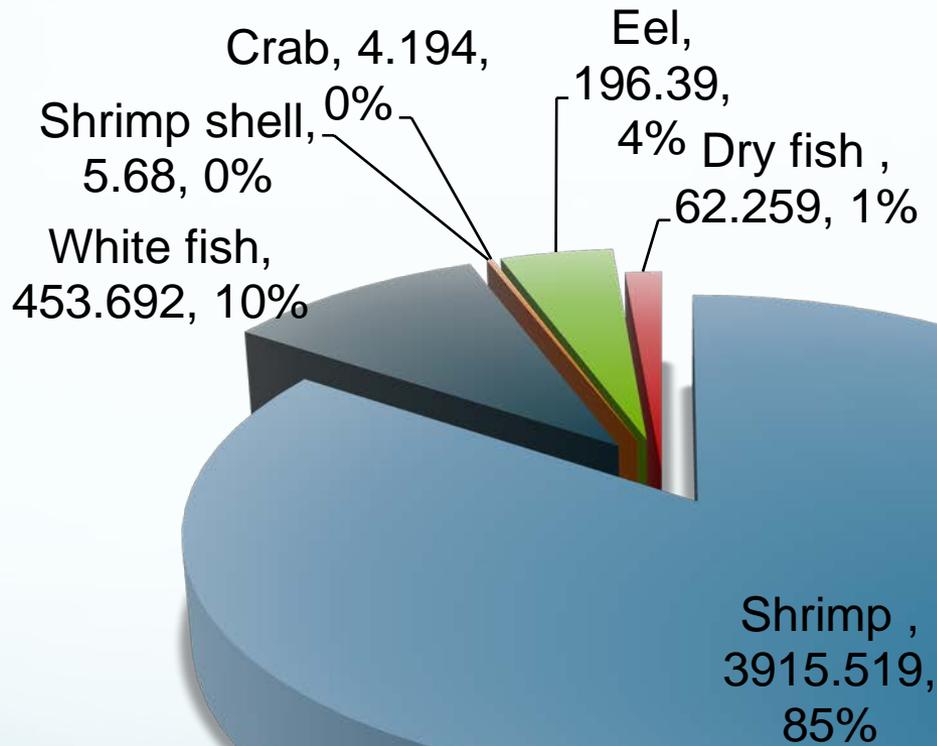
Trend of Bangladesh Shrimp production, export and earning, 2006 - 2015

Role in the Economy



Major Export Sectors with income in million US\$, Bangladesh, 2015-16

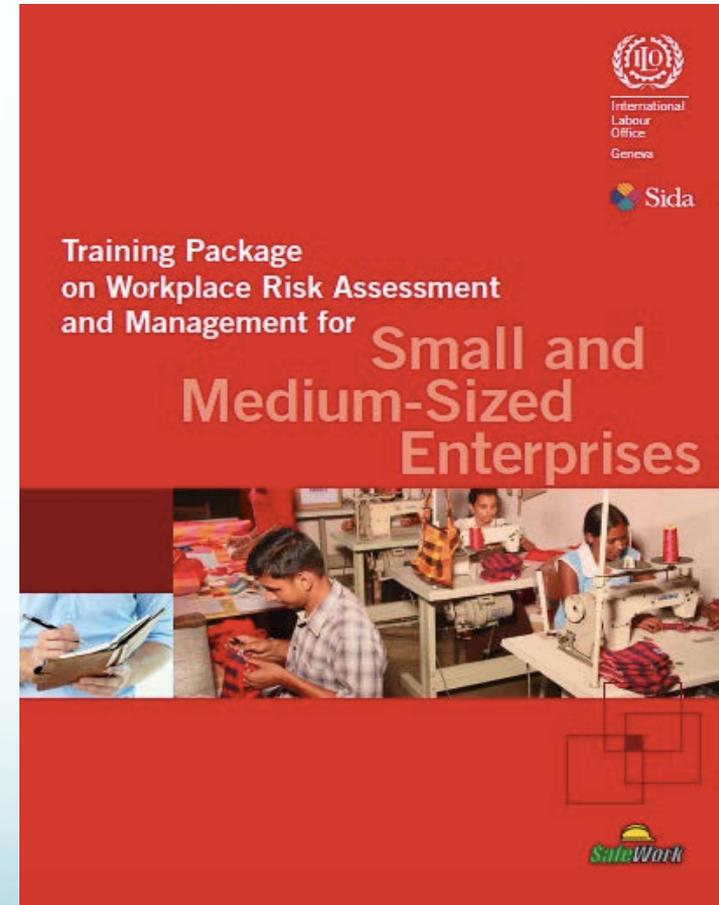
Role in the Economy



Distribution of export earning (in Cr BDT) from shrimp and other fish & fisheries products, 2014-15

Methods of OSH risk assessment

- Several OSH Risk Assessment workshops organized in 2014 for the 1st time for the industry with help of BFFEA and projects
- Technical officials e.g. Plant Engineers, Factory Manager, Machine operators, Boiler operators and Electricians from the running factories were invited
- Participatory identification of 'Hazards' and 'Risks' across the processing factories
- Developed need-based training materials using ILO OSH Guidelines taking help from local resource persons
- Interviewed over 500 workers from 45 shrimp factories investigating OSH risks at their workplaces



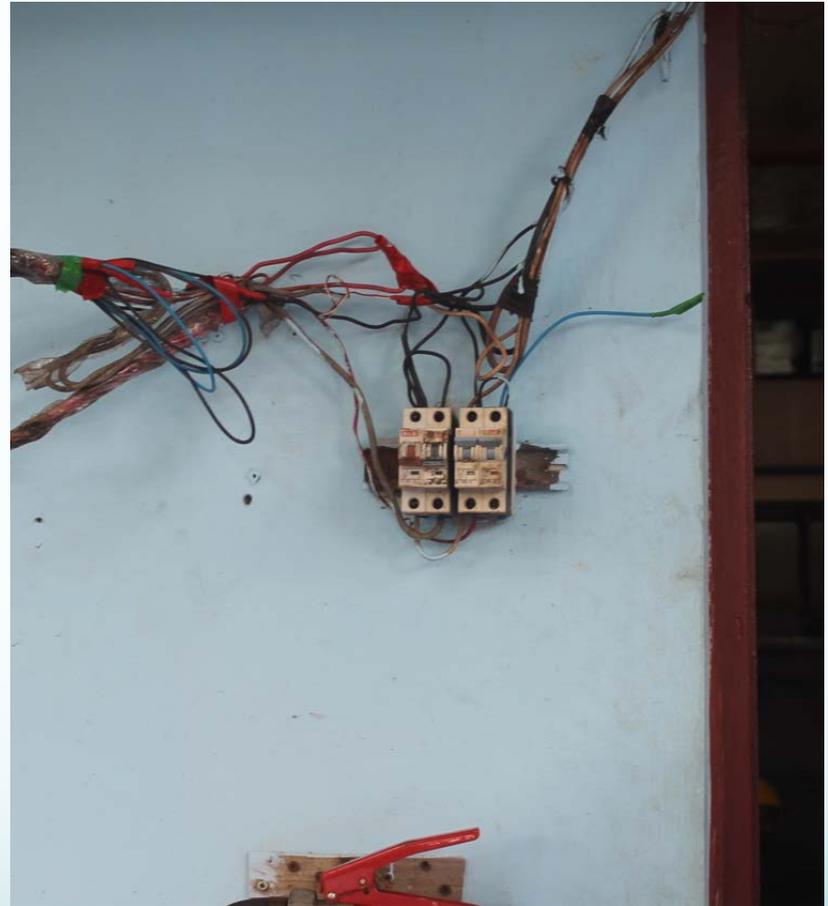
Status of OSH risks across shrimp processing

- Emerged after serious fire incitements and building collapse in garment industry
- There was no such initiative before to assess OSH risks in shrimp industry
- Fire safety and building across the shrimp industry is believe to be safer
- It is believe that there risks of electrical safety, mechanical, chemical and occupational health risks



Some observations

- Building safety is risk free, production is done in 1st floor
- Fire safety generally riskless but for stores for packaging materials and fuels & lubricants found risky
- Electrical safety is weak, low quality cables and fittings, poor maintenance, lack of qualified electricians and there are incidents of accidents



Some observations

- Mechanical safety, noise and vibration around machines found uncared
- Gas (NH_3) and Chemical safety found under risk
- Workers health and occupational safety are much neglected
- Supply and use of PPE was not up to the mark
- Women access to OSH training were limited



OSH and the Women



OSH and the Women



OSH and the Women



Worker injured



Store (Fire safety)



Recommendations for remedy

- Strict compliance of Factory Rules
- Adequate supply and use of necessary PPE
- Regular Fire drill and safety training for the workers
- Assigning a qualified 'Safety Officer' in each factory
- Strict following of SOP for all machines including periodic maintenance
- Use of Fryon as refrigerant instead of NH_3 gas

Recommendations for remedy

- Formation of 'Safety Committee' at each factory and its appropriate functioning as per law
- Regular compliance inspection by government Factory Inspectors, Fire Brigade & Civil Defense officials
- Workers health care to be done as per Labor Laws (Trained Nurse for 150+ workers and MBBS Doctors for 300+ workers)

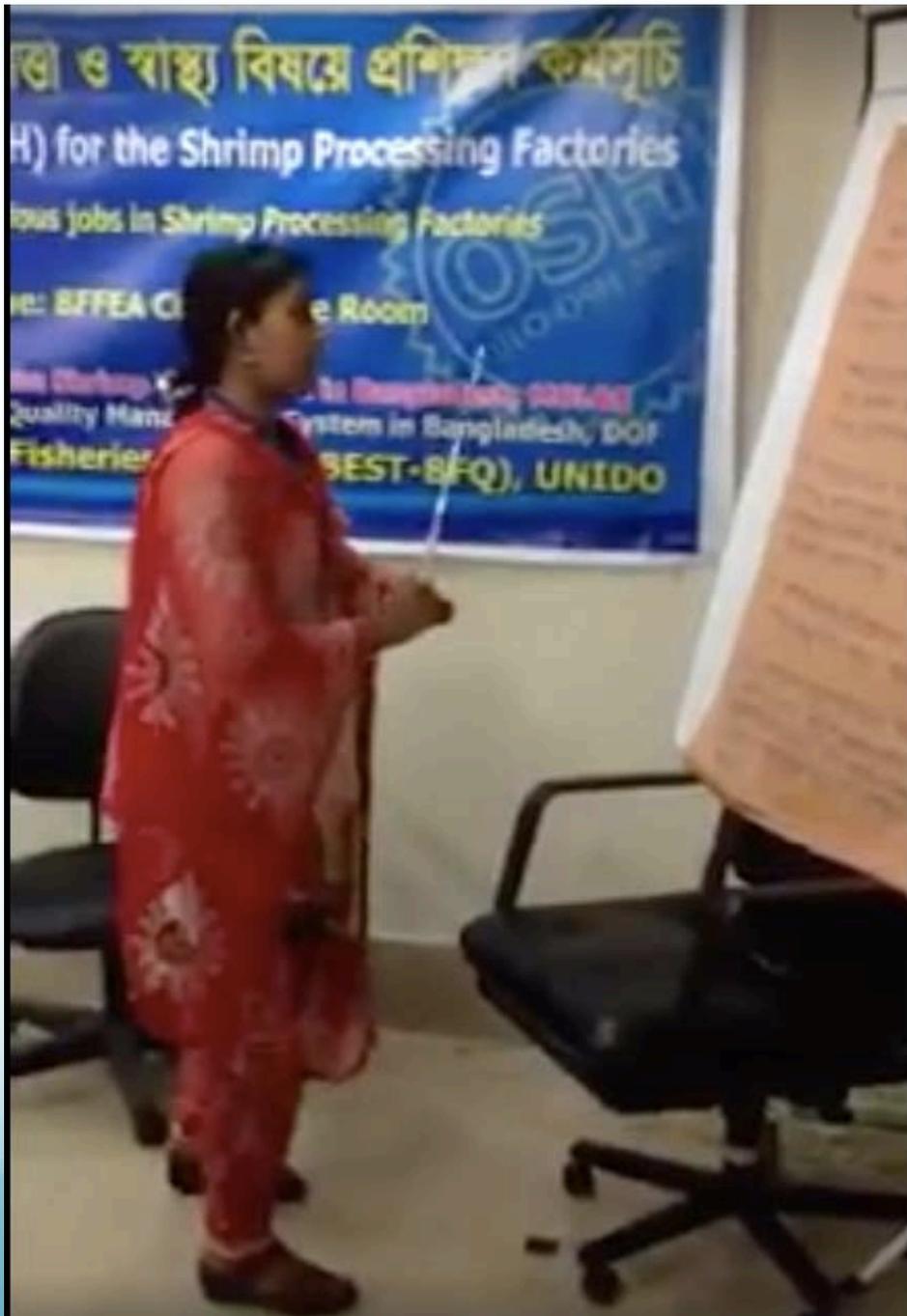
Conclusions

- Training and awareness does not work unless the employers are ready to pay the additional cost of compliance.
- The industry should own their workforce keeping them safe, healthy and skilled for better business and stay competitive.
- Addressing OSH issues need long term support but both UNIDO and ILO have closed their support only after one and a half year working on OSH in shrimp industry.
- Further research and supports are necessary to work on gender focused OSH matters at the shrimp processing workplaces in Bangladesh.

Acknowledgment

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Thank you