

**IMPORT PROMOTION DESK**

# Promoting trade in emerging and developing countries – long term and development-oriented

Participation in international trade is an important condition for lasting measures to combat poverty in emerging and developing countries. Yet companies and associations in the partner countries lack the capacities, know-how and competencies to exploit the opportunities presented by international export markets. European importers, on the other hand, often have neither the contacts nor sufficient appreciation of the potential of the markets in the partner countries.

Import Promotion Desk (IPD) is *the* instrument for import promotion in Germany, efficiently and lastingly bringing together the interests of exporters in the partner countries with those of the European import sector. In doing so, IPD closes a strategic gap at the interface between development cooperation and foreign trade.

Since 2012, IPD has been facilitating access to the EU market for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from selected emerging and developing countries, and supporting them along the so-called “last mile”.

**THE DEVELOPMENTAL GOAL**

The goal of IPD is to integrate partner countries into global trade, thereby making a long-term contribution to the economic development of these countries. Particular consideration is given to increasing exports from the partner countries, promoting innovation and better added value, thereby creating jobs and new sources of income for the low-income population.

**THE TARGET GROUPS**

IPD addresses SMEs in selected countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia. It currently supports exporters in the product areas of fresh fruit and vegetables, natural ingredients for foods, cosmetics and pharmaceutical products, sustainable wood products, cut flowers and sustainable tourism.

In addition, IPD relies on close cooperation with business support organisations (BSOs) in the partner countries so that they can offer improved long-term export promotion services to the SMEs in foreign trade.



**THE APPROACH**

Import Promotion Desk pursues a demand-oriented export trade, i.e. it specifically promotes the export of products for which there is strong demand on the European market. By these means, companies in the IPD partner countries produce and export for the market rather than bypassing it. This ensures that the exporters can achieve long-term sales and establish sustainable trade relations with European partners.



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## THE ACTIVITIES

Import Promotion Desk prepares the export companies for the demands of the European market and, by means of training sessions and customised information offers, mediates knowledge and competencies for the successful marketing of their products. Using targeted “matchmaking”, IPD connects the companies with potential buyers. To this end, it organises their participation in international trade fairs and selling missions for them to Europe as well as buying missions to the partner countries for European importers.



The BSOs in the partner countries are qualified by IPD through consultation and training measures on market trends and market exploitation, so that they can expand their export promotion offers and make them available to local private enterprises.

## THE NETWORK

IPD operates within an international network. In order to build up sustainable promotion structures within the partner countries, IPD cooperates with trade associations and chambers, with the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and with import promotion programmes in other European countries, such as the Swiss Import Promotion Programme (SIPPO/Switzerland) and the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI/Netherlands).

In close coordination with these partners, IPD connects and complements existing export promotion measures and further develops them strategically. This effectively avoids duplication and exploits synergies.



## THE IMPACT

Import Promotion Desk integrates exporters from 16 partner countries into international trade. SMEs from five product groups have lasting business contacts with suitable buyers in Europe and are an integral part of the procurement portfolio of European importers. By this means, the companies in the IPD programme have so far been able to increase their export turnover to Europe by an average of 52%. This in turn has resulted in the creation of new jobs and the generation of investment capital. The economic success especially benefits people from regions that are largely rural in character. The companies can expand their cropland and their production, as well as introducing export-relevant operational improvements. They contract more smallholders and hire more employees. The companies supported by IPD have thus so far increased the number of their employees by an average of 56%.



Import Promotion Desk also empowers the local BSOs and equips them in the long term to develop their own initiatives and export promotion projects and to embed these in their national structures. Thus IPD promotes the expansion of trade capacities and makes a substantial contribution to sustainable economic development in the partner countries.

## CONTACT

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