

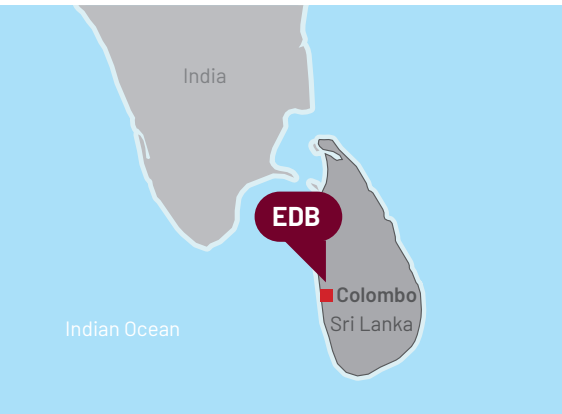


## Success story

# Export promotion successfully expanded

## IPD supports EDB in Sri Lanka in improving export services

The Import Promotion Desk (IPD) works closely with Business Support Organisations (BSOs), i.e. national trade associations and export promotion organisations, in its partner countries. There has been a close exchange with the Sri Lanka Export Development Board (EDB) since 2019. In 2021, the IPD opened a regional office in Colombo to intensify cooperation, and successfully so: together, important projects such as the professionalisation of Sri Lanka's trade fair presentation, sales training for exhibitors and capacity building in the areas of market intelligence and corporate social responsibility (CSR) could be implemented. This marked a good time to end the engagement on site and to continue the work within the framework of individual projects.



### Results

- Professionalizing the country's presentation at international trade fairs
- Transfer of CSR and sustainability competence
- Establishing new export services in the BSO programme
- Organizing the exchange of knowledge within the BSO

### Challenge

#### Positioning Sri Lanka as a procurement market and Increasing exports

Sri Lanka offers a wide variety of agricultural products for export, including many organic products. The agricultural sector is an important driver of sustainable development and creates jobs, especially in rural areas. The country's goal is therefore to further expand the organic agricultural sector and to strengthen exports.

IPD supports export promotion organizations such as the EDB in improving and expanding its services. As a multiplier, the EDB reaches a broad range of companies and prepares them for export or global trade. At the same time, EDB can benefit from international trade fairs by presenting Sri Lanka as an attractive sourcing market to a broad target group and the awareness on companies and products.

### Approach

#### Needs assessment and development of sustainable services

Shortly after the launch of the IPD regional office in Colombo, IPD and EDB developed a roadmap for joint activities. A careful analysis of internal BSO processes and existing service offers, including a needs assessment of export companies, laid the basis for IPD's BSO work. This needs-based approach ensures that sustainable and target-group-oriented export promotion services are developed and offered by the EDB team – now that the IPD regional office has been closed.

Together with EDB, the IPD experts identified the professionalization of trade fair presentation as a key area in which the service offer should be optimized. The IPD team continuously accompanied the organization of the EDB country pavilions, at BIOFACH 2022, SIAL 2022 and BIOFACH 2023, they provided feedback – on documentation, selection of co-exhibitors and financing method, etc. – and ensured an intensive follow-up.





**Inoka Nilmini Wanasinghe**  
Deputy Director Agriculture Export Division  
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»Hand in hand with IPD: Together we have succeeded in ensuring that Sri Lanka is professionally represented at international trade fairs. Our companies and their product range will thus become even better known on the European market. And hopefully even more sustainable trade partnerships with European buyers will be established.«



### Projects at a glance: development of sustainable export services

- Development of new trade fair presentation, incl. financing concept
- Organization of pre-fair workshops to prepare the exhibiting companies
- Transfer of know-how on trade fairs through "training-of-trainers" approach
- CSR trainings to inform companies about sustainability topics in the EU market
- Training of EDB staff and partners using the "training-of-trainers" model to provide CSR trainings for producers on a broad and regular basis
- Training of the EDB team in market research in order to assess the demand situation on the European market

Effect



### Successful establishment of new services

The result was a proven and sustainable country pavilion concept, which EDB implemented independently at Biofach 2023. The new internal processes ran smoothly, the organization was efficient and also a new financing concept, which provides for the stand to be supported solely by the participation fee of the exhibitors, was successfully put in practice.

The Pre-Fair Workshop was integrated as a fixed trade fair preparation tool, which also includes an Awareness Raising Session on CSR - run by especially trained EDB representatives. In the area of Market Intelligence, a pilot project has been successfully completed. After the introduction to market research, EDB employees developed a first product fact sheet on essential oils from Sri Lanka.



**Linda Mense**  
IPD Regional Expert  
HUB Sri Lanka

»The EDB team has truly won my admiration. Working with them showed me how success is achieved by an enthusiastic and committed BSO with a resourceful spirit. This extraordinary commitment is crucial for the successful expansion of export capacities in our partner countries. EDB is a very good example of this!«

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