



Government of the Netherlands

CBI

Supporting SMEs in Africa, Asia,
and the Middle East towards
sustainable and inclusive growth

Introduction

We are CBI

At CBI, our mission is to support the transition towards inclusive and sustainable economies. We work alongside small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East to strengthen social, economic, and environmental sustainability. CBI facilitates local projects to develop sustainable and inclusive products and services for export to Europe by SME exporters.

In this way, we help ensure that workers and self-employed individuals in vulnerable positions - including women and youth - can access decent jobs with fair income in a healthy living environment. In our work, we use a systems approach; we recognise that unsustainable practices are often the result of complex systems. By supporting sustainability transitions, we aim to address the root causes of problems in existing systems and promote lasting change.

Operating in 23 countries across 14 sectors (including agriculture, consumer products and services), we believe in partnering with local stakeholders. There may be no global solutions for local issues, but there are local solutions for global challenges. Let's find and share them!

How we work

1

We identify market opportunities for exporting sustainably and inclusively produced products and services to Europe.

2

We facilitate local projects to help realise these market opportunities.

3

We investigate the root causes of sustainability and inclusion challenges and seek smart solutions.

4

Our strength lies in our knowledge and network: we bring together willing partners, experts and other stakeholders to develop, test, and scale these smart solutions.

5

Local SMEs play a key role, as they provide jobs to a large number of employees.



Our partner countries

What we offer

Our services

Projects

We run projects in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East aimed at helping build more sustainable sectors.

What do we do? We help local SMEs find market opportunities internationally. In our projects, we facilitate SMEs enter these markets and build sustainable trade relations.

Why? To contribute to sustainable and inclusive economies with decent jobs, fair pay and a safe and inclusive environment.

How? We connect experts with local parties, explore root causes and effective solutions, and work together to create effective plans. SMEs are central to this process. By adopting sustainable and inclusive practices, they unlock international export opportunities. This not only benefits European importers but also leads to decent jobs, an improved living environment, and a fair and livable income for local employees and self-employed individuals. Successful approaches can be scaled up across the entire sector.

Do you run a business in one of our partner countries and wish to export high-quality, sustainable products or services while helping create a more inclusive and sustainable sector? Join one of our projects.

We provide expert support to help you:

- Identify market opportunities;
- Improve sustainability and inclusiveness in your business;
- Navigate European requirements, legislation, and certification;
- Succeed as an exporter;
- Showcase your products or services at leading European trade fairs;
- Help build a more inclusive and sustainable sector.

Our projects connect SMEs with international markets, building sustainable trade relations that support inclusive economies with decent jobs, fair pay, and safe working environments.

Market Information

How can you successfully enter the European market?

The first step is understanding it. CBI carries out detailed market research across key sectors, offering essential insights for SMEs. Each year, we publish over 250 market studies tailored to entrepreneurs from our partner countries who wish to export to Europe or offer their services there.

Whether you are in agriculture, consumer products, or services, our research answers the key questions you need. Explore the sectors our research covers on our website.

Our studies can help you discover:

- Which European markets have the best opportunities for your product;
- Trends that open up new possibilities for you;
- Requirements your product needs to meet to enter the market;
- How to find European buyers and how to build successful relationships with them;
- How to build your business sustainably and socially responsible;
- How to organise the export of your product (or service) to the European market.

All our Market Intelligence (MI) is accessible for free and can be read online on PCs or mobile devices, or offline as downloadable and printable PDF files. No registration or subscription is required – just visit our website to access everything www.cbi.eu/marketinfo.

You can also subscribe to our newsletter if you want to be updated about our new publications www.cbi.eu/newsletter/subscribe.

Events

As part of our projects and Market Information, we host a range of online and in-person events designed to meet the needs of SMEs in our partner countries and European importers. Whether you are a business owner entering the European market or an importer seeking reliable suppliers, our events provide valuable opportunities to connect and learn.

How to get involved

For partner organisations

Are you a business, trade organisation, social enterprise, educational institution, or government body committed to tackling social and environmental challenges? Let's work together!

Want to share the latest European market insights with exporters in your country? Become a CBI **Market Information Digital Partner** and share our market information on your website.

For SMEs in our partner countries

If you are an SME in one of our partner countries, our projects, webinars, and Market Information studies offer tools to help you succeed in international markets. Connect with experts, learn about market trends, and explore opportunities designed to support the growth of your sector.

For Consultants and Experts

Do you have expertise in business development or a specific industry? We actively seek local and international consultants to collaborate on projects. Share your expertise and help SMEs grow to become more sustainable and inclusive at the sector level.

For European importers

Are you looking for sustainable suppliers from one of our partner countries? We often invite selected exporters from these regions to Europe for trade fairs and other events, both online and in person. These events are great opportunities to meet trusted suppliers.

Project idea?

If you have ideas to help build inclusive and sustainable sectors, we would love to hear them. Let's work together to create impactful solutions.

About CBI

CBI is part of the Netherlands Enterprise Agency and is funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Our work is focused on supporting sustainable and inclusive growth in our partner countries through market-driven approaches. With over 50 years of experience, we have worked with more than 10,000 SMEs from 70 countries, connecting them to buyers or partners in the European market. We collaborate with over 250 business support organisations and our extensive network of international experts to bring a wide range of expertise to our projects. This enables us to effectively support sustainable, long-term change at the sector level.

Contact us

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