IMPACT
REPORT
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Prepared by
Technology Industry Development Team

Final Assessment of the Technology Industry Development Vertical of Digital Economy

Content

Abstract

This report offers a comprehensive assessment of the Technology Industry Development Programme, evaluating its impact on Sri Lanka's Information Technology and Business Process Management (IT-BPM) sector. The report follows an evidence-based approach, analyzing immediate and intermediate outcomes, exploring reasons for success or challenges faced, and presenting recommendations for overcoming constraints. Emphasizing the training initiative's role in knowledge acquisition, attitude and skill changes, and their practical application, the report also delves into the significance of market access provisions, providing participants with initial evaluations and networking opportunities.

The scope of the report is centered on immediate and intermediate outcomes for beneficiaries, detailing activities such as knowledge and skill acquisition, attitude changes, and connections provided post-initiative completion. In the introduction, the report outlines the pivotal role of the Technology Industry Development (TID) vertical within the Digital Economy Division of the Information and Communication Technology Agency (ICTA). It examines the challenges confronted by the Sri Lankan IT industry and highlights the multifaceted role played by the TID, strategically focusing on capacity building, market preparedness, and international market access.

The objectives of the Tech Industry Development Vertical, including attracting IT-BPM investments, driving export growth, and creating job opportunities through technology-based businesses, are explored in-depth. The report accentuates how the TID strategically positions Sri Lanka as a prime destination for IT-BPM enterprises globally, leveraging the nation's strengths in skilled workforce, efficient operating environment, and cutting-edge IT infrastructure.

As the report scrutinizes the achievements of the TID and its dedication to promoting industrial growth, it provides a comprehensive understanding of the TID's vital role in Sri Lanka's digital transformation and economic success on the international stage. Ultimately, the research sheds light on how the TID shapes the trajectory of the nation's digital economy, fostering innovation, growth, and global competitiveness in the IT-BPM sector.

Purpose and Scope of the Report

Purpose of the report

The purpose of the report is to gauge the success of the Technology Industry Development Programme in line with the objectives specified above. This would be an evidence based report where immediate and intermediate outcomes would be considered along with the reasons for achievement or non achievement of the final outcome. This report also will elaborate on the key constraints and provide recommendations on how the constraints were overcome.

The training initiative would consist of participants acquiring new knowledge, changes in attitude or skill and applying them in their businesses to make positive changes and achieve desired results.

Provision of market access will provide the participants with an initial evaluation on how they should pitch/ present their offerings to the International market, and then proceed to presenting to the various stakeholders their products and services. It would be an initial connection and networking opportunity that would be presented to them. They would also get the opportunity to be mentored on knowledge of the overseas markets, the pros and cons of the market, the trends in that market and strategies to enter the market.

Scope of the Report

The scope of the report will focus on the immediate and intermediate outcomes to the beneficiaries based on the various interventions carried out by the program. The study will expand on the activities carried out such as gaining new knowledge and skills, changes in attitude and also connections and leads provided to beneficiaries upon completion of the initiatives.

1. Introduction

Technology Industry Development Vertical

The Technology Industry Development (TID) vertical, operating within the Digital Economy Division of the Information and Communication Technology Agency (ICTA) in Sri Lanka, is a driving force propelling the nation's Information Technology and Business Process Management (IT-BPM) sector into a future marked by innovation, sustainability, and global prominence. Positioned at the forefront of Sri Lanka's digital transformation, the TID strategically navigates through challenges, such as regulatory complexities and global competition, to foster a resilient and competitive technology industry.

As a pivotal entity, the TID orchestrates a comprehensive program aimed at advancing the IT-BPM sector, aligning its efforts with the National Policy Document (NPD). The NPD serves as the guiding framework, outlining objectives and outcomes that form the basis for the TID's strategic initiatives. Despite encountering obstacles like budget restrictions and resource constraints, the TID remains steadfast in its commitment to achieving key milestones by the end of 2024.

The objectives of the TID's Tech Industry Development Vertical are ambitious and multifaceted, including attracting Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs), driving export growth, and creating new job opportunities through technology-based businesses. These objectives are not mere aspirations but are anchored in the tangible outcomes outlined in the NPD.

The TID's roadmap involves facilitating the IT-BPM industry's growth to achieve a targeted $3 billion in export revenue, increasing the number of companies to 700, and generating 100,000 jobs by 2024. The actual progress, as compared to the rescoped plan, underscores the dynamic nature of the TID's initiatives, with a focus on building capacity, enhancing market preparedness, and providing international market access.

In this report, we delve into the intricacies of Sri Lanka's IT-BPM sector, examining challenges faced by industry participants and the strategic initiatives undertaken by the TID to overcome these hurdles. From managing legislative complexities to developing a skilled workforce and positioning Sri Lanka as a top global IT-BPM destination, the TID's efforts are crucial in shaping the trajectory of the nation's digital economy.

As we explore the achievements and challenges of the TID, this research provides a comprehensive overview of the TID's vital role in Sri Lanka's digital transformation and economic success on the international stage. The subsequent sections of this report will delve into the detailed action plan, highlighting the TID's efforts to attract investments, drive export growth, create job opportunities, and enhance the global competitiveness of Sri Lanka's technology industry.

1.1 Objectives of the Tech Industry Development Vertical:

- To attract IT-BPM investments (FDI's).
- To drive export growth through innovation in facilitating 3Bn revenue.
- To create new job opportunities through new technology-based businesses that create or adopt new technologies

1.2 Desired Outcomes

Intro to the NPD and an elaborated table to visualize the NPD in terms of actual and rescoped. Originally planned outcomes and approach as per the NPD.

- Facilitate the IT-BPM industry towards achieving $3 billion in export revenue by the end of 2024.
- Increase the number of IT-BPM companies to 700 by the end of 2024.
- Increase the number of IT-BPM jobs to 100,000 by the end of 2024.

1.3 Challenges

Several significant challenges were faced by the team during the event/project, including:

Resource and Budget Constraints:

-Limited availability of budget and resources significantly impeded the project's progress.

-The need for ongoing workarounds and alternative approaches to sourcing budgets and resources consumed valuable time and effort.

-Continuous scaling down and de-prioritization of initiatives resulted in a lack of consistency and coherence in the work completed.

Management and Direction:

-Frequent changes in management and direction hampered the project's momentum and stability.

-Periods of unclear or absent direction created uncertainty and hampered decision-making.

Policy and Regulatory Fluctuations:

-Unpredictable and ad-hoc changes in government policies and gazette notifications introduced unexpected obstacles and required constant adaptation.

-These challenges combined to create a complex and challenging environment for project execution. Addressing them effectively required significant flexibility, resourcefulness, and resilience from the project team.

2. Company Portfolio of Technology Industry Development Program 2023

Each point is elucidated in detail below:

1. Unique Companies in Both Programs: The total number of unique companies participating in both the Market Access and Export Readiness programs.

2. Regional Company Participation: The total number of regional companies participating in both the Market Access and Export Readiness programs.

3. Total Revenue: Estimated total revenue generated by all companies participating in the Market Access and Export Readiness programs based on reported averages.

4. Export Revenue: Estimated total export revenue generated by all companies participating in the Market Access and Export Readiness programs based on reported averages.

5. Countries Reached (Market Access Only): Total number of countries reached by companies participating in the Market Access program in 2023.

6. e-Swabhimani Innovations: The total number of innovations recognized by the e-Swabhimani program.

7. IT Industry Talent Guidance: The new talents are guided towards the IT industry through online workshops and regional tech summit certifications.

8. Total number of employees trained by foreign talent who came into the country with unique skillsets through the VISA recommendation Program

9. Total Event and Project Sessions: Total number of sessions conducted across all events and projects by Technology Industry Development.

10. Number of jobs created by the companies that have expanded their market through the interventions of Market Access and Export Readiness Programs, along with those individuals with unique skills who came into the country via the Visa Recommendation program

3. Industry Development Programs

3.1 LEAP (Export Readiness Program)

Endorsed by the National Exports Strategy in 2019 and ICTA's Digital Economy Strategy in 2021, LEAP emerged as a flagship program to extend ICTA's technology industry development (TID) Project to regional fronts. Its primary goal is to empower regional tech companies, aiding their successful entry and growth in global markets. LEAP also serves as a platform for knowledge sharing, industry connections, lead generation, and cross-selling among potential solution providers across different regions.

3.1.1 Objectives of LEAP
- Increased number of IT-BPM companies
- Increased export market readiness capacity in IT-BPM companies
- Increased Re-skilled/ up-skilled IT-BPM workforce
- Increased female participation (%) in the IT-BPM workforce
- Freelancers up-skilled to engage with the IT-BPM industry

LEAP's Extensive Workshop Program Drives Regional Tech Success. Throughout 2022 and 2023, LEAP proactively engaged with regional tech companies through comprehensive workshops. These workshops covered various topics, including:

- Secure C: Equipping developers with the knowledge and tools to build secure and reliable software.

- Win USA: Providing insights and strategies for entering the lucrative US market.

- Winning $: Mastering the art of proposal writing and securing funding for tech ventures.

- Regional Tech Summit 2023 (Southern, Central & Northern Chapter): Fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing within regional tech ecosystems.

These workshops proved to be instrumental in successfully onboarding 172 out of 201 targeted regional tech companies. The program's success can be attributed to:

- Targeted content: Addressing the specific needs and challenges of regional tech companies.
- Expert-led sessions: Featuring industry professionals sharing their knowledge and insights.
- Collaborative environment: Encouraging networking and knowledge exchange among participants.

### 3.1.2. Intermediate Outcomes of LEAP Program 2022-2023

Details of the Sample:

Random Sampling: The report recognizes the application of a random sampling approach, encompassing 8 out of 42 LEAP companies, which constitutes 20% of the program. Although not comprehensive, this sample offers valuable insights into the broader impact of the program.

Profiles of Participating Companies:

The entities included in this sample consist of Regional Tech SMEs actively engaging with us from 2022 to 2023.

Knowledge & Expertise
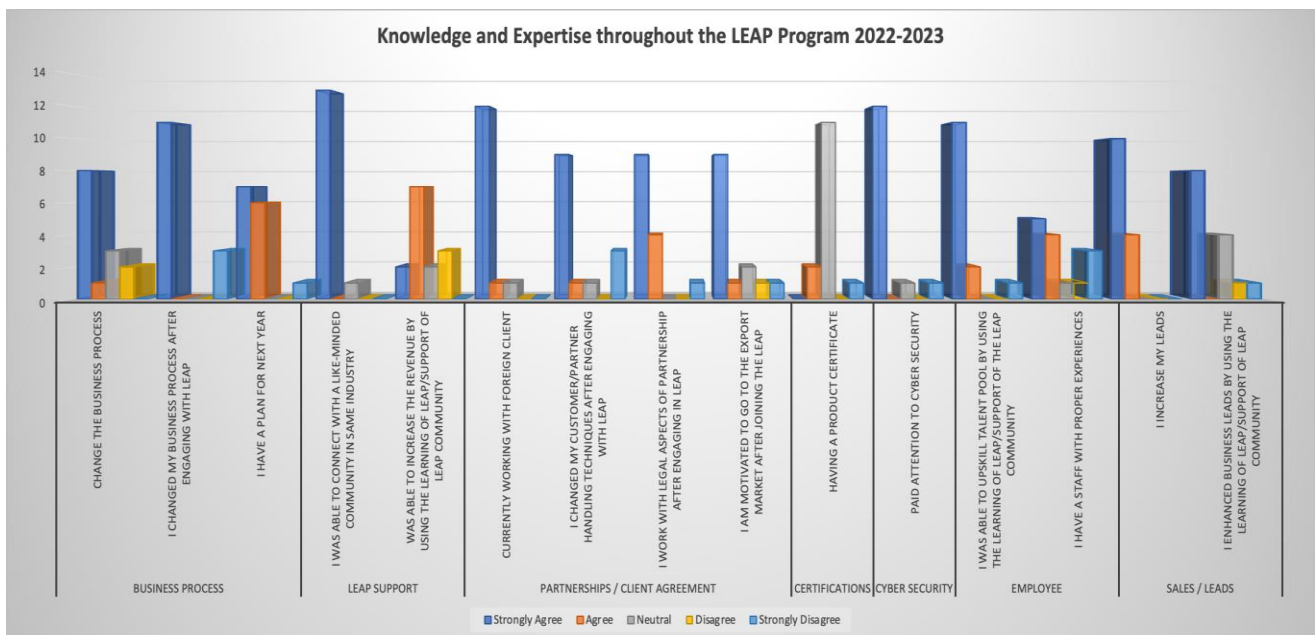
The chart compiles feedback from a sample of individuals participating in the LEAP program, specifically highlighting the support they received from LEAP workshops based on key criteria. The results are presented according to the scale of their feedback.

Business Process:

Change in Business Process: A significant number (9) strongly agreed or agreed that they changed their business process after engaging with LEAP, reflecting a noteworthy impact on operations.

Planning for the Future: The majority (13) either strongly agreed or agreed that they have a plan for the next year, showcasing LEAP's role in helping participants develop future strategies.

LEAP Support:

Community Connection: All 13 respondents strongly agreed that they were able to connect with a like-minded community in the same industry, highlighting the program's strength in fostering connections and collaboration.

Revenue Increase: While only 2 strongly agreed, 7 agreed, and 2 remained neutral on increasing revenue. This suggests varied experiences, with some benefiting directly from revenue growth and others finding value in the program's learnings.

Partnership/Client Agreements:

Working with Foreign Clients: Almost all respondents (12) strongly agreed, indicating a significant impact on international reach and business development.

Changes in Handling Techniques: Most respondents (9) strongly agreed or agreed that LEAP helped them improve their relationship management skills.

Legal Aspects of Partnership: The majority (13) strongly agreed or agreed, showing LEAP's valuable support in navigating the legal aspects of partnerships.

Motivation for Export Market: A substantial number (10) strongly agreed or agreed, indicating LEAP effectively encouraged participants to pursue international expansion.

Certifications:

Product Certificates: There was no strong agreement, and only 2 agreed, suggesting obtaining product certificates wasn't a major focus or benefit.

Cybersecurity:

Attention to Cybersecurity: Almost all respondents (12) strongly agreed, indicating LEAP successfully raised awareness of and importance of cybersecurity.

Employee:

Upskilling Talent Pool: The majority (13) strongly agreed or agreed that LEAP effectively helped them develop their employees' skills and knowledge.

Staff with Proper Experiences: Responses varied, with 4 agreeing, 1 neutral, and 1 disagreeing, indicating differing experiences and needs.

Sales/LEADS:

Increased Leads: Most respondents (14) strongly agreed or agreed that LEAP helped them generate more sales leads.

Enhanced Business Leads: Similar to the previous question, 8 respondents strongly agreed or agreed, suggesting LEAP's learnings were effective in improving lead generation.

The survey results suggest that the LEAP program was generally successful in providing valuable support across various areas, including business process improvement, networking, international expansion, legal and partnership support, cybersecurity awareness, employee upskilling, and sales lead generation. While not every response was unanimously positive, the strong agreement and agreement scores across most sections indicate that LEAP had a significant impact on participants' businesses and their plans.

Export Revenue Enhancement
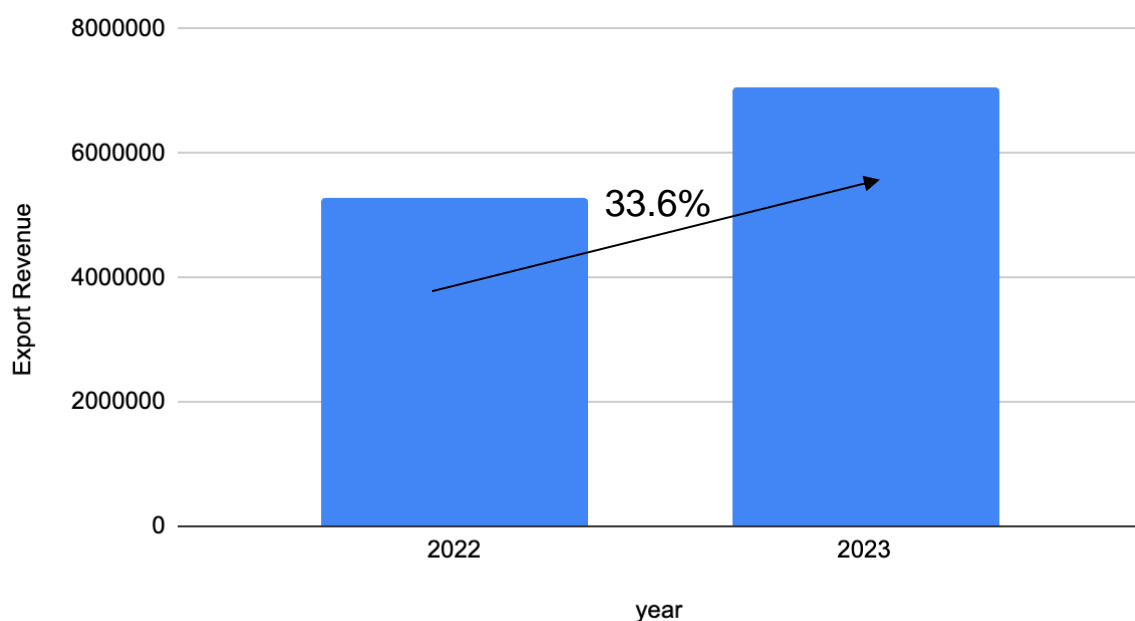
This underscores a positive trend in export revenue among technology Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) enrolled in the Export Readiness Program, known as LEAP. The analysis focuses on the period from 2022 to 2023, revealing a notable 33.6% increase in export revenue for participating tech SMEs, from $5.2 million to $7 million.

Result Analysis:

The export revenue data collected from participating companies demonstrates a substantial surge in performance from 2022 to 2023. In 2022, export revenue totalled $5.2 million experiencing significant growth to reach $7 million in 2023. This positive trend reflects the successful utilization of initiatives and strategies implemented by the program, showcasing the adaptability and effectiveness of companies engaged in the export readiness program.

Data Representation:

It is essential to note that the presented data is derived from 8 out of 42 participants. The average export revenue for these 8 participants was calculated and extrapolated to represent the

entire group, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the program's impact across the entire cohort.

The positive outcomes observed in the export revenue data affirm the program's success in cultivating a conducive environment for the growth of regional tech companies. This success is attributed to the strategic alignment with national and digital economy strategies, allowing the program to play a pivotal role in driving the overall development of the technology industry at both regional and global levels. The data strongly supports the notion that the Export Readiness Program, through LEAP, is making a meaningful and widespread impact on the export capabilities and competitiveness of the participating companies in the dynamic global market.

Workforce Enhancement
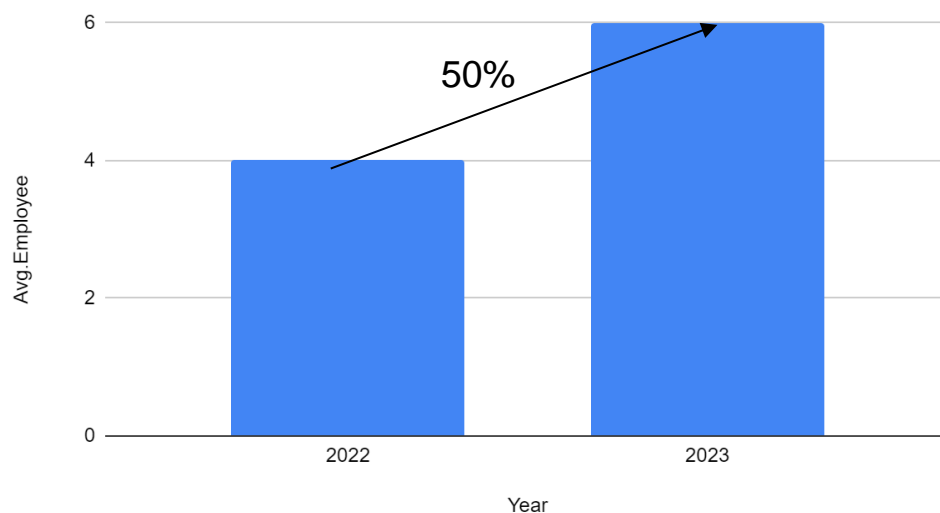
Analysis of data provided by participating SMEs reveals a significant positive trend in the average workforce of LEAP companies. From 4 employees in 2022, the average employee count has increased to 6 in 2023, marking a substantial 50% growth. This data suggests a commendable trajectory in terms of company expansion and job creation within the Export Readiness Program.

Result Analysis:

The data on the average employee count collected from companies engaged in the export readiness program echoes a consistent narrative of substantial growth and development. In 2022, the average employee count stood at 4, witnessing a notable increase to 6 in 2023. This positive trend in workforce expansion indicates the program's efficacy not only in fostering financial success, as evident in the export revenue data, but also in generating tangible opportunities for employment and professional advancement within the regional tech industry.

In alignment with the overarching Export Readiness Program, known as LEAP, the surge in the average employee count underscores the program's dedication to cultivating a robust technology ecosystem. Presumably associated with the program, LEAP extends the reach of ICTA's Technology Industry Development (TID) Project to regional fronts. By strategically

augmenting the workforce, the program not only enhances the operational capacity of participating companies but also contributes to the overarching goal of empowering regional tech entities for global market entry.

Data Representation:

The growth in the average employee count signifies LEAP's success in fostering a talent pool capable of propelling regional tech companies to greater heights. This human capital development, coupled with the financial successes highlighted in the export revenue data, exemplifies the multifaceted impact of the Export Readiness Program. Beyond preparing companies for global market competitiveness, LEAP addresses the critical aspect of workforce development, playing a pivotal role in advancing the technology industry both regionally and on the global stage.

The remarkable workforce growth observed among LEAP companies, as evidenced by the increase from 4 to 6 employees, reinforces the program's comprehensive impact. LEAP not only contributes to the financial success of participating SMEs but also actively promotes job creation and professional growth within the regional tech industry. This holistic approach aligns with the program's commitment to building a thriving technology ecosystem, positioning regional tech companies for sustained success on the global stage.

Export Market Enhancement
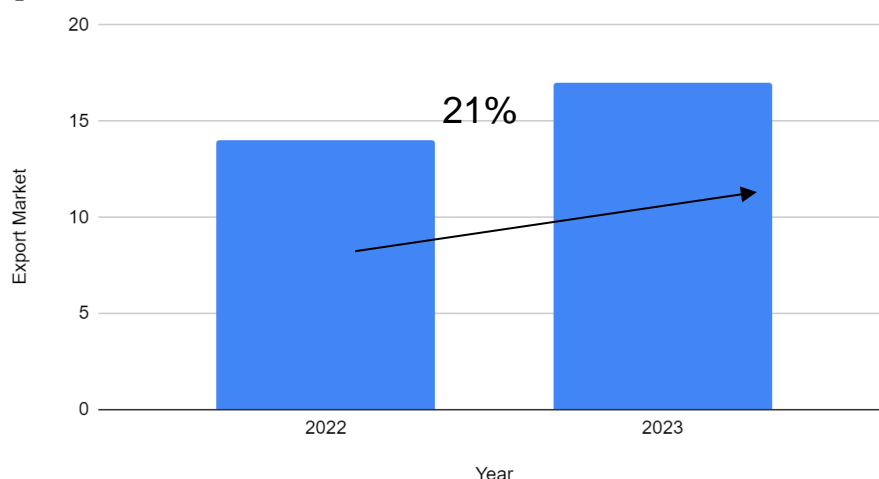
This report highlights a promising trend in export revenue among technology Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) participating in the Export Readiness Program (LEAP). The findings demonstrate a notable increase in export market readiness, showcasing the program's effectiveness in preparing companies for global engagement.

Key Findings:

Increase in Export Market:

From 2022 to 2023, tech SMEs in the LEAP program experienced a substantial 21% increase in export market readiness. The export market score jumped from 14 to 17 during this period, indicating positive growth.

Result Analysis:

The Export Market data reveals a compelling narrative of progress and heightened readiness among LEAP participant companies. The readiness score increased from 14 in 2022 to 17 in 2023, signifying effective preparation for navigating international markets.

Within the framework of LEAP, aligned with the Technology Industry Development (TID) Project by ICTA, these scores mirror the program's mission to empower regional tech companies for global market entry. The positive trajectory in readiness scores affirms LEAP's success in enhancing the capabilities of participating companies.

The increase in Export Market readiness scores not only emphasizes the quantitative success of the program but also underscores its qualitative impact. LEAP acts as a catalyst for knowledge sharing, industry connections, and strategic positioning in international markets.

The data reinforces that the Export Readiness Program, specifically LEAP, plays a pivotal role in elevating the export capabilities and competitiveness of participating tech companies. Aligned with national and digital economy strategies, the program emerges as a key player in advancing the technology industry both regionally and globally.

The rising Export Market readiness scores validate the program's instrumental role in shaping participating companies into formidable players in the dynamic landscape of international markets. LEAP's success highlights its effectiveness in fostering an environment where regional tech companies can thrive and compete globally.

Continuing our analysis of LEAP's successful workshop program, we now delve deeper into examining the immediate outcomes of each workshop:

Export Readiness Program Support (as%).

Participants in the survey received their feedback in the form of percentages, illustrating the effectiveness of the Export Readiness Program (LEAP).
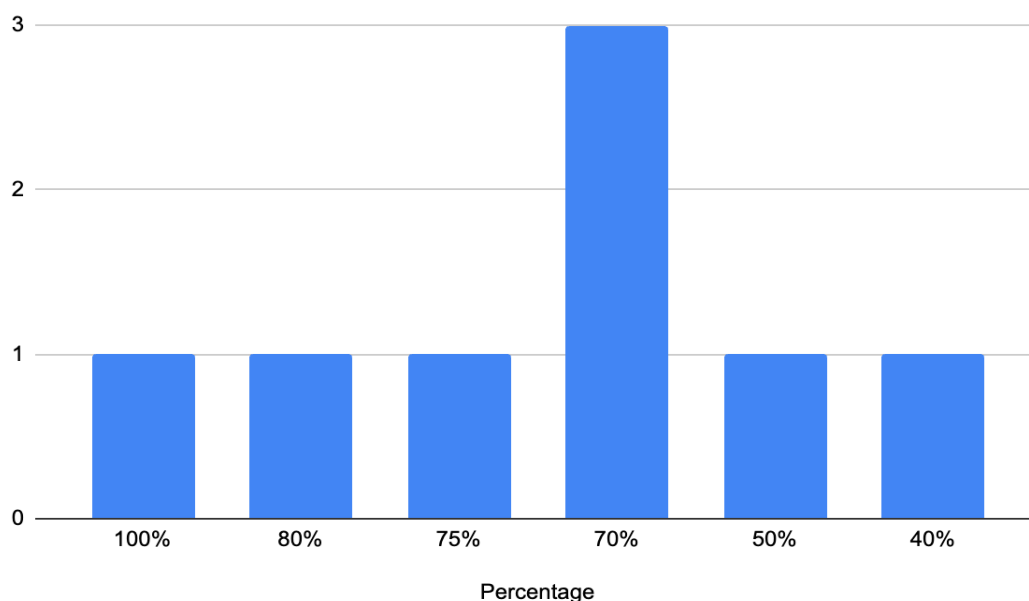
This chart provides insights into the perceived effectiveness of the Export Readiness Program (LEAP) based on feedback from 8 individuals. The data is presented as percentages, reflecting the participants' assessments. However, the graph does not offer a conclusive judgment on whether the program is highly effective, moderately effective, or not very effective.

Breaking down the responses:
3 participants (37.5%) considered the program 70% effective.
1 participant (12.5%) rated the program as 100% effective.
1 participant (12.5%) found the program to be 80% effective.
1 participant (12.5%) believed the program had 75% effectiveness.
1 participant (12.5%) expressed a perception of 50% effectiveness.
1 participant (12.5%) indicated a 40% effectiveness.

In summary, the feedback is diverse and does not lean towards a specific effectiveness rating. However, it's crucial to acknowledge the limited sample size of 8 participants, which may not be fully representative of the broader population that has undergone the Export Readiness Program.

3.2 AIMS (Access International Markets)

The project "AIMs" (Access International Markets) embarked on its journey in July 2022 with the noble objective of connecting local IT companies to international markets. The project continues to make significant strides in achieving its goals. The inspiration for starting this project stemmed from recognizing the immense potential of local IT companies in Sri Lanka. These companies possessed the technical expertise but often lacked the exposure and opportunities to tap into international markets. AIMs was conceived as the bridge that would facilitate this connection, empowering local IT enterprises to explore global horizons.

3.2.1 Objectives of AIMs

- Increased global reach by positioning Sri Lanka as a sought-out IT/BPM destination.
- Increased international market access opportunities
- Increased Re-skilled/ up-skilled IT-BPM workforce.

### 3.2.2 Intermediate Outcomes of AIMs Program 2022-2023

Details of the Sample:

Random Sampling: The report recognizes the application of a random sampling approach, encompassing 10 out of 39 AIMs companies, which constitutes 25% of the program. Although not comprehensive, this sample offers valuable insights into the broader impact of the program.

Profiles of Participating Companies:

The entities included in this sample consist of Tech SMEs actively engaging with AIMs from 2022 to 2023.

Export Revenue Enhancement
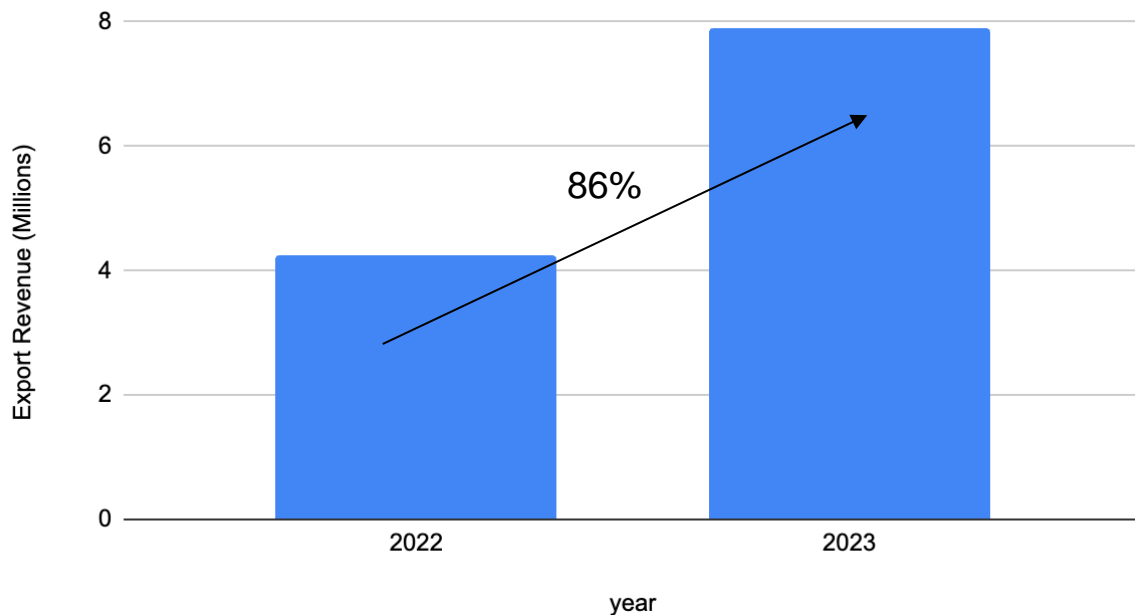
The data presented in the report showcases the Export Revenue generated by companies participating in the Access to International Market (AIMs) program over the years 2022 and 2023. The figures reveal a substantial increase in Export Revenue, reflecting positively on the impact of the AIMs project on the local IT companies involved.

In 2022, the Export Revenue stood at $4.2 million, indicating the initial success of the AIMs initiative shortly after its launch in July of that year. This suggests that the project had a swift and promising start, fostering international connections for local IT companies and laying the foundation for their expansion into global markets.

The subsequent year, 2023, witnessed a remarkable surge in Export Revenue, reaching $7.8 million. This substantial increase highlights the continued success and growth of the AIMs program. The project appears to have effectively supported participating IT enterprises in capitalizing on international opportunities, resulting in a significant boost to their export earnings.

The interpretation of this data suggests that the AIMs project has proven to be a vital catalyst for the development and internationalization of local IT companies in Sri Lanka. The project's emphasis on bridging the gap between technical expertise and global markets has yielded tangible results, with the Export Revenue figures attesting to the success of the initiative. The upward trend in revenue also indicates that the AIMs project has not only met its initial objectives but has also surpassed expectations in terms of its impact on the participating companies.

Overall, the data underscores the importance of initiatives like AIMs in fostering the growth and global competitiveness of local industries. The success of the project in its early years

bodes well for the continued development of the local IT sector and its sustained integration into the international market landscape.

Workforce Enhancement
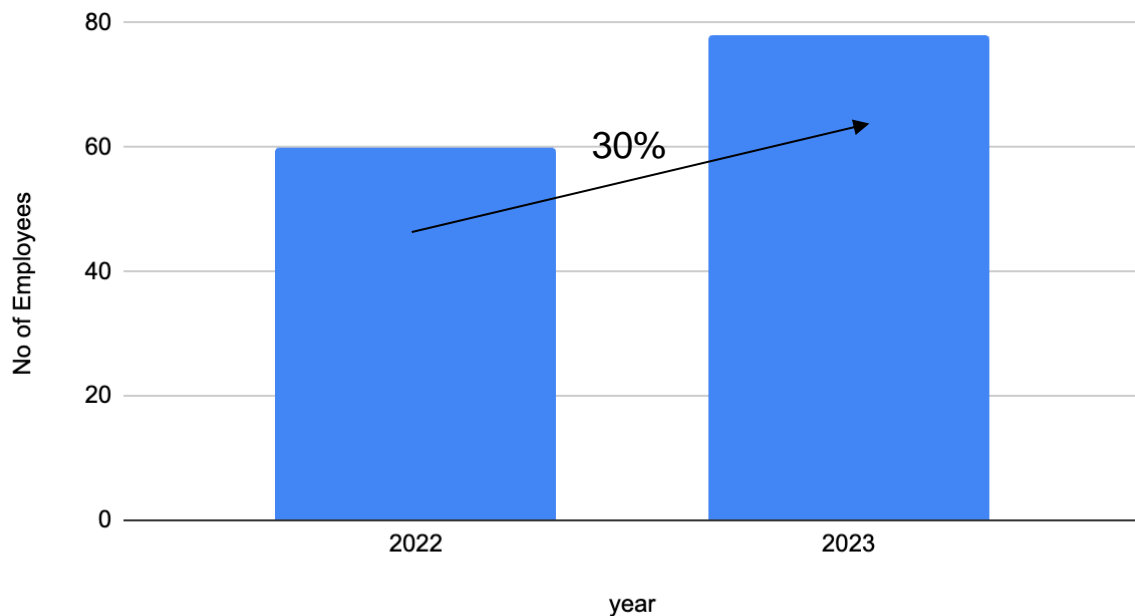
The evolution of the AIMs project, commencing its transformative journey in July 2022, continues to demonstrate significant progress in connecting local IT enterprises in Sri Lanka with international markets. This initiative arises from the acknowledgment that local companies possess technical expertise but often lack exposure to global opportunities. AIMs serves as the vital bridge, empowering these businesses to explore and thrive in international markets.

In the pursuit of its objectives, AIMs has achieved substantial milestones, evident in the data provided by 10 participating companies. In 2022, the collective workforce of these companies totaled 60, and by 2023, it experienced noteworthy growth, reaching 78. This substantial 30% increase underscores the project's efficacy in not only facilitating job creation but also fostering the expansion of companies within the dynamic landscape of the Sri Lankan tech industry.

A meticulous analysis of data from SMEs participating in the Access international markets reveals a consistent positive trend in workforce growth. The average employee count witnessed a remarkable 30% (18) increase, rising from 60 employees in 2022 to 78 employees in 2023. This growth not only signifies the program's success in enhancing the operational capacity of participating companies but also accentuates its steadfast commitment to workforce development.

The surge in the average employee count seamlessly aligns with the overarching AIMs program, an extension of ICTA's Technology Industry Development (TID) Project to regional fronts. By strategically augmenting the workforce, AIMs is not only empowers participating companies for global market entry but also contributes significantly to the broader goal of cultivating a robust technology ecosystem regionally.

Beyond the numerical successes highlighted in the export revenue data, the growth in the average employee count exemplifies the multifaceted impact of the Access to International Program. AIMs addresses not only global market competitiveness but also plays a pivotal role in advancing the technology industry both regionally and on the global stage. The program's holistic approach actively promotes job creation and professional growth, positioning regional tech companies for sustained success in the ever-evolving global landscape.

In essence, the AIMs project, facilitated by the Access to international program, transcends its role as a mere connector of local IT companies to international markets. It serves as a catalyst for a transformative ecosystem, empowering companies and individuals alike, thereby ensuring their sustained competitiveness and success on the global stage.

Export Market Expansion
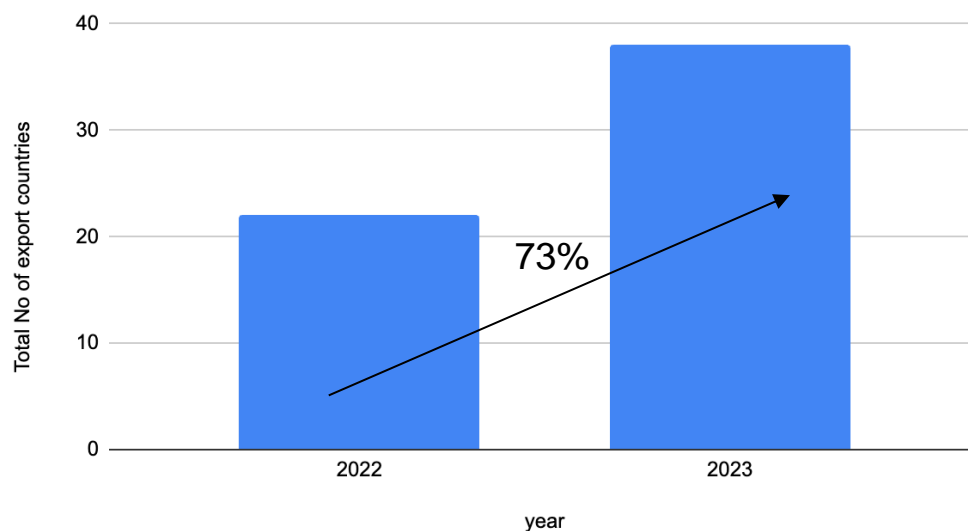
The data from the AIMs (Access International Markets) program showcases a remarkable expansion in the global reach of local IT companies, affirming the program's commitment to connecting these enterprises with international markets. Here's an analysis of the key findings:

1. Exponential Growth in Export Countries:
   The data reveals a substantial increase in the total number of export countries from 22 in 2022 to an impressive 38 in 2023. This surge highlights a notable achievement for the AIMs program, indicating a significant expansion of international market presence for local IT companies within a relatively short timeframe.

2. Strategic Progress Towards Global Exposure:
   The noteworthy increase in the number of export countries reflects the strategic progress made by AIMs in fulfilling its mission. By nearly doubling the reach within a year, the program demonstrates its efficacy in creating avenues for local IT enterprises to access diverse international markets. This expansion is crucial in providing these companies with the exposure needed to thrive on a global scale.

3. Alignment with Program Objectives:
   The surge in the number of export countries aligns seamlessly with the foundational objectives of the AIMs program. The project was conceived with the vision of serving as a bridge for local IT companies to access international markets. The data not only validates the program's alignment with its objectives but also underscores its success in realizing these goals.

4. Empowering Local IT Enterprises:
   The increased number of export countries signifies the empowerment of local IT enterprises facilitated by the AIMs program. By connecting these companies to a broader array of international markets, AIMs plays a pivotal role in unlocking opportunities, fostering growth, and enhancing the global competitiveness of the local IT sector.

5. Positive Trajectory for Future Growth:
   The data suggests a positive trajectory for the AIMs program, indicating the potential for sustained growth in the coming years. The expanded reach to 38 export countries positions local IT companies for continued success on the global stage, fostering resilience and adaptability in an ever-evolving international business landscape.

In conclusion, the AIMs program has not only met but exceeded expectations, successfully expanding the global footprint of local IT companies. The increase in export countries serves as a tangible measure of the program's impact in fostering international connections and providing a platform for local IT enterprises to thrive in the global marketplace.

Participants in the survey received their feedback in the form of percentages, illustrating the effectiveness of the Market Access Program (AIMs).
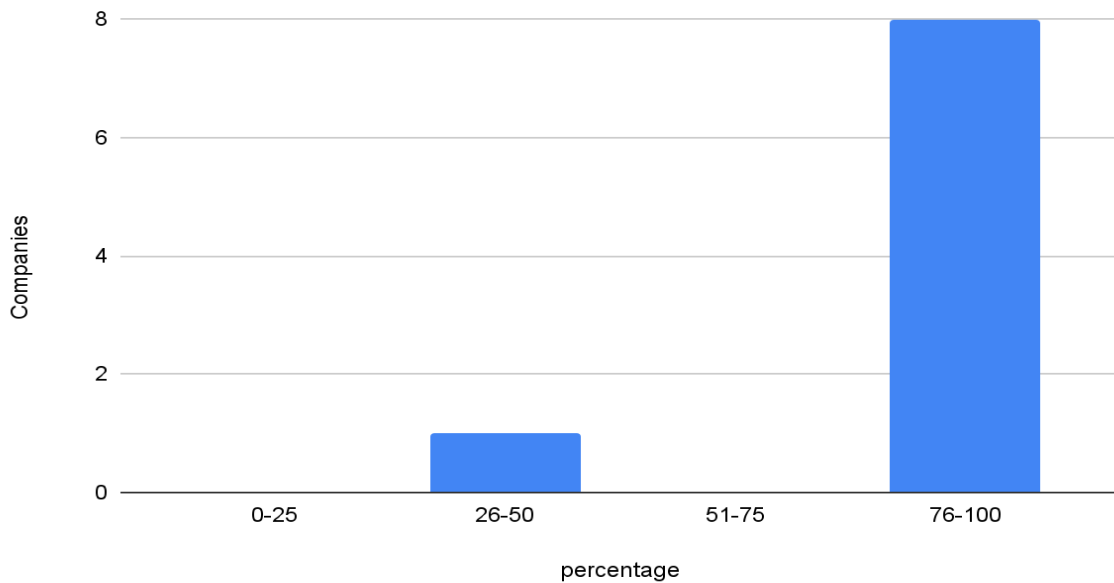
The majority of respondents (8 out of the total) expressed a high level of satisfaction with the support provided by the AIMs program, with 76-100% of support reported. However, it's important to note that the sample size is relatively small (10 respondents), and the results may not be fully representative of the entire program's impact. Additionally, it's crucial to explore further details or qualitative feedback to understand the specific aspects of the program that contributed to the reported levels of support.

3.3 Regional Tech Summit
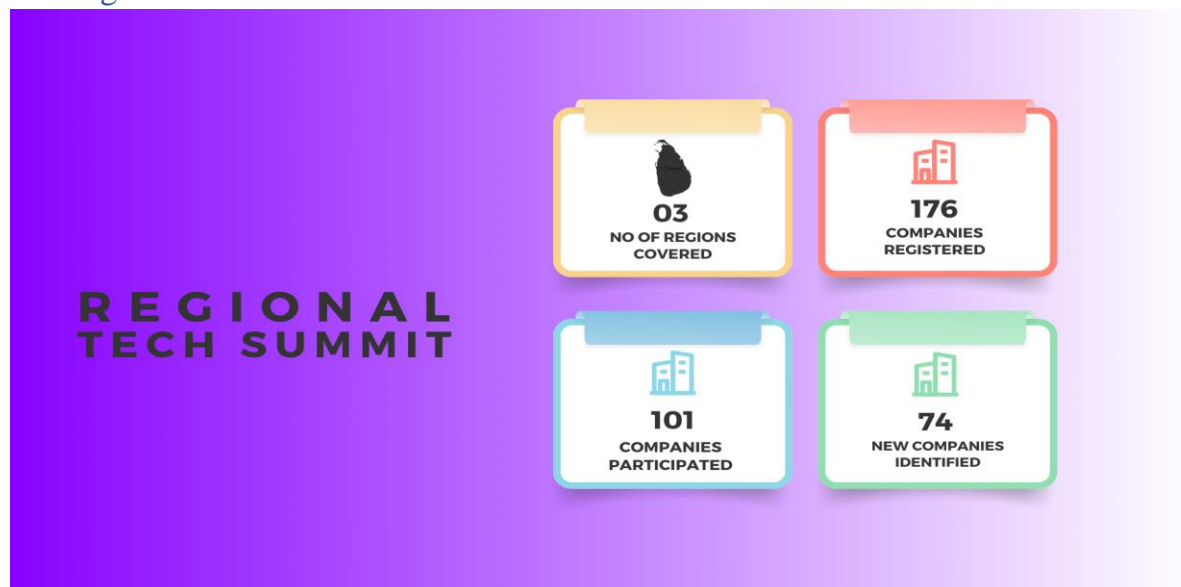
The Regional Tech Summit, launched by ICTA in June 2023, is a proactive initiative addressing challenges in Sri Lanka's ICT sector. It focuses on key areas such as Connectivity and Collaboration, grassroots development, the Employment Gap, and Brand Visibility. The project aims to create a unified platform to nurture grassroots development, bridge employment gaps, and enhance industry visibility. Successful summits held in Jaffna, Galle, and Kandy have garnered significant interest, leading to notable milestones and opportunities for IT SMEs.

Overall, the summit reflects a commitment to fostering innovation and collaboration, signalling a positive trajectory for Sri Lanka's technology sector.

3.3.1. Objectives

- Plug into the Regional ICT Ecosystem
- To continue the Development of the ICT Sector
- Bridging Employment Gaps and Upskilling Workforce
- Giving a chance to other regional IT SMEs to expand their local market

3.3.2 Regional Tech Summit- Northern Chapter

The event, conducted under LEAP initiatives, focused on gathering feedback from regional tech SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) regarding their experience at the Regional Tech Summit in Jaffna. The feedback was obtained through a random sampling method, with a sample size of 20 respondents.

The feedback results are presented in a chart that captures the respondents' opinions on various aspects of the summit. The chart categorizes responses into five levels: Excellent, Good, Neutral, Bad, and Poor.

1- *Quality of Delivering Content:*

The majority of respondents (10 out of 12) rated the quality of delivering content as "Excellent," indicating a high level of satisfaction with the presentations and discussions conducted by the resource personnel. This suggests that the content was well-received and deemed valuable by the participants.
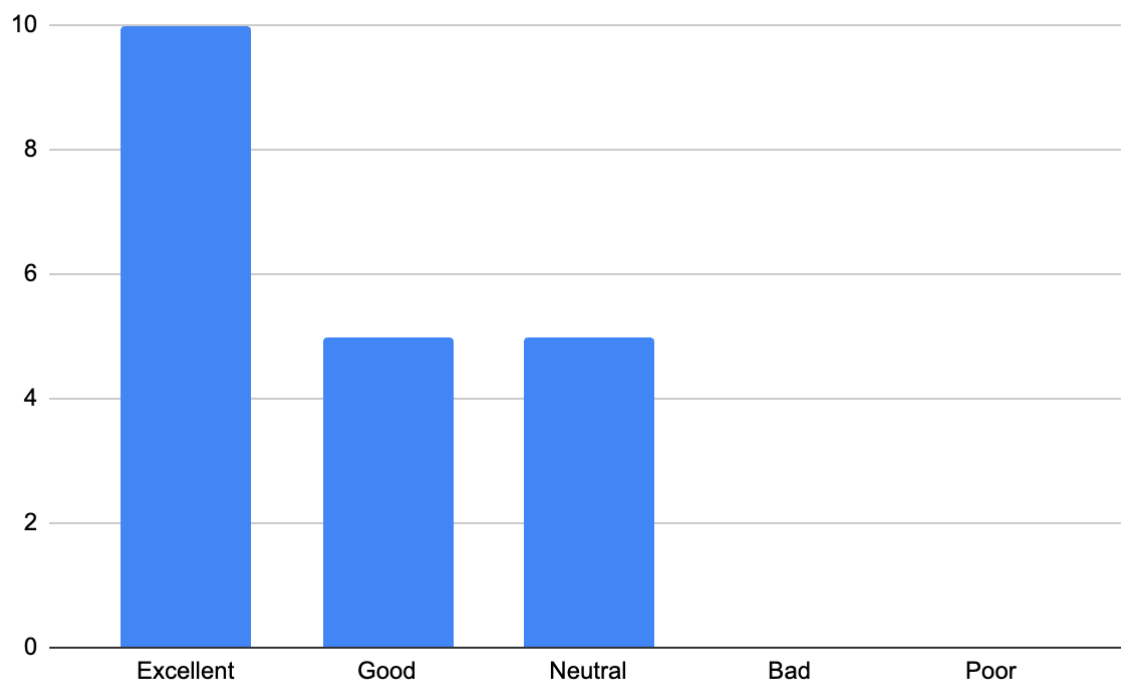
2- *Networking Experience:*

A significant portion of respondents (8 out of 12) rated their networking experience during the summit as either "Excellent" or "Good." This positive feedback suggests that the event provided ample opportunities for participants to build new connections or partnerships within the regional tech community.
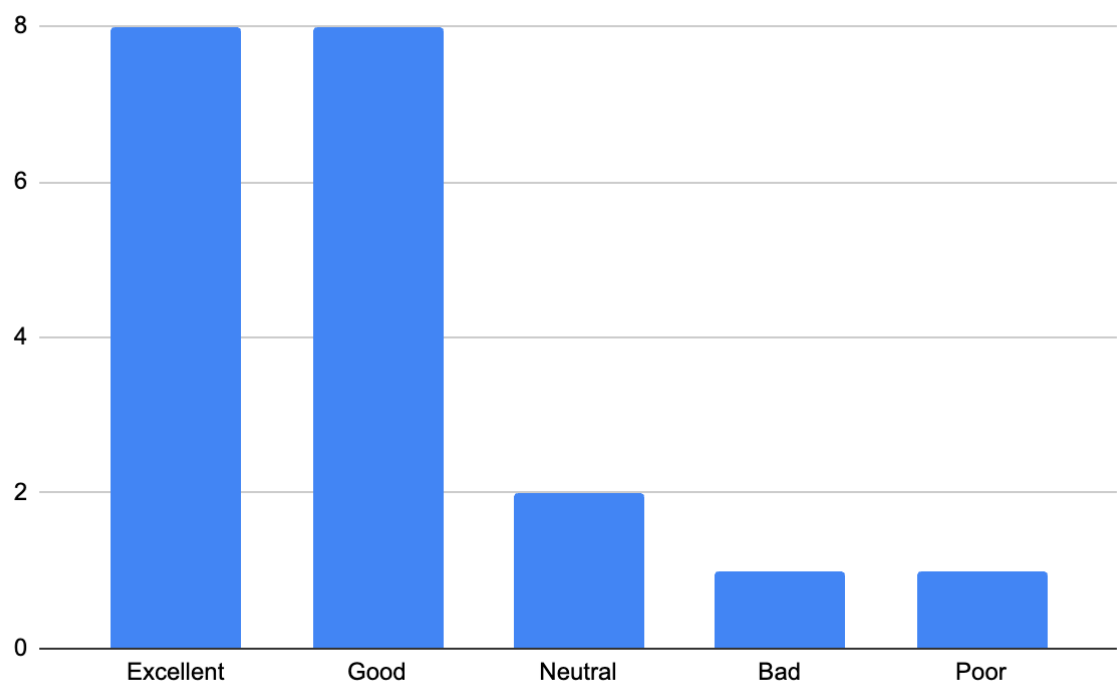
3- *Tendency of Applying Acquired Knowledge:*

The majority of respondents (10 out of 12) expressed a strong tendency to apply the knowledge acquired through the Regional Tech Summit to their day-to-day business activities. This is a positive indicator, as it reflects the perceived practicality and relevance of the summit content to the needs of the participating tech SMEs.
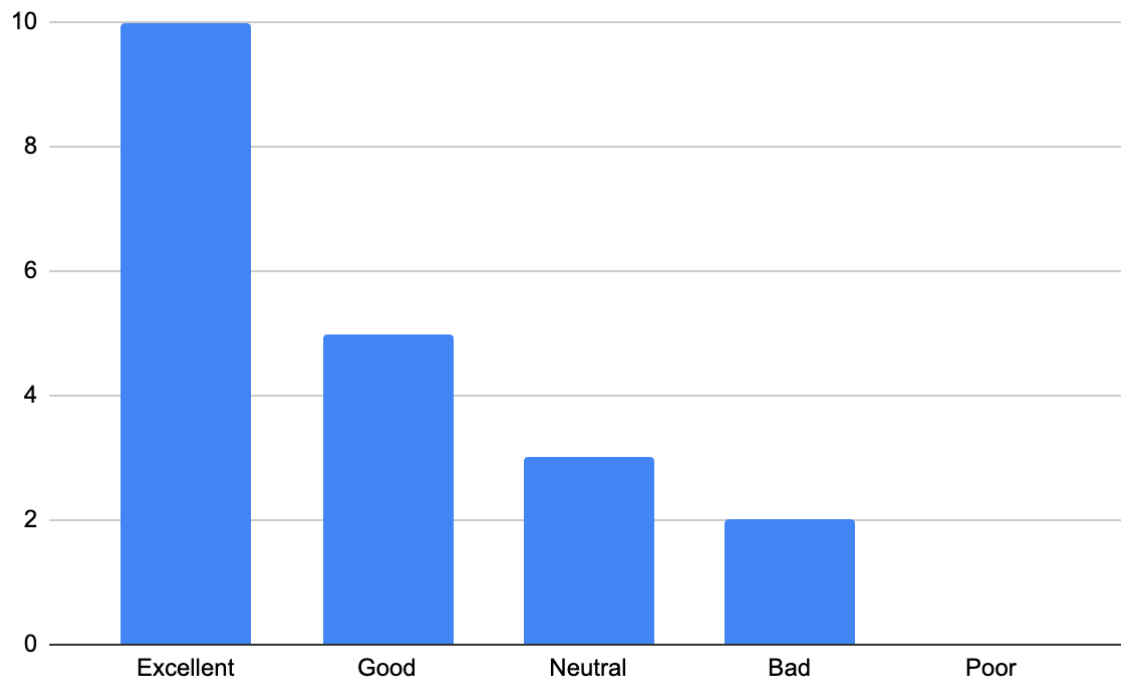
The overall feedback paints a positive picture of the Regional Tech Summit, with a majority of respondents providing favorable ratings in all three categories.

However, it's essential to address the concerns of the few respondents who rated certain aspects as "Neutral," "Bad," or "Poor." Further investigation or targeted improvements may be necessary to enhance these areas for future events.

In conclusion, the feedback results under the LEAP initiatives suggest that the Regional Tech Summit in Jaffna was generally well-received by regional tech SMEs, with strong indications of content satisfaction, positive networking experiences, and a high tendency to apply acquired knowledge in their business activities

3.3.3 Regional Tech Summit- Southern Chapter

This event is conducted under the Regional Tech Summit event series, and we had a qualitative questionnaire focused on gathering feedback from regional tech SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) regarding their experience at the Regional Tech Summit in Galle. The feedback was obtained through a random sampling method, with a sample size of 18 respondents.

The feedback results are presented in a chart that captures the respondents' opinions on various aspects of the summit. The chart also categorizes responses into five levels: Excellent, Good, Neutral, Bad, and Poor.

Interpreting the feedback results from the event conducted under LEAP initiatives, where data was collected through random sampling from 18 participants representing regional tech SMEs, provides insights into various aspects of the Regional Tech Summit in Galle. The feedback was

gathered using a scale to evaluate the quality of content delivery, networking experiences, and the tendency to apply acquired knowledge in day-to-day business activities.

1- *Quality of Content Delivery:*

The majority of respondents rated the quality of delivering content as excellent, indicating a high level of satisfaction with the resource personnel covering the subject areas. A notable portion also found it to be good, suggesting an overall positive perception of the content delivery.
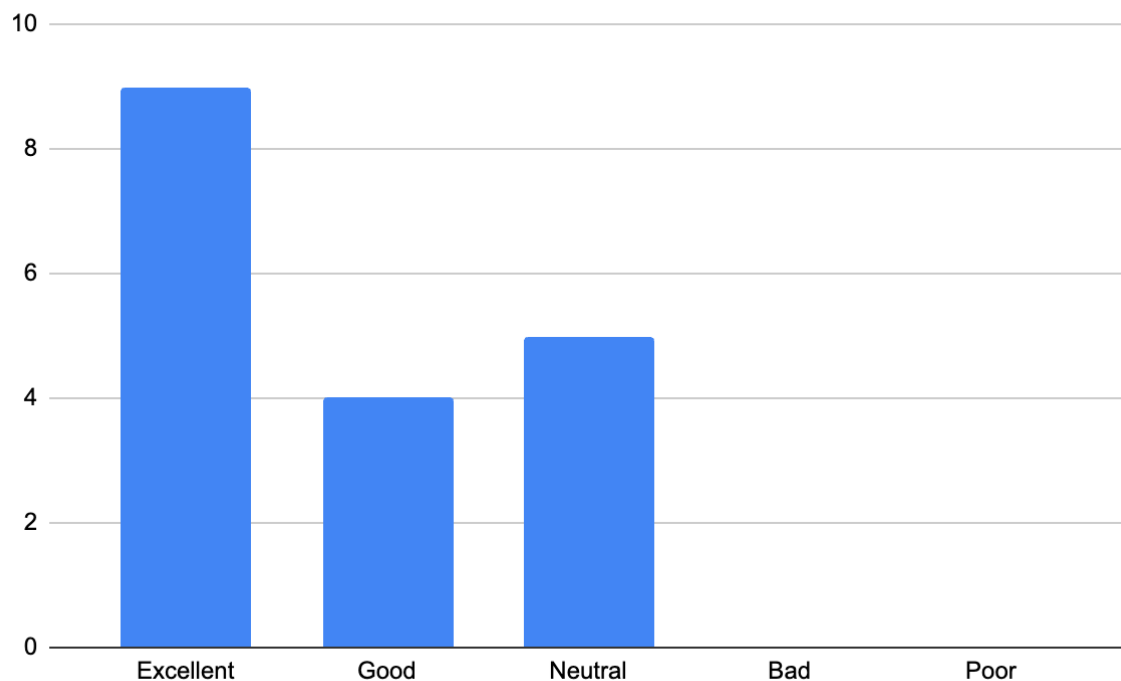
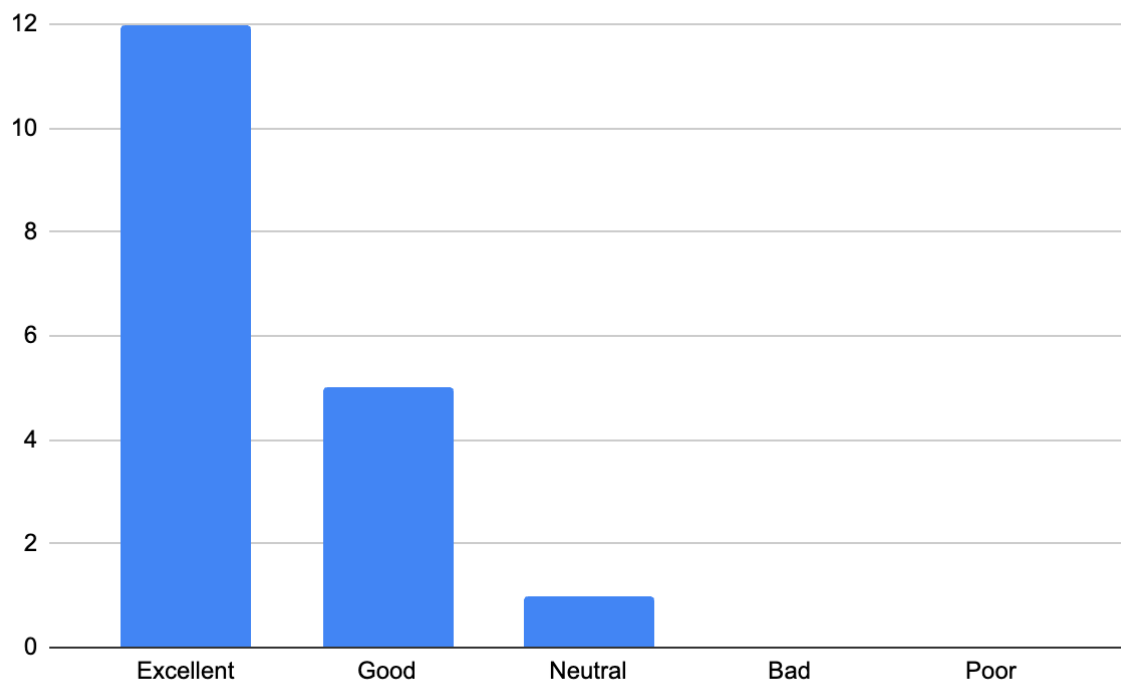### 2- *Networking Experience:*

Participants generally had a positive networking experience during the Regional Tech Summit, with a significant number rating it as excellent. A smaller but still considerable number rated it as good. However, a few respondents indicated a neutral or poor experience, suggesting that there might be room for improvement in facilitating connections or partnerships.
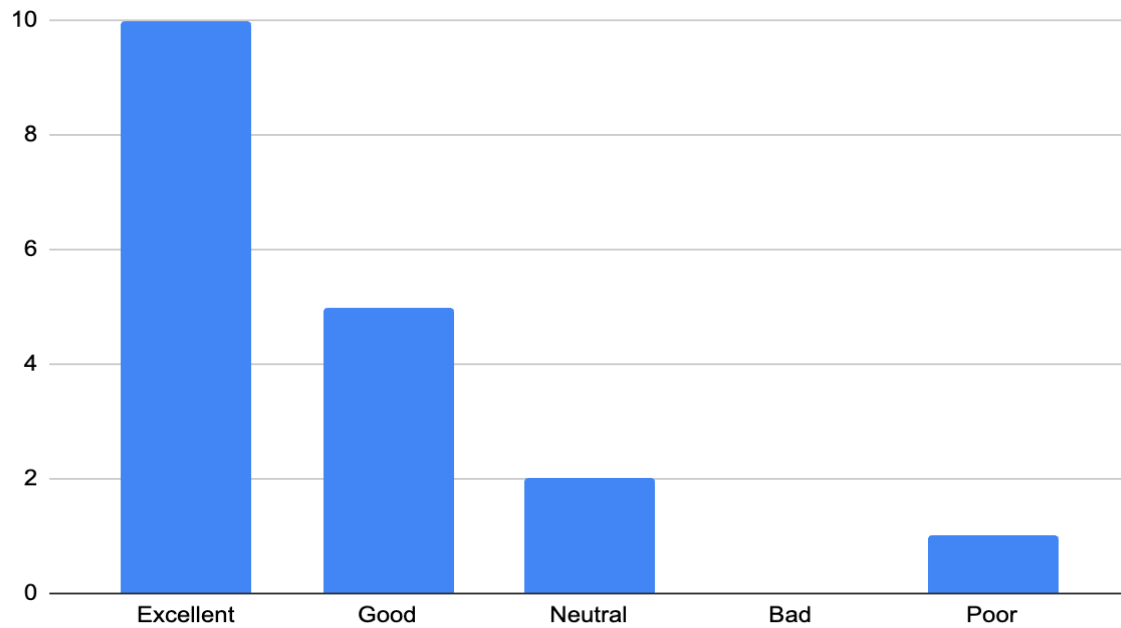
3 -Application of Acquired Knowledge:

The feedback indicates a strong tendency among participants to apply the knowledge acquired through the Regional Tech Summit to their day-to-day business activities. The majority rated this aspect as excellent, reflecting a high perceived value of the event in terms of practical applicability.

In summary, the overall feedback suggests a successful Regional Tech Summit with positive evaluations in content delivery, networking experiences, and the practical application of acquired knowledge. However, there are areas, such as networking experiences for a few participants, where improvements may be considered for future events. This feedback can be valuable for organizers to refine and enhance future initiatives under the LEAP (Export Readiness Program) framework.

3.3.4 Regional Tech Summit- Central Chapter

The provided feedback results stem from a survey conducted under the LEAP initiatives, employing a random sampling method with a sample size of 20 individuals. The respondents are representatives from regional tech SMEs who attended the Regional Tech Summit in Kandy. The survey aimed to gauge their perceptions and experiences related to the event, covering aspects such as the quality of content delivery by resource personnel, networking experiences, and the likelihood of applying acquired knowledge in day-to-day business activities.

The feedback is presented in a tabular format, indicating the number of respondents who rated each category on a scale ranging from "Excellent" to "Poor."

1- Quality of Content Delivery:
The majority of respondents (11) rated the quality of content delivery as excellent, suggesting that the resource personnel effectively covered the subject areas.
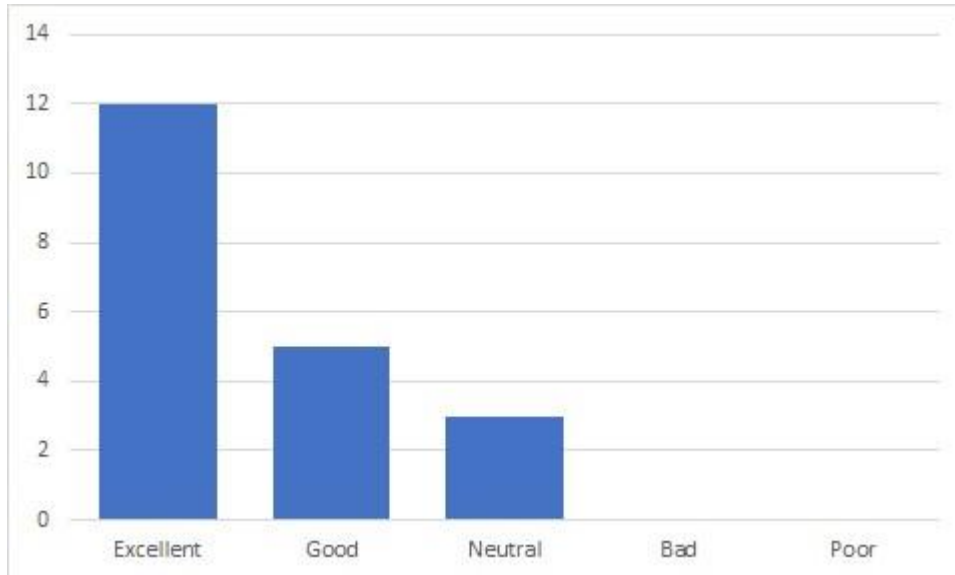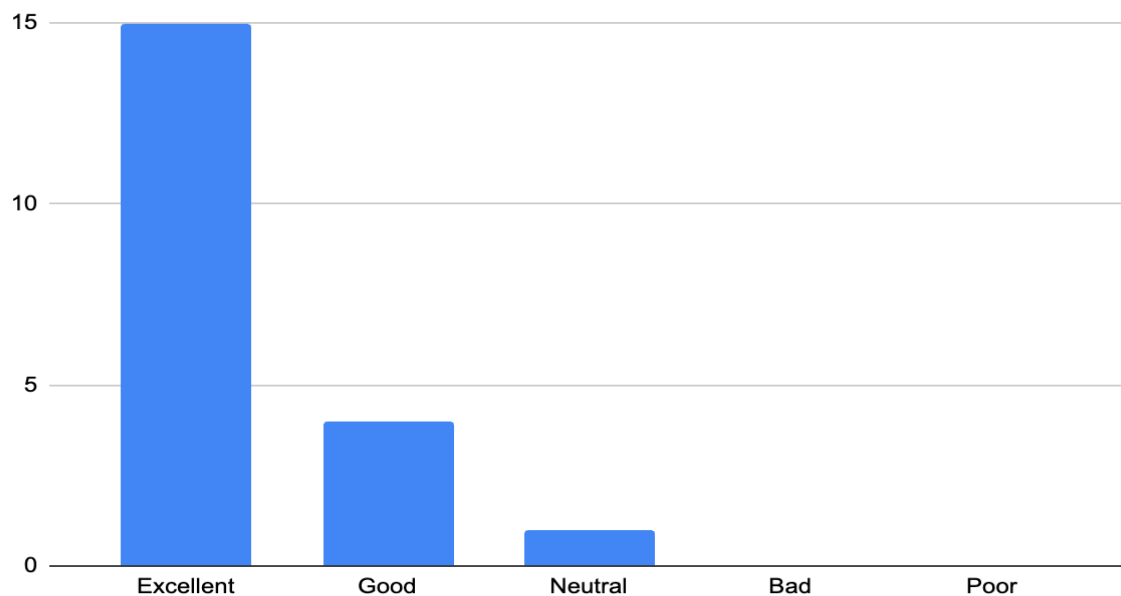

2- Networking Experience:
A significant number of respondents (11) found the networking experience during the Regional Tech Summit to be excellent, indicating successful connections or partnerships were established.
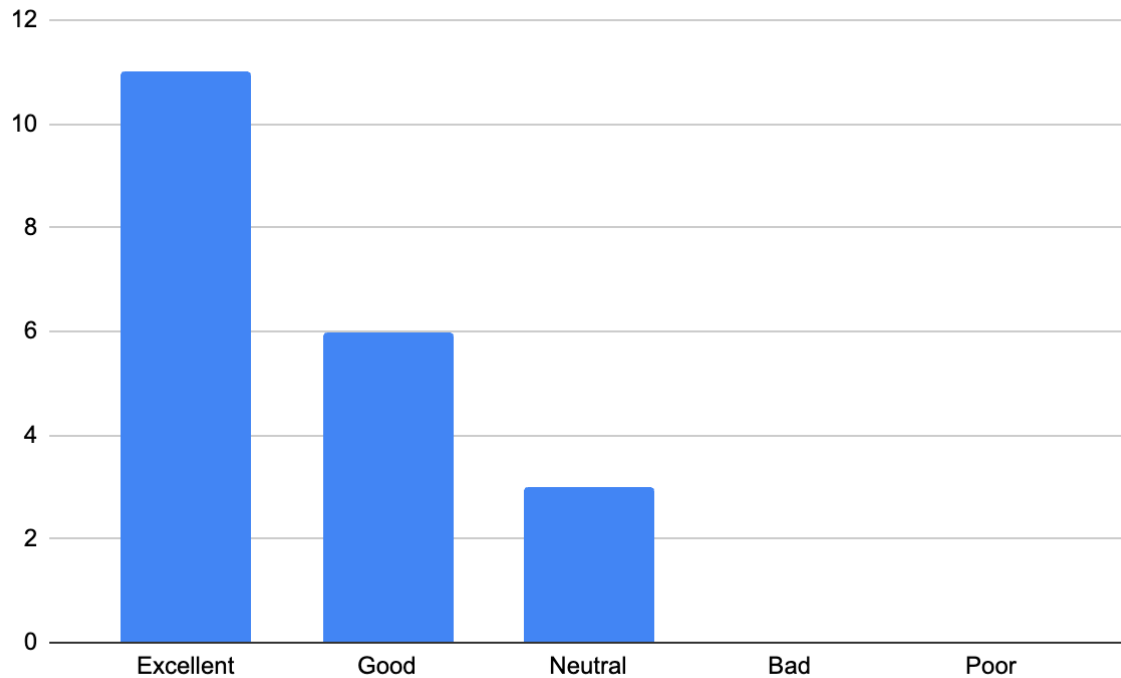
3-Tendency of Applying Acquired Knowledge:

A substantial number of respondents (15) expressed a high likelihood of applying the knowledge gained from the summit to their day-to-day business activities, reflecting the perceived value of the event in practical terms.

Overall, the feedback suggests a positive reception of the Regional Tech Summit among the surveyed regional tech SMEs. The high ratings in content delivery, networking experience, and the application of acquired knowledge indicate that the event has met or exceeded the expectations of the participants, potentially contributing to the success of LEAP initiatives in fostering collaboration and knowledge transfer within the regional tech community.

3.4 Tech Trade Insights
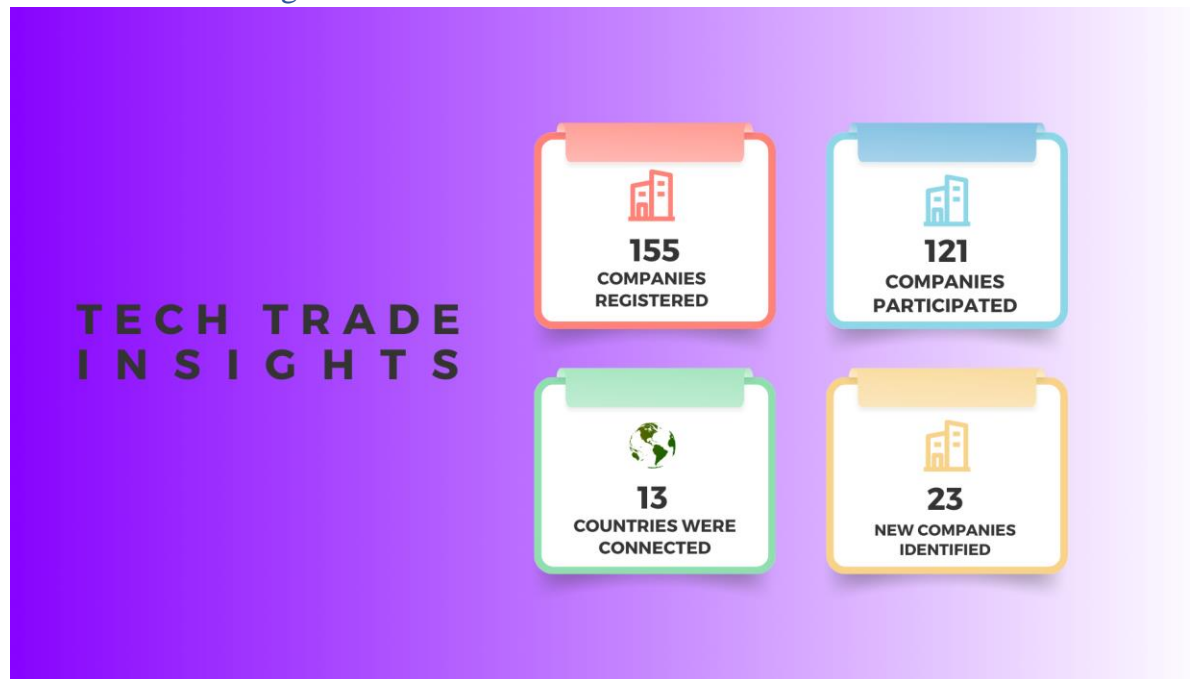
"Tech Trade Insights," initiated in March 2023, concluded successfully by June, leaving a lasting impact on the Sri Lankan tech landscape. The project addressed challenges faced by SMEs in navigating global tech trends and international markets. With educational materials, training sessions, 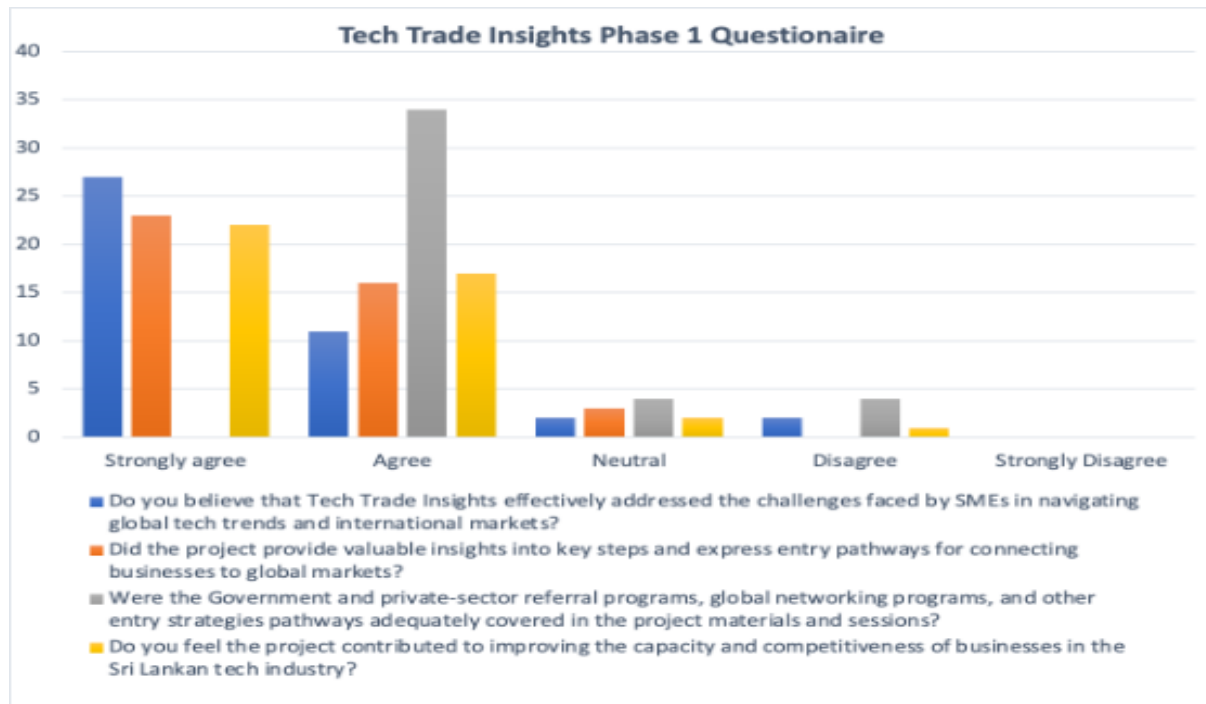and partnerships with global experts, it enhanced global tech awareness and facilitated international market entry. Bridging the digital divide, offering ICT infrastructure, and collaborating with educational institutions empowered communities. Despite concluding, Tech Trade Insights remains a testament to innovation, inclusivity, and growth in Sri Lanka's tech industry.

3.4.1 Objectives

- Insights on key steps and express entry pathways to connect your business to global markets, including but not limited to Government and private-sector referral programs, Global networking programs, and other entry strategies pathways, etc.
- Best practices and processes in product management fundamentals, including product conception, development, and engineering, adopting a customer-centric approach in User Interface/User Experience design.
- Improved Capacity and Competitiveness, Increased Access and Availability of Finance and to creation of economic resilience between employer and employee towards the micro and macro-economic impacts during uncertain grounds.

3.4.2 Trade Insights - Phase 01

Tech Trade Insights Phase 1 Questionaire

Legend:
- Do you believe that Tech Trade Insights effectively addressed the challenges faced by SMEs in navigating global tech trends and international markets?
- Did the project provide valuable insights into key steps and express entry pathways for connecting businesses to global markets?
- Were the Government and private-sector referral programs, global networking programs, and other entry strategies pathways adequately covered in the project materials and sessions?
- Do you feel the project contributed to improving the capacity and competitiveness of businesses in the Sri Lankan tech industry?

The graph discusses the findings of a survey conducted among 42 companies in Sri Lanka, focusing on the effectiveness of the Tech Trade Insights Phase 1 Questionnaire in assisting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in dealing with global tech trends and international markets.

According to the survey results presented in a bar graph, the majority of respondents (81%) expressed strong agreement or agreement that the questionnaire effectively addressed challenges faced by SMEs in navigating global tech trends and international markets. This indicates that the questionnaire was successful in helping SMEs understand and overcome these challenges.

The survey also revealed that 76% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the project provided valuable insights into key steps and express entry pathways for connecting businesses to global markets. This suggests that the questionnaire helped SMEs identify specific steps needed to enter new markets successfully.

Furthermore, 71% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the project adequately covered government and private-sector referral programs, global networking programs, and other entry strategy pathways. This implies that the questionnaire provided SMEs with the necessary information to access these programs and resources.

In conclusion, 66% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the project contributed to improving the capacity and competitiveness of businesses in the Sri Lankan tech industry. This indicates that the questionnaire played a role in helping SMEs grow and succeed in the global marketplace.

Overall, the interpretation of the paragraph suggests that the Tech Trade Insights Phase 1 Questionnaire was successful in providing valuable insights, information, and resources to

assist SMEs in overcoming challenges, entering new markets, and enhancing their capacity and competitiveness on a global scale.

3.4.3 Tech Trade Insights - Phase 02
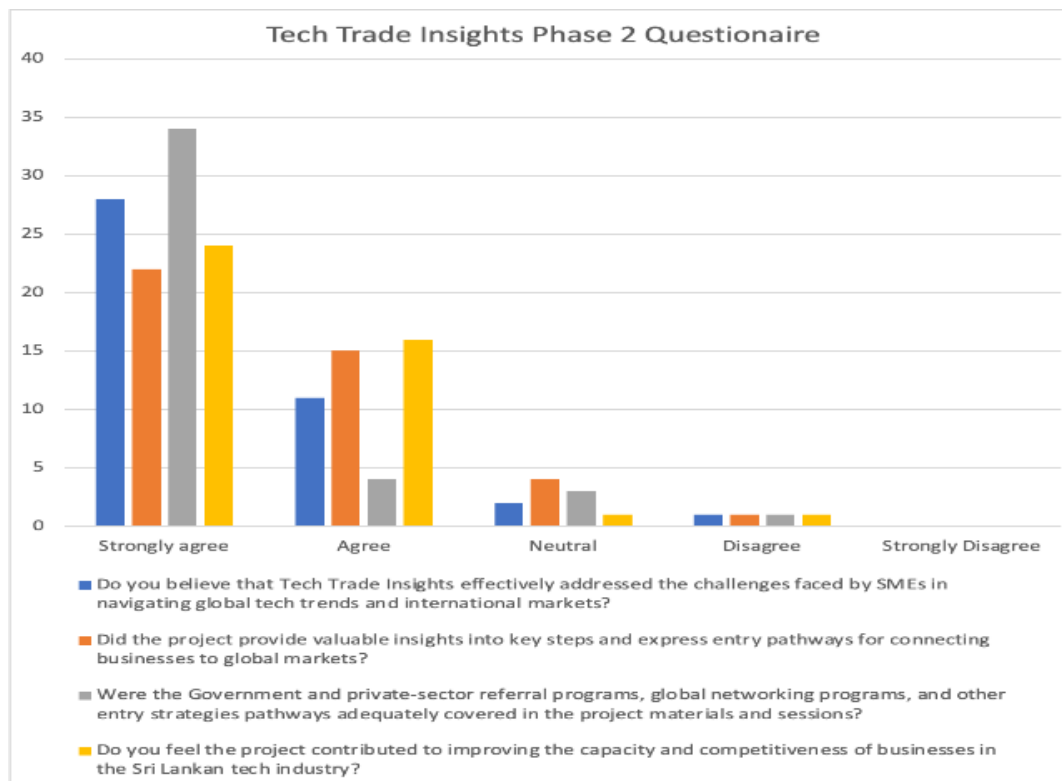
The graph discusses the outcomes of a survey conducted among 42 companies in Sri Lanka, focusing on evaluating the effectiveness of the Tech Trade Insights Phase 2 Questionnaire in aiding small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in understanding and navigating global tech trends and international markets.

The survey posed four key questions, aiming to gauge respondents' perspectives on whether the questionnaire effectively addressed challenges, provided valuable insights, covered referral programs and entry strategies, and contributed to enhancing the capacity and competitiveness of businesses in the Sri Lankan tech industry.

The survey results, presented in a bar graph, indicate that a significant majority of respondents (81%) either strongly agreed or agreed that the Tech Trade Insights Phase 2 Questionnaire effectively addressed challenges faced by SMEs in navigating global tech trends and international markets. This suggests that the questionnaire was successful in aiding SMEs to comprehend and overcome these challenges.

Furthermore, the survey revealed that 76% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the project provided valuable insights into key steps and express entry pathways for connecting businesses to global markets. This indicates that the questionnaire assisted SMEs in identifying specific steps required to enter new markets successfully.

Additionally, 71% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the project adequately covered government and private-sector referral programs, global networking programs, and other entry

strategies and pathways. This implies that the questionnaire furnished SMEs with the necessary information to access relevant programs and resources.

The survey found that 66% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the project contributed to improving the capacity and competitiveness of businesses in the Sri Lankan tech industry. This suggests that the questionnaire played a role in helping SMEs grow and succeed in the global marketplace.

In summary, the survey results suggest that the Tech Trade Insights Phase 2 Questionnaire was effective in aiding SMEs to navigate global tech trends and international markets by providing valuable insights, information, and resources. However, it's crucial to note that the sample size was relatively small (42 companies), and the survey method might limit the generalizability of the results to the entire population of SMEs in Sri Lanka. Despite these limitations, the survey provides valuable insights into the questionnaire's effectiveness, emphasizing the need to interpret the results with consideration for the sample size and potential population representation challenges.

3.4.4 Tech Trade Insights - Phase 03
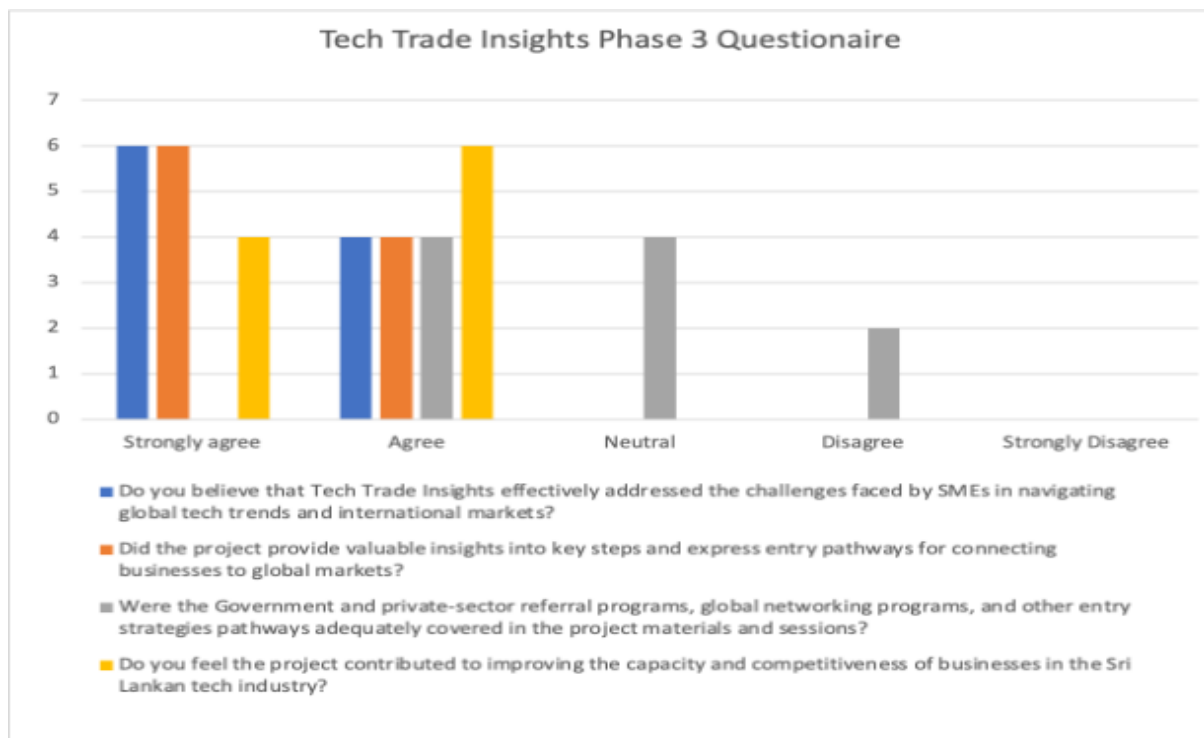
The objective of the Tech Trade Insights Phase 3 Questionnaire was to assess the perceived effectiveness of the project in addressing challenges faced by Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in navigating global tech trends and international markets. Additionally, the questionnaire aimed to gauge the value of insights provided, coverage of key entry pathways, and the overall impact on the capacity and competitiveness of businesses in the Sri Lankan tech industry.

1. Effectiveness in Addressing Challenges:

   - Strongly Agree (6): The majority of respondents (6 out of 10) strongly believe that Tech Trade Insights effectively addressed challenges faced by SMEs.

- Agree (4): Four respondents expressed agreement with the project's effectiveness.

2. Provision of Valuable Insights:

   - Strongly Agree (6): Six respondents strongly believe that the project provided valuable insights into key steps and entry pathways.

   - Agree (4): Four respondents agree that the insights provided were valuable.

3. Coverage of Entry Strategies and Programs:

   - Neutral (4): A neutral stance is observed among four respondents regarding the coverage of government and private-sector referral programs, global networking programs, and other entry strategies. This indicates a lack of strong agreement or disagreement on the adequacy of coverage.

4. Contribution to Capacity and Competitiveness:

   - Agree (6): Six respondents agree that the project contributed to improving the capacity and competitiveness of businesses in the Sri Lankan tech industry.

   - Neutral (4): Four respondents neither agree nor disagree on the project's contribution to capacity and competitiveness.

The overall response to the Tech Trade Insights Phase 3 Questionnaire reflects a positive perception among the majority of respondents. The project is seen as effective in addressing challenges, providing valuable insights, and contributing to the enhancement of capacity and competitiveness. However, there is a neutral stance on the adequacy of coverage for certain aspects, such as government and private-sector referral programs. These findings highlight areas for potential improvement in future phases of the project to ensure comprehensive coverage and alignment with the diverse needs of SMEs in the Sri Lankan tech industry.

3.5 Visa Recommendation Process
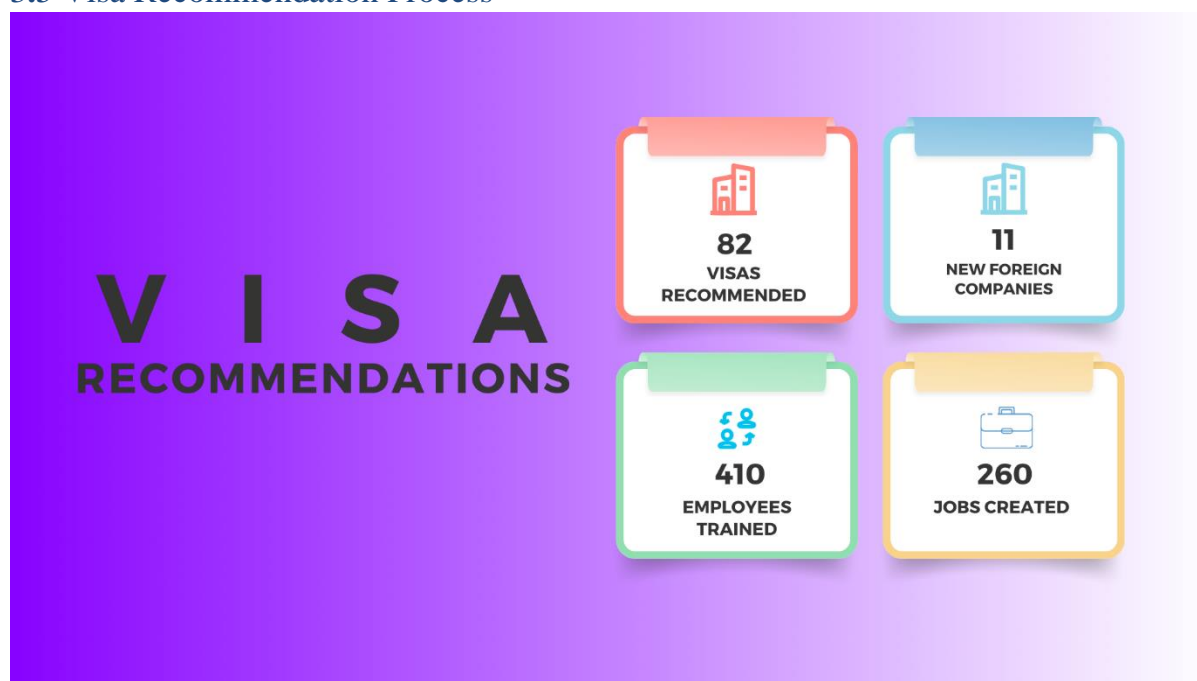
The Visa Recommendation process serves a dual purpose: to assist the Immigration Department in evaluating the suitability of foreign talent entering the ICT industry and to attract and retain the right individuals who will significantly contribute to the development of Sri Lanka's Digital Economy. By carefully assessing the skills and qualifications of foreign candidates, we strive to create a conducive environment that fosters innovation, growth, and knowledge transfer.

Our target beneficiaries encompass a diverse spectrum within the ICT sphere. Foreign employees seeking assistance in obtaining Sri Lankan employment visas will find tailored support through our Visa Recommendation process. Additionally, ICT companies considering establishing a presence in Sri Lanka can leverage our services to navigate the visa procedures seamlessly. Foreign investors exploring opportunities to invest in Sri Lanka will discover a supportive framework that aligns with the nation's vision for a thriving digital economy.

3.5.1 Objectives of Visa Recommendation

- Filling the knowledge and the talent gaps in the ICT industry
- Train the local employees on niche domain areas
- Attract new Investments to Sri Lanka

3.6 Embassy Engagement
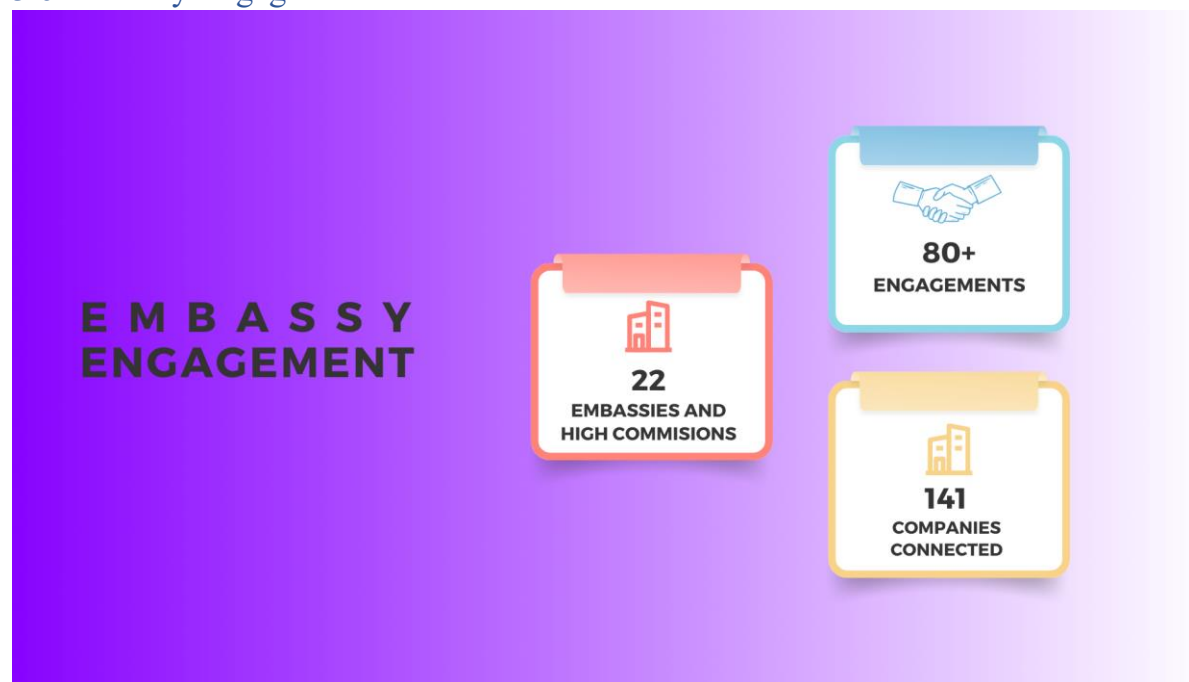
Our diplomatic endeavors extend to fostering collaborations with Sri Lankan Embassies worldwide. By actively engaging with diplomatic missions, we aim to strengthen ties, facilitate information exchange, and garner support for the growth of the technology industry in Sri Lanka.

3.7 Global Outreach Summit

Initiated by ICTA in January 2023, the Global Outreach Summit addresses the limited global competitiveness of Sri Lanka's IT SMEs. It aims to streamline AIMs program registration, foster networking, and provide global visibility. The project targets enrolling 100+ SMEs, generating $3 billion in revenue by 2024, and fostering economic development and growth in Sri Lanka's IT sector.

3.7.1 Objectives

- Create a platform for policy-level discussions
- Bringing industry stakeholders together to influence government decisions positively
- Facilitate networking among various stakeholders in the ICT industry
- Fostering connections that can drive growth
- Streamlining the registration process for local IT SMEs within the AIMs (Access to International Markets) national program
- Ensuring their inclusion in this pivotal initiative
- Provide IT-SMEs with access to local and international events
- Strengthening their global visibility and market exposures

3.8. e-swabhimani

The e-Swabhimani Awards, initiated by the Information and Communication Technology Agency of Sri Lanka (ICTA), are a prestigious national recognition for outstanding achievements in digital application development. Established in 2009, the awards aim to inspire and celebrate excellence in creating innovative digital solutions that address societal needs. Recognizing that the digital divide extends beyond infrastructure limitations, ICTA focuses on fostering high-quality digital applications that combine creative imagination, technical expertise, and financial resources. The core objectives of the e-Swabhimani Awards include encouraging the development of impactful digital applications, addressing the diverse needs of Sri Lankan society, and promoting local talent nationally and internationally.

The project has achieved notable success, with over 500 participants receiving awards across ten categories since 2009. The awards not only acknowledge and motivate creators but also provide a platform for international recognition through nominations for the World Summit Awards. In 2021 alone, 53 new innovations were explored, highlighting the enduring impact of the e-Swabhimani Awards on Sri Lanka's digital landscape.

3.9 Secure C
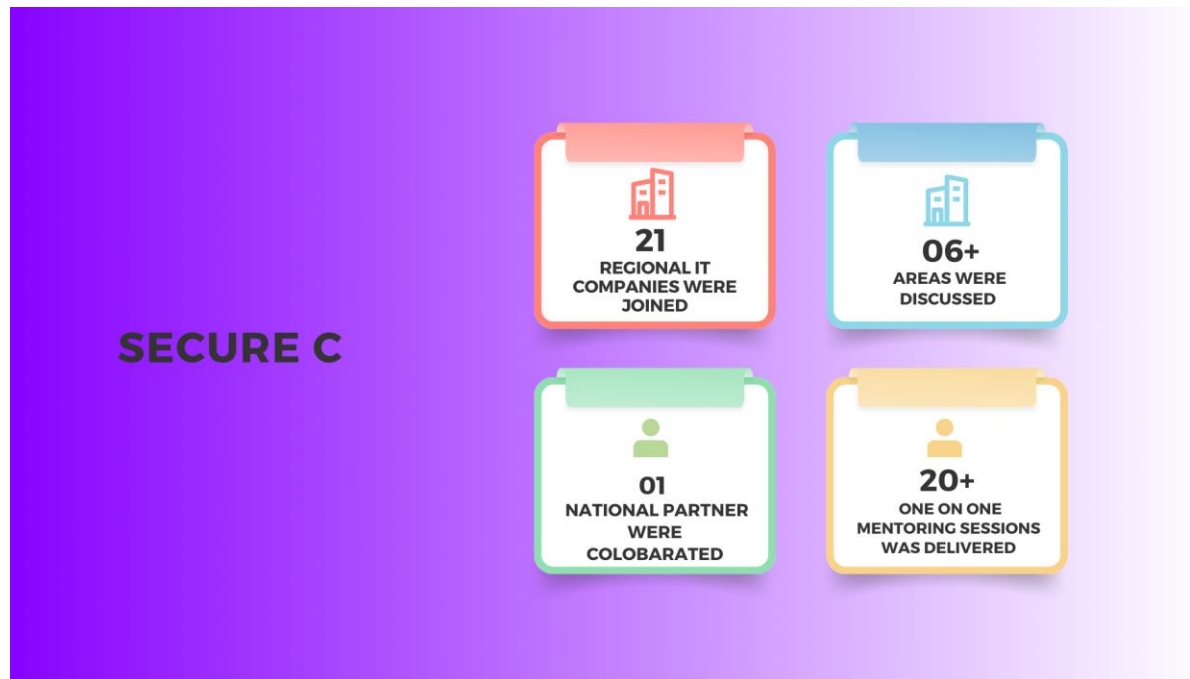
Secure C, initiated in 2017, is a comprehensive cybersecurity program that employs industry standards and adheres to the Open Web Application Security Project (OWASP) methodology for assessing the security posture of government websites. The initiative involves collaboration among various participants, including consultants, lawyers, contractors, and the ICT Department. The primary objectives of Secure C are to provide government organizations with initial audit reports on the security status of their websites, offer advice on resolving identified security issues, and conduct follow-up audits to ensure that the addressed concerns meet the required standards. The program's approach involves identifying vulnerabilities without disrupting operations, utilizing proof-of-concept exploitation, and prioritizing risks associated with the targeted websites. Notably, Secure C has successfully engaged 21 regional IT companies, facilitating discussions across 6+ areas. Additionally, a valuable collaboration with a national partner has been established, and over 20 one-on-one mentoring sessions have been delivered as part of this initiative. Ultimately, Secure C aims to enhance website security across government entities and issue certificates for compliance based on the assessment outcomes.

3.10 Win USA

The Win USA program recently organized an online workshop on January 27th, with a specific focus on enlightening regional tech companies about the intricacies of the USA market. Notable participants included industry figures such as Sidath Perera, along with various regional tech SMEs. Facilitated by a distinguished Sri Lankan American Technology Consultant, the workshop aimed to empower participants with key insights into the USA technology market and effective strategies to leverage its vast opportunities.

The primary objective of the workshop was to provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of the USA market in the technology sector. By doing so, the Win USA program sought to equip regional tech companies, including Sidath Perera, with valuable knowledge and strategies to navigate and capitalize on the opportunities presented by the USA technology market.

The core activity undertaken by the Win USA program was the organization of an online workshop conducted on January 27th. This workshop served as a platform for disseminating crucial insights about the USA market and offering guidance on how regional tech companies could effectively capitalize on the opportunities within the American technology landscape.

The key stakeholders involved in the Win USA program include the Sri Lankan American Technology Consultant, who serves as a facilitator for the workshop, and participants like Sidath Perera, who contribute their expertise. The primary target audience for this initiative comprises regional tech SMEs seeking to expand their operations and explore the USA technology market.

Since its initiation, the Win USA program has registered 40 IT companies, showcasing a robust level of industry engagement. Moreover, the program has successfully facilitated the participation of 40 IT companies, indicating a significant impact on the regional tech sector. The recent online workshop on the USA market underscores the program's commitment to

providing valuable resources and knowledge to enhance the competitiveness of regional tech companies in the global arena.

3.11 Sri Lanka Technology Forum
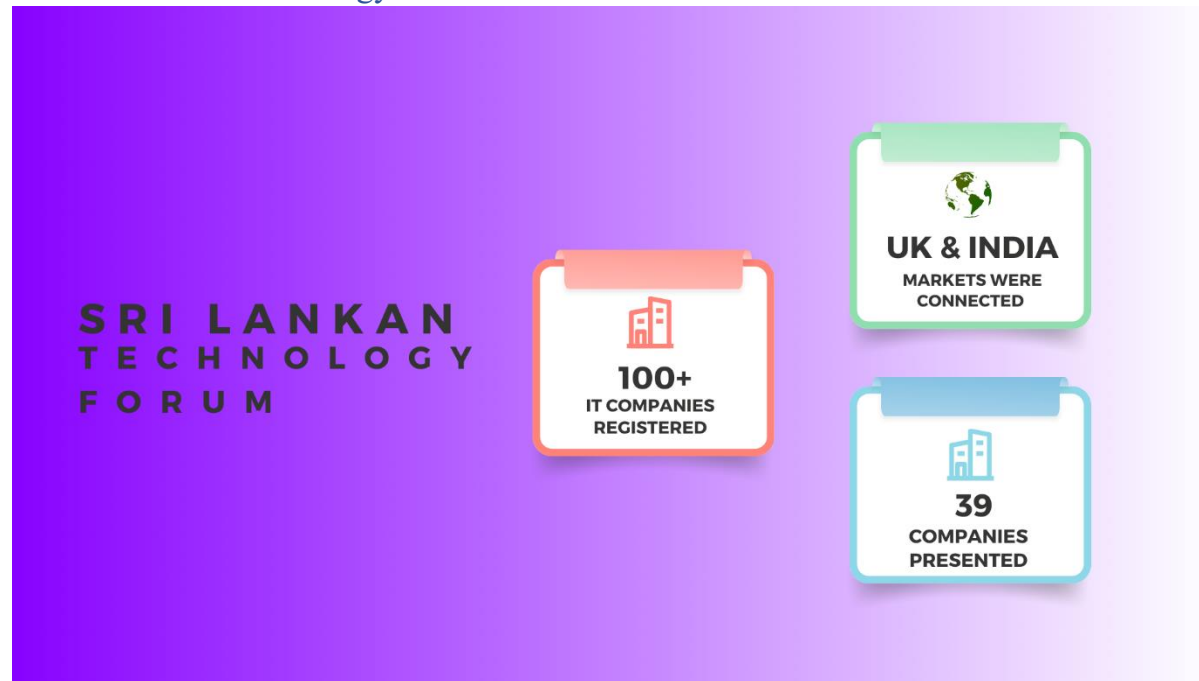
The Sri Lanka Technology Forum aims to position Sri Lanka as a prominent test bed for innovation and intellectual property (IP) creation, fostering an environment where both global and local multinational corporations, organizations, and companies can establish their operations within a dynamic tech ecosystem. The forum is hosted by the Indoor Sri Lanka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ISLCCI), a key player in promoting economic growth and collaboration in the region. Participants in this initiative include representatives from the Sri Lankan High Commission of India, contributing to the bilateral ties and technological advancements between the two nations. By encouraging the convergence of diverse stakeholders, the Sri Lanka Technology Forum strives to propel the country towards becoming a hub for groundbreaking technological solutions and a fertile ground for the generation of intellectual assets.

4.Challenges & Overcomes

4.1. Challenges faced according to the present circumstances

1.   Budget unavailability

2.   Restrictions on resources and talent acquisition (recruitment being frozen)

3.   De-prioritising of projects and continuous changes in Management and the direction.

3.   Government restrictions in the form of circulars/ notices

4.   Red tape and Government procedures

4.   Lack of understanding of the governing authorities

5.   Support services not aligning to provide quick solutions for the challenges of projects

7.   Constant changes in the internal methods and working priorities

8.   Procedures change regularly which shows irregularity in performance

9.   No strict authority to defend the work that is being successful

Funding Challenges:

Diversify funding sources by exploring public-private partnerships (PPPs), seeking grants, and engaging with philanthropic organizations.

Develop a robust business case to attract investors and demonstrate the value of the organization's initiatives.

Resource Scarcity:

Conduct a thorough resource assessment and reallocate resources based on priority projects.

Consider outsourcing non-core functions to optimize the use of existing resources.

Staffing Issues:

Implement aggressive recruitment strategies, including partnerships with educational institutions and offering competitive packages.

Develop a talent retention program to keep skilled staff within the organization.

Procurement Process Streamlining:

Review and revise procurement policies to simplify processes without compromising transparency.

Invest in e-procurement solutions to automate and expedite procurement procedures.

Red Tape and Approval Delays:

Conduct a review of approval processes to identify bottlenecks and streamline decision-making.

Advocate for a more flexible and responsive decision-making structure within the organization.

Board Meeting Frequency and Decision Time:

Consider more frequent board meetings or establish a mechanism for emergency approvals to expedite critical decisions.

Ensure that board members are well-prepared before meetings to maximize efficiency.

Lack of Suitable Candidates

Collaborate with educational institutions and professional organizations to develop training programs that align with the organization's needs.

Consider offering internships or apprenticeships to groom candidates for specific roles.

Rebuilding ICTA's Credibility:

Develop and implement a transparent communication strategy to address concerns and communicate positive changes within the organization.

Showcase successful projects to rebuild public and stakeholder trust.

Authority to Make Decisions:

Advocate for increased decision-making authority at appropriate levels within the organization.

Clearly define decision-making roles and responsibilities to avoid unnecessary delays.

Automation of Processes:

Invest in technology solutions to automate manual processes, reducing delays and errors.

Provide training to staff on new systems to ensure effective implementation.

Vendor Relationship Management:

Address credit facility issues by negotiating flexible payment terms with vendors.

Build strong, long-term relationships with reliable vendors to ensure a steady supply of services.

Addressing Payment Delays:

Develop a system to ensure timely payment to vendors.

Communicate openly with vendors about payment schedules and changes in processes.

Engaging Multilateral Funding Organizations:

Implement and adhere to strict ethical standards to rebuild trust with funding organizations.

Provide transparent reporting on fund utilization and project outcomes.

Improving Monitoring and Evaluation:

Invest in M&E training for staff and consider bringing in external experts for independent evaluations.

Integrate M&E as an integral part of project planning and execution.

Addressing these challenges will likely require a combination of policy changes, organizational restructuring, capacity building, and strategic communication efforts. Regular reviews and adjustments to the strategies will be essential to ensure sustained improvement.

4.2. Best Practices adopted

Tailor Communication Methods:

- Adapt communication methods to suit the preferences and needs of different stakeholders.
- Some stakeholders may prefer email updates, while others may prefer face-to-face meetings or social media updates.

Build Relationships:

- Develop positive relationships with key stakeholders.

- Understand their interests and motivations to foster a collaborative and supportive environment.

Risk Management:

- Identify potential risks associated with each stakeholder who involved with project/events and develop strategies to mitigate them.
- Anticipate and plan for any challenges that may arise in the stakeholder management process.

Post-Event Evaluation:

- Conduct a thorough evaluation after the event to gather feedback from stakeholders.
- Use insights gained to improve future stakeholder management strategies and enhance the overall event planning process.

Create a Detailed Project Plan:

- Develop a comprehensive project plan that outlines tasks, milestones, deadlines, and dependencies. This plan should serve as a roadmap for the entire project.

Documentation:

- Maintain thorough documentation throughout the project. This includes meeting notes, decisions made, and any changes to the plan. This documentation serves as a valuable reference for future events.

Appendix

Programme or Event	Activity	Starting Date/ Event Date	Type of Participant	Stakeholders	Objectives
LEAP (Export Readiness Programme)	-Promoting the practical application of concepts and methods which resulted in participant's active engagement -Peer-to-peer learning -Networking and building up a culture of cross selling among each other	August 2019	IT-SME companies	-Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade (MODSIT) -Exports Development Board (EDB) - Industry Stakeholders	-Scaling up regional tech companies to break into new global markets -Regional IT companies provided with opportunities to enhance their knowledge and network at national level events
AIMs (Market Access Programme)	-Connecting with other stakeholders -Qualified leads -Connecting with embassies -Onboarding -Initial screening -Registration	July 2022	-Local IT industry -Foreign connections between government institutes -Private sector entities	-Sri Lankan High commissions -Embassies, and consulates overseas -Expat groups in foreign countries -Bilateral & Multilateral organizations -Bilateral chambers and associations -Local governments authorities -Local IT associations	-Increased export market readiness capacity in IT-BPM companies -Increased international market access opportunities
Global Outreach Summit		January 2023	local IT SMEs	-Technology Industry Development Division of ICTA -bilateral Chambers of Commerce -foreign embassies -the Department of Commerce -the Export Development Board	-Create a platform for policy-level discussions -Bringing industry stakeholders together to influence government decisions positively -Facilitate networking among various stakeholders in the ICT industry -Fostering connections that can drive growth -Streamlining the registration process for local IT SMEs within the AIMs (Access to International Markets) national program -Ensuring their inclusion in this pivotal initiative -Provide IT-SMEs with access to local and international events -Strengthening their global visibility and market exposure
Regional tech summit - Northern chapter	-IT MSME Training and Knowledge Sharing Sessions -Focus on equipping attendees with	June 2023	Local and multinational IT companies"- Investors and industry leaders	-USAID "Catalyze" Private Sector Development (PSD)Activity -Northern Chamber of Information Technology	-Plug into the Regional ICT Ecosystem -To continue the Development of the ICT Sector

			-Local and multinational IT companies and Expatriate Groups -Bilateral and multilateral local/international associations"	(NCIT) -Central Bank of Sri Lanka	-Bridging Employment Gaps and Upskilling Workforce -Giving a chance to other regional IT SMEs to expand their local market
Regional tech summit - Southern chapter	-IT MSME Training and Knowledge Sharing Sessions -Networking Sessions -Meeting Sessions -Connect with Associations -Access to Finance -ICT Job and Certification Fair	August 24th & 26th 2023	-Investors and industry leaders -Local and multinational IT companies and Expatriate Groups -Bilateral and multilateral local/international associations		-Plug into the Regional ICT Ecosystem -To continue the Development of the ICT Sector -Bridging Employment Gaps and Upskilling Workforce -Giving a chance to other regional IT SMEs to expand their local market
Regional tech summit - Central Chapter	-Career and Educational Fair -UI/UX and Product Management MasterClasses	November 3rd & 4th 2023	-Leaders -Investors International partners -SMEs -Innovators -Freelancers	USAID "Catalyze" Private Sector Development (PSD)	-Plug into the Regional ICT Ecosystem -To continue the Development of the ICT Sector -Bridging Employment Gaps and Upskilling Workforce -Giving a chance to other regional IT SMEs to expand their local market
Tech Trade Insights - P01	Export Readiness Masterclass	03rd March 2023	-Customers -New Investors -Local business groups	-SMEs and Large Scale ICT companies	-Insights on key steps and express entry pathways to connect your business to global markets, including but not limited to Government and private-sector referral programs, Global networking programs, and other entry strategies pathways, etc. -Best practices and processes in product management fundamentals including product conception, development and engineering, adopting a customer-centric approach in User Interface/User Experience design -Improved Capacity and Competitiveness,
Tech Trade Insights - P02	Personalized appointments with 10 Country Representatives	13th March 2023	-50 individuals -Admission	-Start-Ups -SMEs or Key Companies -Business Partners -Distributors -Relevant Influences -Trade Communities -SL Diaspora	
Tech Trade Insights - P03	Mentoring session for 20 tech SMEs by two USA Deligates	14th June 2023	20 IT Companies	-Limited number of esteemed individuals	

					Increased Access and Availability of Finance and to creation of economic resilience between employer and employee towards the micro and macro-economic impacts during uncertain grounds
Secure C	-Conduct the assessment by following the industry standards and as per the open Web Application Security Project (OWASP) methodology -Exploit the above vulnerabilities as proof of concept without disturbing the operations - Identify and prioritize various risks to the given websites	2017	-Consultant -Lawyer	-Contractor -ICT Department	- To provide initial audit reports to government organizations by assessing current security status of their websites, - To advice government organizations on fixing the identified security issues - To conduct follow-up audits to examine whether identified security issues have been sufficiently addressed and issue a certificate.
Win USA	-Online Workshop for the regional tech companies about USA market and how to capitalize on it	27th January	- Sidath Perera -Regional tech SMEs	Sri Lankan American Technology Consultant	-Give a insight about USA market in technology
Future Tech Summit	Awareness sessions expanding its reach and influence within the tech industry. Both physical and virtual sessions will remain integral to its strategy, ensuring that knowledge continues to flow freely among tech enthusiasts	July 2023	Tech industry	ADL (Axiata Digital Labs)	-Provide insights into emerging technologies and concepts that hold tremendous promise for the IT industry and those with an interest in cutting-edge ideas and innovations -Actively engage the tech industry by conducting a series of enlightening awareness sessions on the latest trends and technologies relevant to the IT sector
Winning Dollar	-Identified the startup procedure of enter into the international market -How to handle a international business in properway -How to build up the trust between customer way of advertising -Licensing and agreement details -Currently we do not operate in international market,so we identified	March 17		- 6IXSENSES	-Scaling up reginal tech companies to break into new global markets

	the possible opportunities we have in the international market especially in Canada				
Sri Lanka Technology Forum 1.0	-Enable Sri Lanka to be recognized as a test bed for innovation and IP creation where both global and local multinational corporations, organizations and companies will set-up their operations within this tech-ecosystem	November 2022	Tech SMEs	UK Embassy	Giving chance to Sri Lankan tech SMES to go global market
Sri Lanka Technology Forum 2.0	-Enable Sri Lanka to be recognized as a test bed for innovation and IP creation where both global and local multinational corporations, organizations and companies will set-up their operations within this tech-ecosystem	April 2023	Tech SMEs	Indu -Sri Lanka Chamber of Commerce	Giving chance to Sri Lankan tech SMES to go global market

Project/Event – Regional Tech Summit – Northern Chapter	*The Regional Tech Summit 2023's Northern Chapter in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, marked a significant milestone in collaboration with ICTA, USAID Catalyze PSD Activity, and NCIT. The event focused on bolstering the ICT sector through knowledge sharing, policy discussions, and empowering regional professionals. Notable activities included IT MSME training, extensive networking opportunities, and connections with local and international associations. Innovative sessions on market access, UI/UX, and other pertinent topics fueled the spirit of innovation. The summit successfully facilitated collaborations and partnerships, contributing to the growth of the Jaffna IT-BPM industry. Exclusive banking facilities highlighted access to finance, while an ICT Job and Certification Fair underscored the event's comprehensive approach. Building on the success of the Northern Chapter, the summit is set to expand to Galle in August, embodying inspiration, collaboration, and limitless possibilities within the dynamic ICT sector.*

Objectives	Date	Activities	No of Participants	Type of participants
-Plug into the Regional ICT Ecosystem -To continue the Development of the ICT Sector -Bridging Employment Gaps and Upskilling Workforce -Giving a chance to other regional IT SMEs to expand their local market	June 2023	-IT MSME Training and Knowledge Sharing Sessions -Focus on equipping attendees with invaluable insights (Areas covered include: International Market Access, UI/UX (User Interface/User Experience), Product Engineering, Contractual Law, Digital Media Management IT Pricing & Procurement) -Networking Sessions	100+	*Tech SME* *Freelacer* *IT Undergraduate*
Project/Event – Regional Tech Summit – Southern Chapter	*The Regional Tech Summit 2023's Southern Chapter in Galle, Sri Lanka, builds on the success of the Northern Chapter, continuing the momentum of collaboration with ICTA, USAID Catalyze PSD Activity.. Focused on enhancing the ICT sector, the event features knowledge-sharing, and policy discussions, and empowers regional professionals. Activities include IT MSME training, networking, and connections with local and global associations. Innovative sessions cover market access, UI/UX, and other crucial topics. Exclusive banking facilities highlight finance access, and an ICT Job and Certification Fair ensures a comprehensive approach. The Southern Chapter also aims to foster collaborations, drive industry growth, and inspire limitless possisilities within the dynamic ICT sector.*			
Objectives	Date	Activities	No of Participants	Type of participants
-Plug into the Regional ICT Ecosystem -To continue the Development of the ICT Sector -Bridging Employment Gaps and Upskilling Workforce	**August 2023**	-IT MSME Training and Knowledge Sharing Sessions -Focus on equipping attendees with invaluable insights (Areas covered include:	**200+**	*Tech SME* *Freelacer* *IT Undergraduates*

-Giving a chance to other regional IT SMEs to expand their local market		International Market Access, UI/UX (User Interface/User Experience), Product Engineering, Contractual Law, Digital Media Management IT Pricing & Procurement) -Networking Sessions		
Project/Event – Regional Tech Summit – Central Chapter	*The Regional Tech Summit 2023's centra Chapter in kandy , Sri Lanka, builds on the success of the northern & southern Chapter, continuing the momentum of collaboration with ICTA, USAID Catalyze PSD Activity.. Focused on enhancing the ICT sector, the event features knowledge-sharing, and policy discussions, and empowers regional professionals. Activities include IT MSME training, networking, and connections with local and global associations. Innovative sessions cover market access, UI/UX, and other crucial topics. Exclusive banking facilities highlight finance access, and an ICT Job and Certification Fair ensures a comprehensive approach. The central Chapter also aims to foster collaborations, drive industry growth, and inspire limitless possibilities within the dynamic ICT sector in kandy*			
Objectives	**Date**	**Activities**	**No of Participants**	**Type of participants**
-Plug into the Regional ICT Ecosystem -To continue the Development of the ICT Sector -Bridging Employment Gaps and Upskilling Workforce -Giving a chance to other regional IT SMEs to expand their local market	November 2023	-IT MSME Training and Knowledge Sharing Sessions -Focus on equipping attendees with invaluable insights (Areas covered include: International Market Access, UI/UX (User Interface/User Experience), Product Engineering, Contractual Law, Digital Media Management IT Pricing & Procurement) -Networking Sessions	**250+**	**Tech SME** **Freelacer** **IT Undergraduates**

Project/Event – Secure C	Description - This event comprehensive support interventions initiated by LEAP for its regional technology SME community. The previously held event, conducted during the November 2022, featured an initial briefing workshop addressing crucial areas identified by the community. The secure C covers topics such as Information Security, Global Standards, Regulatory Compliance, Data Privacy, Digital Laws, Technical Product Validation, Recognition/Accreditation, Quality Certification, Cybersecurity Risks, Ransomware Trends, Cloud Service Challenges, and Best Practices for Remote Work.			
Objectives	Date	Activities	No of Participants	Type of participants
-To provide initial audit reports to government organizations by assessing current security status of their websites, -To advice government organizations on fixing the identified security issues To conduct follow-up audits to examine whether identified security issues have been sufficiently addressed and issue a certificate.	Nov 2022	-Conduct the assessment by following the industry standards and as per the open Web Application Security Project (OWASP) methodology -Exploit the above vulnerabilities as proof of concept without disturbing the operations - Identify and prioritize various risks to the given websites	19	Regional Tech SMEs
Project/Event – Win USA	Description - **The Win USA program conducted an online workshop on January 27th, with the primary focus on providing insights about the USA market for regional tech companies, including participants like Sidath Perera and various regional tech SMEs. Facilitated by the Sri Lankan American Technology Consultant, the objective was to equip participants with valuable knowledge about the USA technology market and strategies to capitalize on its opportunities.**			
Objectives	Date	Activities	No of Participants	Type of participants
Give an insight about USA market in technology	Jan 2023	-Online Workshop for the regional tech companies about USA market and how to capitalize on it	40	Regional Tech SMEs

Project/Event -Wining $	The "Winning $!" event, initiated on March 17, aimed to guide regional tech companies in entering international markets. The activities included understanding startup procedures, handling international business effectively, building customer trust through advertising, and exploring licensing and agreement details. With a focus on potential opportunities in the international market, specifically in Canada, the event engaged stakeholders like 6IXSENCES and welcomed 20 participants. The primary objective was to facilitate the scaling up of regional tech companies, providing them with valuable insights and strategies for successful entry into new global markets.			

Objectives	*Date*	*Activities*	*No of Participants*	*Type of participants*
facilitate the scaling up of regional tech companies, providing them with valuable insights and strategies for successful entry into new global markets.	*March 2022*	Identified the startup procedure of enter into the international market -How to handle a international business in properway -How to build up the trust between customer way of advertising -Licensing and agreement details -Currently we do not operate in international market,so we identified the possible opportunities we have in the international market, especially in Canada	*20*	*Regional Tech SMEs*

Details of LEAP's workshop program:

Qualitative Feedback

Exiting news from Nanosoft Global, an ICTA backed Startup

Greetings,

I hope this email finds you in good health and high spirits. I am thrilled to share some exciting news with all of you. Smart COOP has successfully raised its first round of funding, marking a significant milestone in our journey towards transforming co-operative banking in Sri Lanka.

This achievement would not have been possible without your unwavering support, guidance, and mentorship throughout our entrepreneurial journey. Your belief in our vision and your invaluable advice have been instrumental in shaping the growth and success of Smart COOP. I am immensely grateful for the role ICTA has played in our development, and I want to express my deepest appreciation for ICTA's commitment to our mission.

The funds raised will be utilized to expand our operations into new regions, invest in advanced product technologies, and enhance our services to provide an even better experience for our valued customers. With this significant milestone, we are more determined than ever to revolutionize co-operative banking and uplift financial literacy in rural communities.

As we embark on this new chapter of growth and innovation, I look forward to your continued guidance and mentorship. Your expertise and wisdom are invaluable assets, and we will always strive to make you proud.

Once again, thank you from the bottom of my heart for your unwavering support. Together, we are making a lasting impact on co-operative banking and financial inclusion in Sri Lanka. I am excited about the journey ahead and cannot wait to share more updates with all of you.

Which event did you participate in?	Name	Overall Experience: (Rate your overall satisfa	Speakers and Content: (Quality of the sessions and r	Networking Opportunities (How useful were the netwo	Organization: (Event organization)	Comment
Regional Tech Summit - Central Chapter (Kandy)	Shabique Irshad	5	5	5	Well-organized	Is there any opportunities to work with you all
Regional Tech Summit - Central Chapter (Kandy)	B.M Naveed	5	4	5	Well-organized	Very satisfied event
Regional Tech Summit - Central Chapter (Kandy)	Amarabandu චුදි	2	4	3	Well-organized	Best Event
Regional Tech Summit - Central Chapter (Kandy)	Dilani Samanthika	5	5	2	Disorganized	Sending event invitations was problematic and totally it was a negative experience. Rest is perfect.
Regional Tech Summit - Central Chapter (Kandy)	Isuru Chandimal	4	4	3	Well-organized	It's great experience, but I think organization must be improved. Because I have received my invitation late night.
Regional Tech Summit - Central Chapter (Kandy)	Shafrin Mahroof	5	4	5	Well-organized	The event was fantastic. looking forward to participate in ICTA events. also willing to become design partners in other ICTA events
Regional Tech Summit - Southern Chapter (Galle)	Sandithi Mathanga	3	3	3	Well-organized	Thank you
Regional Tech Summit - Central Chapter (Kandy)	Detunu Udakotuw	4	2	4	Well-organized	The event might have done better than it was