



ecomConnect



## Together on the way to sell online

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Partnering with ecomConnect to develop small business digital capabilities and improve e-commerce accessibility in developing countries.

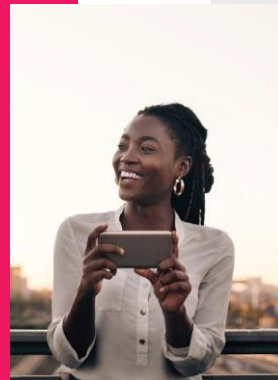
# “

Digital technologies are driving the future of trade and we need to make sure that small businesses can be on board.

For many small businesses, those technologies are out of their reach due to a combination of factors: cost, limited connectivity, know-how and more.

This is why the International Trade Centre is working with partner institutions and large enterprises to bring affordable solutions to small businesses, promote innovation and boost their participation in international trade.”

Pamela Coke-Hamilton  
ITC Executive Director











ecomConnect



## Index

-  About
-  Methodology
-  Partners
-  Case study
-  Vision
-  Get in touch





## About ecomConnect

The [ecomConnect Programme](#) helps small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in developing countries to market and sell their products online. We support our project SMEs with training, research, structures, partnerships, and digital tools and technologies.

Our goal is to connect SMEs to local, regional, and international online markets, in an inclusive and sustainable manner.



# Snapshot 2019-2021



# Impact

 Collaborative	Working together to support existing or planned initiatives	Rwanda: Developed an e-commerce marketing and logistics strategy for domestic e-commerce with the Rwandan Ministry of Trade and Industry
 Scalable	Staged approach toward rapid adoption of e-commerce	Middle East and North Africa: Conducted online webinars and remote coaching through the MENA E-commerce Entrepreneur Knowledge Series to support businesses in their rapid adoption of e-commerce during COVID-19
 Inclusive	Tailored solutions for different business groups	Central Asia: Adapted training for e-commerce readiness for multiple SMEs and business support organisations. Covered beginner to advanced levels in 5 countries
 Community-based	Leveraging skills for continuous support	Central America: Supported advanced SMEs to mentor fellow beneficiaries through the regional E-commerce Leadership Programme
 Blended approach	Delivering assistance online and offline	Worldwide: Free resources for SMEs including webinars, workshops, guides, tutorials, and networking opportunities for potential collaborations via the <a href="https://ecomconnect.org">ecomConnect.org</a> online community



# Presence

## Ongoing projects 2017-2021

- Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panamá

Support women-led businesses to export handicrafts by creating of their own websites, marketplace stores, and social media

## Finalized projects

- Bangladesh, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Qatar, Azerbaijan, Senegal, Jordan, Morocco, Cambodia, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Afghanistan

## Ongoing projects 2020-2023

- Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan

Develop digital capabilities for small businesses to trade regionally and internationally through online channels

## Ongoing projects 2020-2022

- Vietnam, Laos, Ghana, Kenya, Peru

Enable sustainable brands offering tourism services, handicrafts, and agribusiness products, such as coffee, tea, or chocolate, to sell to international markets

## Ongoing projects 2019-2021

- Tunisia, Lebanon

Provide women-led businesses with access to national and international markets through online marketplaces





## What we offer SMEs



Tailored online and face-to face training for successful domestic and international e-commerce



Advisory and research services to develop, expand, and resolve specific barriers, such as access to payment solutions, logistics, and e-commerce services



Partnerships with private sector firms to provide key training, preferential payment support, and other essential e-commerce services



Innovative tools and customized software solutions to support product digitalization, e-commerce readiness, and the development of e-commerce pricing strategies



Promotional events to connect e-commerce businesses to international customers through online campaigns, trade fairs, and exhibitions





# Tools

 ecomConnect.org  
community

Connects entrepreneurs, organisations and business experts with SMEs to share e-commerce solutions and success stories, and access free tools, via our online community.

 E-commerce  
Readiness Quiz

Rapidly assesses e-commerce readiness in 5 areas: e-commerce planning, online presence, digital marketing, shipping, and inventory and customer service.

 E-commerce  
Cost Calculator

Helps SMEs understand the costs of selling on popular e-commerce marketplaces such as Amazon, eBay and Etsy, or their own online stores. Supports SMEs to set up pricing strategies and calculate sales margins.

 Online Payment  
Solution Finder

Helps SMEs understand the costs of selling on popular e-commerce marketplaces such as Amazon, eBay and Etsy, or their own online stores. Supports SMEs to set up pricing strategies and calculate sales margins.

 ecomConnect  
Market

Brings together a selection of e-commerce businesses from around the world, to promote and showcase best practices achieved by the ITC ecomConnect Programme.

 Africa Marketplace  
Explorer

Conducts a deep assessment of SMEs' e-commerce capabilities before and after projects, covering general business maturity, online presence, payments, logistics, digital marketing, and customer service. Information is gathered via a comprehensive online survey. This tool is only accessible to project SMEs and is not publicly available.

 E-commerce  
Diagnostics tool

Conducts a deep assessment of SMEs' e-commerce capabilities before and after projects, covering general business maturity, online presence, payments, logistics, digital marketing, and customer service. Information is gathered via a comprehensive online survey. This tool is only accessible to project SMEs and is not publicly available.

 Track Me Tool

Tracks SME sales and site traffic across different e-commerce platforms in a single dashboard. Helps SMEs measure their online performance. The tool is used in selected ITC projects.

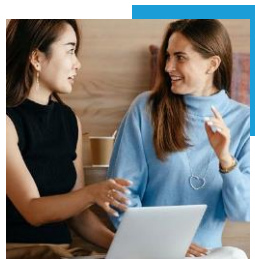
## ecomConnect Market: Showcasing the best small enterprises and work with partners

The enterprises showcased have all gone through an extensive support programme and serve as a reference group for the quality of their products and implemented e-commerce strategy.

All selected companies are actively engaged in e-commerce – either through marketplace platforms or their own managed sites and have achieved some degree of success.

Selected companies benefit from:

- ▶ increased exposure
- ▶ support offered by partners in the ecomConnect programme



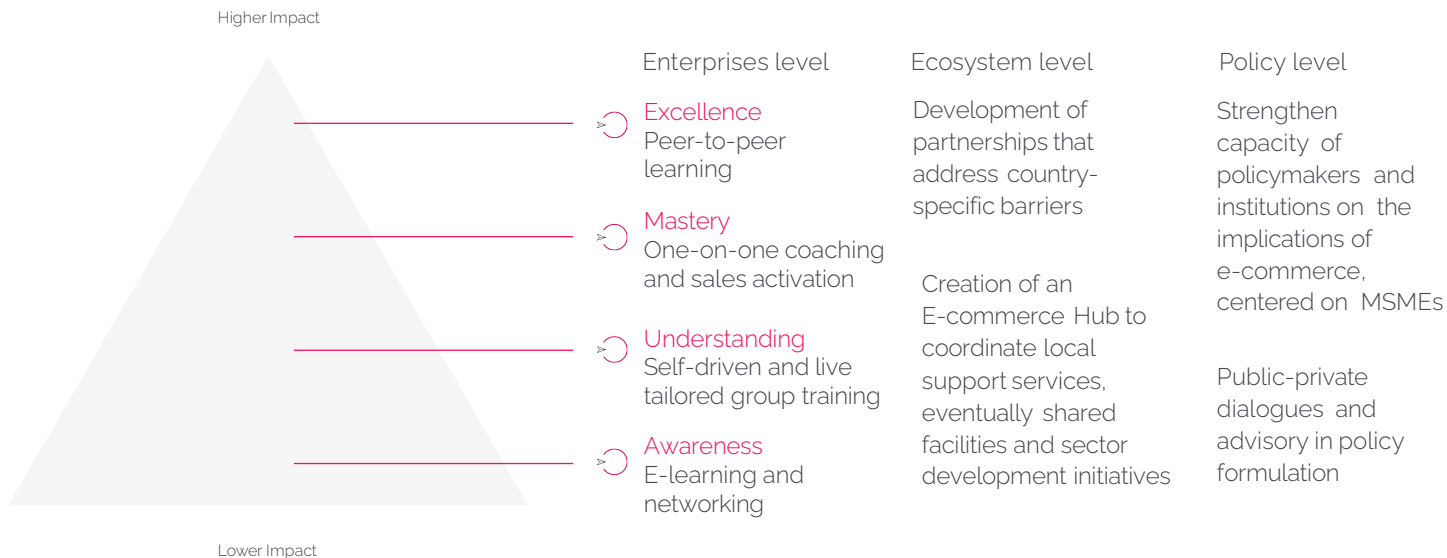
## Vision for the ecomConnect market

We see the current showcase as just the beginning of what we can do to drive awareness and success of small enterprises in e-commerce.

We would like this to be a platform where we promote the contribution of partners, fund online campaigns that can boost sales for the selected enterprises and demonstrate the results we achieve together with our partners.

# How ecomConnect works

ecomConnect covers activities and interactions in three levels: enterprise level, ecosystem level, and policy and institutional environment level. Our overall aim is to shift from improving to consolidating the capabilities of each SME, ensuring long term, sustainable change.





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# Partners

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# Partners





## Why partner with us



### **Advance the agenda for sustainable and inclusive access to e-commerce**

Build solutions to underserved SMEs in collaboration with other private and public sector partners



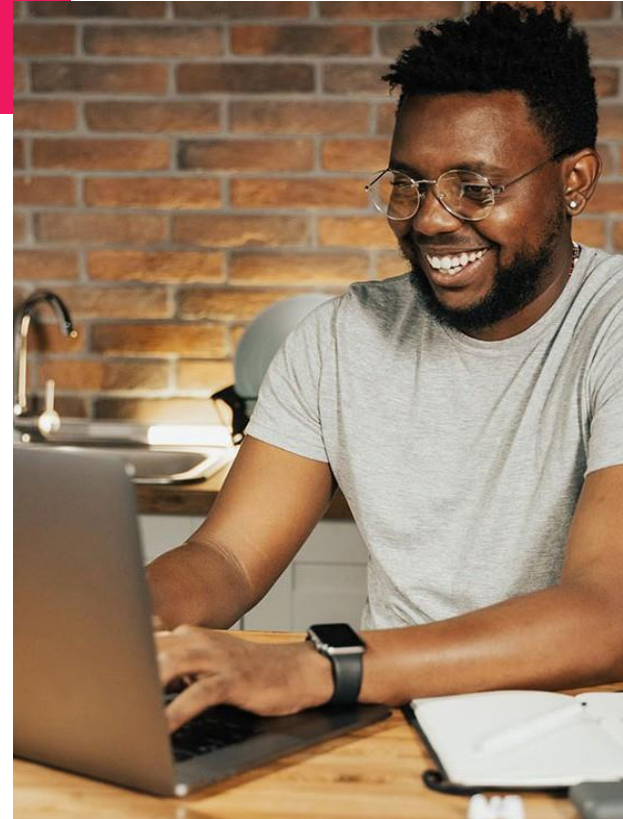
### **Contribute to the growth of e-commerce in developing countries**

Support long term development and opportunities for future business, and identify champions in local markets



### **Support the delivery of an established, effective and scalable project in key regions**

Grow and extend a network of contacts among local, regional and international groups engaged in e-commerce



# Levels of partnerships



## Funder

Fund and implement comprehensive programmes; brainstorm and generate innovative and integrated solutions; and engage multiple actors to boost e-commerce

- Financial contribution
- Design, build and run solutions
- Engage different actors



## Contributor

Provide in-kind contribution, expertise, and personalized support to advance e-commerce skills and ease of doing business

- Provide shared resources for training and support
- Provide preferential rates



## Supporter

Commit to e-commerce transformation of businesses; actively engage in dialogue and advocacy events to increase ecomConnect outreach

- Raise awareness of ecomConnect projects
- Organize and contribute to events



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# Case study

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## Central America: Women and e-commerce

Since 2018, ecomConnect has worked with local partners in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama to support SMEs to build e-commerce businesses.

**Aim:** Train and support 200 women-led SMEs in Central America to develop their own successful online businesses selling handmade products.

**Method:** ecomConnect provided training on key product and market selection, content development, online store development, website optimisation, digital marketing, and customer service.

In addition, 'e-labs' were organised to provide the most seasoned businesses with specific support on website and Etsy and eBay stores optimization. By testing different online channels, learning digital marketing techniques, and measuring performance, participants developed e-commerce strategies that they could later pass on to less advanced beneficiaries through a peer-to-peer support programme: the **E-commerce Leadership Programme**.

# Central America Results

6

Local institutions  
trained

150

SMEs  
trained

119

Websites and  
marketplace stores  
created or optimized

102

SMEs making  
online sales

2,449

Online  
orders

86,540

Revenue  
gained (USD)

21

Markets  
reached

95

Promotional  
videos

# Central America Partners

## Funder



## Implementing partners



## Contributors



# “

This was a great experience. Thanks to this partnership, I was able to reduce my shipping time from 3-4 weeks to 3-4 days, without changing my pricing.

DHL's preferential shipping rates also allowed me to offer free shipping to my customers, and we have since sent several products to Houston, Texas, which was previously an issue due to shipping. With ITC's support, I can now send customers my products quickly and securely!"

Elena San Martín  
Founder of Nicteel Ceramics, Honduras



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"Thanks to the training provided by ITC and eBay, I have learnt about the importance of having good product photos, attractive and authentic product descriptions as well as a high quality packaging.

With targeted online campaigns and continuous tracking of the sales metrics, I am able to successfully promote my brand abroad especially in the United States.

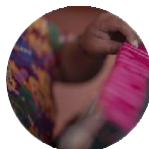
Soledad Borel  
Founder of Soledad Art Jewellery  
Costa Rica



# Central America: Find more about the project



Project page



Online stores



Hub on eBay



Hub on Novica



Facebook page



Instagram page



YouTube channel



# Vision

## Building resources, solving issues locally

Create resource centres that offer locally adapted support for advice, learning, networking, and shared services

Partner with local institutions to embed capabilities and create self-reinforcing learning and capacity building, including through peer-to-peer mentoring.

## Growing reach, involvement, and impact

Expand and extend the online community of entrepreneurs, experts and resources through the ecomConnect platform

Build a network of private sector partners and e-commerce innovators to tackle access and affordability issues for small e-commerce SMEs in developing and least developed countries

Increase geographic coverage and scale of projects

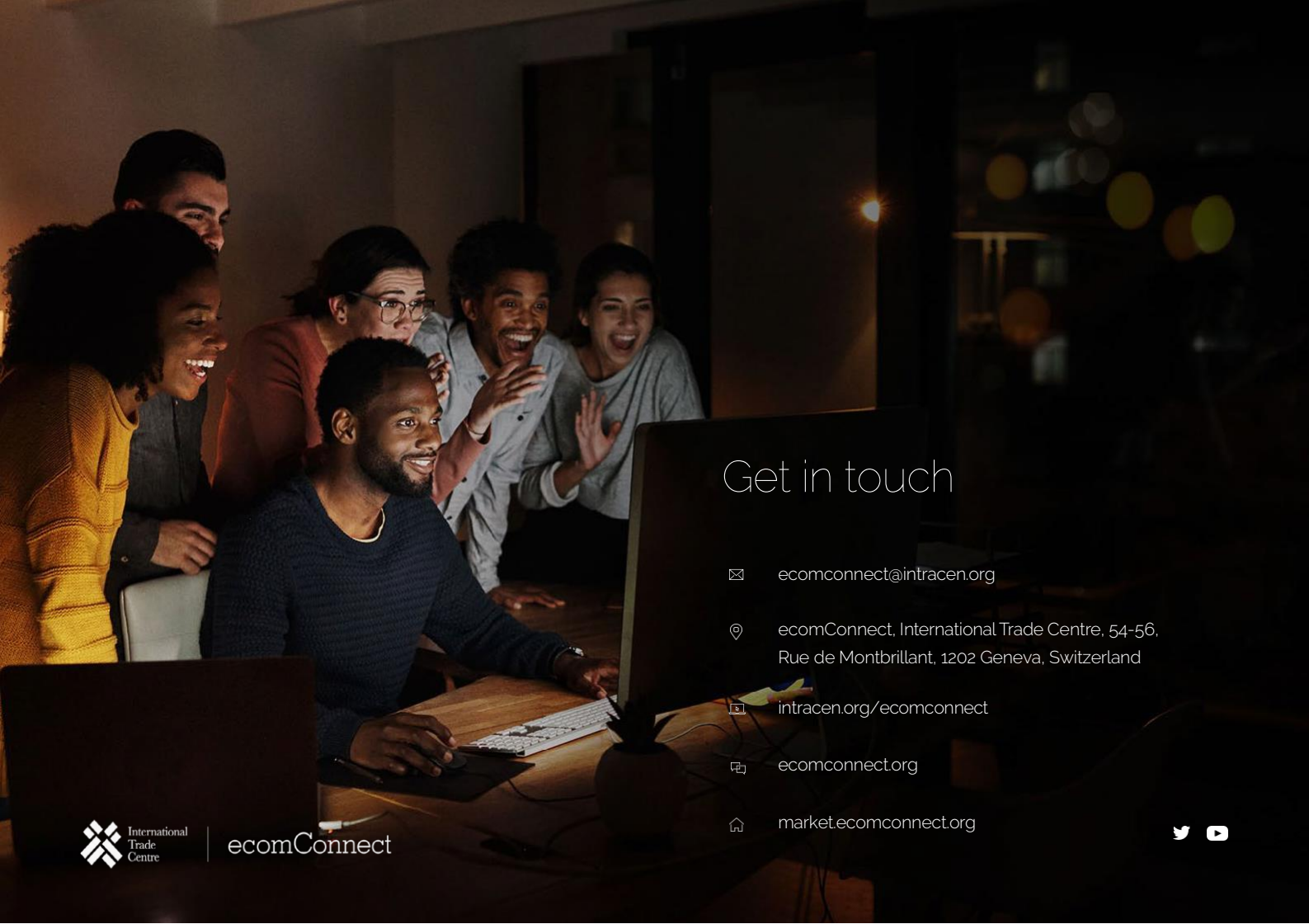
## Extending the opportunities of digital trade to all

Extend and innovate learning modules and their deployment toward otherwise excluded populations

Collaborate with digital infrastructure partners to bring connectivity and e-commerce access to rural, remote, and underdeveloped areas

Work with ecosystem partners, in particular online platforms, to increase accessibility

Facilitate improved access to financing SME e-commerce in developing countries



## Get in touch

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