E-commerce is fast becoming a significant channel for international trade and one that offers the potential for renewed economic growth in developing and least developed countries.

Doing business digitally will be essential in the new era: unfortunately small businesses from these countries are often excluded from e-commerce due to the limited availability of international payment solutions, affordable and reliable logistics services and suitable technologies, on top of legal and regulatory barriers, insufficient skills and a lack of financial support.

THE PROGRAMME

The ecomConnect programme aims to build the world’s largest community of e-commerce entrepreneurs engaged in the sustainable development of small businesses online by facilitating shared learning, innovative solutions, collaboration and partnerships.

ABOUT ITC

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is the joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations. ITC assists small and medium-sized enterprises in developing and least developed countries to become more competitive in global markets, thereby contributing to sustainable economic development.
WHAT WE OFFER

- **Tailored online and face-to-face training** on how to undertake market research, develop an e-commerce pricing strategy, create digital content, handle online payments, manage inventory, prepare for shipment and customs clearance as well as promote products and services through digital channels.

- **Advisory and research services** to support small businesses with their e-commerce development and expansion and resolve specific barriers, notably to access payment solutions, logistics services and e-commerce services.

- **Partnerships with private sector firms** to provide key support to small businesses and enable them to share costs and other services essential to e-commerce.

- **Innovative tools and customized software solutions** to help with the digitization of product catalogues, the assessment of a company’s e-commerce readiness and the development of an e-commerce pricing strategy.

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

OUR ECOMCONNECT PLATFORM

ecomConnect is the first e-commerce community platform with a special focus on users from developing and least-developed countries. We bring together micro, small and medium sized companies, start-ups, organizations and business experts in e-commerce to:

- **Build-up connections** with e-commerce businesses and experts.

- **Acquire digital expertise and learn new skills** through free resources, such as online courses, tools, guidelines, success stories, tutorials, live webinars and Q&A sessions.

- **Discuss e-commerce and stay up to date** with the latest tech news, activities and publications.

The platform integrates:

- **An e-commerce readiness quiz** to assess your business maturity for e-commerce.

- **A pricing calculator** to evaluate the fees and costs associated with selling on international online marketplaces or through your own custom webshop.

- **A marketplace finder** to identify suitable B2C online marketplaces in Africa.
2017-2021
Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panamá
Supporting women-led businesses in Central America to export handicrafts through e-commerce channels.

2017-2021
Azerbaijan
Integrating small businesses into global value chains and providing innovative digital solutions to sell on international marketplaces.

2017-2018
Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Afghanistan
Training of small businesses on e-commerce, with a focus on China marketplaces.

2017-2019
Rwanda
Opening e-commerce opportunities for small businesses through improved logistics services and the development of an e-commerce platform.

2018-2019
Qatar
Helping businesses to prepare for cross-border B2B e-commerce.

2019-2021
Bangladesh, Kenya, Nigeria
Upgrading the e-commerce ecosystem by training IT businesses on how to improve the SEO and online visibility of small businesses in the tourism, textile and agribusiness sectors.

2014-2018
Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia
Supporting small businesses to sell handicrafts and services on international marketplaces.

2017-2018
Senegal
Strengthening e-commerce skills among young entrepreneurs and helping them connect to markets through digital channels.

2020-2021
Tunisia, Lebanon
Providing women-led businesses with access to markets through online marketplaces.

2020-2023
Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan
Supporting small businesses on their journey to trade internationally through online channels.

2020-2021
2017-2021

Ongoing projects
Finalised projects
"The course has been very valuable for me at a personal and professional level and has helped me understand the requirements for e-commerce. We are studying topics such as how to build trust, improve website usability and do online promotions. I am sure the programme will have a big impact on the businesses we coach in Rwanda."

Jack Gasana, e-commerce coach, Rwanda

"Success in e-commerce requires a lot of basic capabilities to be mastered all at once. ITC’s support sharpened our understanding of what it takes – from understanding market demand to working with payment solutions and platforms."

Moabi Phia, Director, Export Promotion, Botswana Investment and Trade Centre (BITC)

"The tools we are using in the project are going to help us export our products through e-commerce. We are learning how to effectively use keywords and how to modify our website to adapt it to the target market."

Kryssia Quintanilla, Co-founder and manager of Coco Canela, El Salvador

"It was a nice and very useful workshop that allowed me to know more about digital marketing and new website standards. I found the coaching on SEO optimization very interesting."

Nishad Ahmed, Qatari German for Medical Devices

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS CONTRIBUTION:

MORE INFORMATION

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