
The Global Coalition for Efficient Logistics
The HumaWealth Program
Driving SME Prosperity Around the World

The Global Coalition for Efficient Logistics (GCEL) and major international organizations around the world are committed to ensuring prosperous SMEs in a new economic order. These organizations include the League of Arab States, ASEAN's Business Advisory Council, The Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific (ADFIAP), and the Union for the Mediterranean. Working together, GCEL and its strategic partners will provide the tools and road map to build a digital platform for trade and commerce around the world in a program called HumaWealth. This platform, in turn, will trigger three powerful business management tools for SMEs, all made available to businesses at no cost to them.

HumaWealth tackles the core business problems facing SMES the world over. SMEs must conquer four basic challenges to thrive:

1. They must be cost-competitive. SMEs must have the management savvy and tools required to be cost-competitive. This is one part managerial art and one part organizational science. In the end, nearly all SMEs have operating costs higher than bigger firms because they cannot capture economies of scale. Thus, SMES must constantly find ways to cut costs wherever they can. The question is how to do this not in an ad hoc way, but *systemically*.
2. They must expand sales in distant markets. Most SMEs can only grow by selling more products beyond the local area. This presents two problems. They must find ways of "presenting" their products in places where they are, by definition, unknown. Getting recognized in those markets is a major problem. An SME often has fine, unique products. The problem is that few people know about them. Firms must also know how to concentrate marketing efforts on the markets where the sales opportunities are greatest. This is rarely easy to discern.
3. They must deliver products quickly and reliably to distant markets and maximize sales 'turnover.' Making products at competitive prices and then marketing them is only the beginning. SMEs must then find a way to get their products to those promising distant markets. This requires navigating a logistics trade pipeline they often find unfamiliar. An overriding concern is to ensure their products arrive quickly and reliably. This whole process also must be repeated many times over, with an overall goal of increasing sales turnover and improving the bottom line.
4. They must obtain financing to do all of the above. Financing is the Achilles heel of almost every SME. They need operating loans to make their products. They need trade finance to ship them. They need long-term capital to buy equipment and buildings. The problem is that they often operate their business out of their check book, or in some cases, just the cash box in the back room. Many SMEs do not have in-depth financial records about their business, and their information is often not transparent to the lender (what experts call "opaque." This puts them at a huge disadvantage in obtaining loans, because financing is all about information.

In sum, what 21st century SMEs need is to be armed with the right information. Information that spans the entire business operation. Information that is available in real-time. Information that is verified by reliable third parties, not the business itself. In short, SMEs need 21st century digital business tools, ones powered by information.

HumaWealth will provide a suite of powerful business tools, all founded on the power of information. These tools are enabled by a new digital platform for global trade and commerce made possible by the deployment of digital Soft Infrastructure. This platform provides the real-time information to meet each of the challenges SMEs face, especially the juggernaut of obtaining financing. Best of all, these tools will be made available to end users free of cost.

- ***Operations management.*** The digital trade platform provides a business dashboard that allows SMEs to adjust operating decisions in an optimal way. Real-time information about incoming materials and outgoing product shipments allows an SME to optimize their efficiency and achieve business excellence, becoming more cost competitive.
- ***Marketing management.*** The digital trade platform helps SMEs obtain and manage information about global markets. A global digital trade platform represents the ultimate business-to-business (B2B) marketplace, generating up-to-the-minute information on what's selling where. This puts global market intelligence at the fingertips of SMEs, but manages that information in the way that suits them best. This critical information allows them to position their products and connect with markets they would never know about otherwise.
- ***Supply chain management.*** That same stream of market information puts SMEs in touch with the competitive, reliable logistics providers, speeds delivery times and payment, and maximizes overall turnover of sales. SMEs can also find the most competitive prices for the materials they must purchase in their business operations. This amounts to a virtual "supply manager" at their fingertips.
- ***Financial management.*** The digital trade platform also provides what SMES need most—a "manager" that compiles accurate, real-time, verified financial information. This information engine represents the real answer to SME finance. It provides lenders with a true, transparent financial picture, and in real time!

The HumaWealth Program will commence in a few months with the Asia Benchmark Trade Lane, the first deployment in the world of the digital platform for trade and commerce. This project will engage the participation of India and Indonesia. GCEL is currently conducting an Awareness Campaign in the Middle East and Africa region, with plans to hold an Awareness Event in Cairo and other major capitals in the region.