



**Enset Innovation Institute Inc.**

*Advancing Indigenous Innovation for Food Security and Climate Resilience*

## **ENSET INVESTMENT PROSPECTUS**

### **From Indigenous Resilience to Scalable Climate & Gender Innovation in Africa**

**Prepared by:** Enset Innovation Institute Inc.

**Date:** October 2025

**Indicative Ask:** USD 15 Million (5-Year Catalytic Investment)

#### **1. Executive Investment Thesis**

The Enset Initiative represents a rare convergence of **climate resilience, women-led enterprise, food security, and long-term carbon value**, anchored in an indigenous African crop system with proven resilience and deep cultural legitimacy.

With a **USD 15 million catalytic investment over five years**, the Initiative will scale a validated, women-centered Enset SME platform across Ethiopia and establish the institutional and technical foundation for replication across comparable African highland agro-ecologies.

This is **not a pilot**.

It is a **platform investment**.

#### **Why Enset merits anchor capital now:**

- Demonstrated resilience to drought, climate shocks, and food price volatility (Brandt et al., 2012; Dawson et al., 2019)
- Immediate income, labor, and nutrition gains for women-led households (Fischer & Qaim, 2012)
- Strong Ethiopian institutional partnerships already in place
- Significant upside optionality through carbon and co-financing (Laekemariam & Kibebew, 2020)
- Direct alignment with global priorities on climate adaptation, gender equity, and food sovereignty



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## 2. The Problem: A Missed Opportunity in Global Food and Climate Systems

Despite sustaining **over 20 million people in Ethiopia**, Enset remains largely absent from:

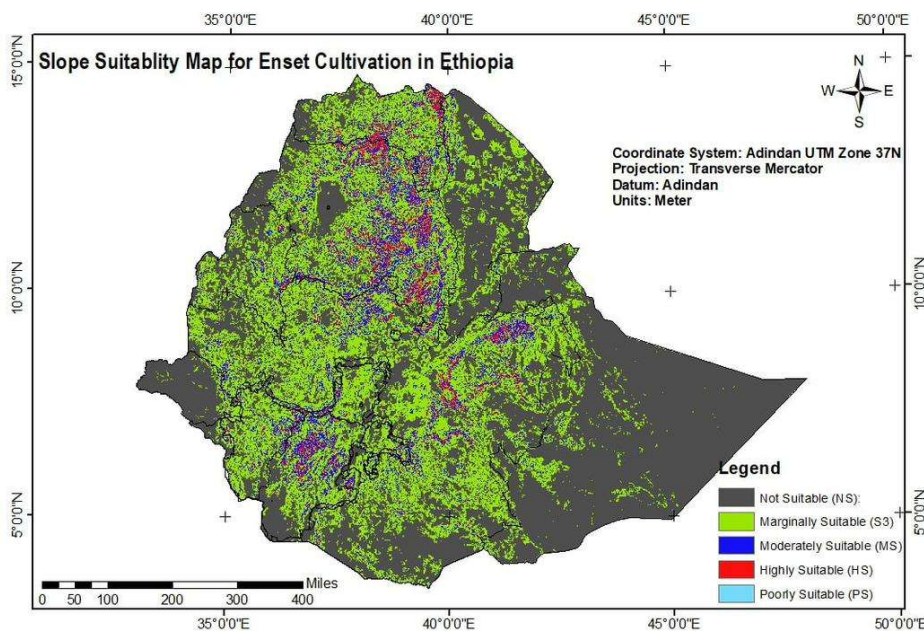
- Climate-resilient agriculture portfolios
- Global food security investment pipelines
- Gender-smart agribusiness platforms

Key constraints include:

- Labor-intensive and unhygienic traditional processing methods that suppress productivity and income (Kader, 2005)
- Fragmented SME support for women processors who dominate the value chain
- Weak research-to-scale pathways for indigenous crops (Dawson et al., 2019)
- Absence of an institutional platform for cross-country replication

As climate shocks intensify, underinvestment in **perennial, women-led food systems** represents both a systemic failure and a strategic opportunity.

### Suitability Map of Enset Cultivation in Ethiopia produced by Arba Minch University





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### **3. The Solution: The Enset SME Platform**

The Enset Initiative scales a **hub-based, women-led SME model** that modernizes Enset production and processing while preserving indigenous knowledge systems and community ownership.

#### **Core Components**

- Hygienic Enset processing kits and standardized fermentation technologies
- Women-led SME hubs and cooperative enterprises
- Improved landrace productivity and seedling systems
- Digital monitoring, evaluation, learning (MEL), and adaptive management
- Gender-responsive finance and enterprise development

#### **Delivery Model**

- Ethiopian institutions lead implementation
- Enset Innovation Institute Inc. coordinates innovation, systems design, and global linkage
- Government and academic partners anchor sustainability and policy integration

This model has been **validated through pilot programs** and is now ready for **system-level expansion**.

### **4. Scale & Impact Pathway: Ethiopia (Years 1-5)**

By Year 5, the Ethiopia platform will deliver:

- 200,000+ women farmers and processors reached
- 163+ women-led SME hubs established
- 50,000+ hectares under improved Enset cultivation
- Durable income gains, food security improvements, and climate resilience

Impact outcomes include:

- Sustained income uplift for women-led households
- Increased food availability and nutrition security
- Reduced vulnerability to climate shocks



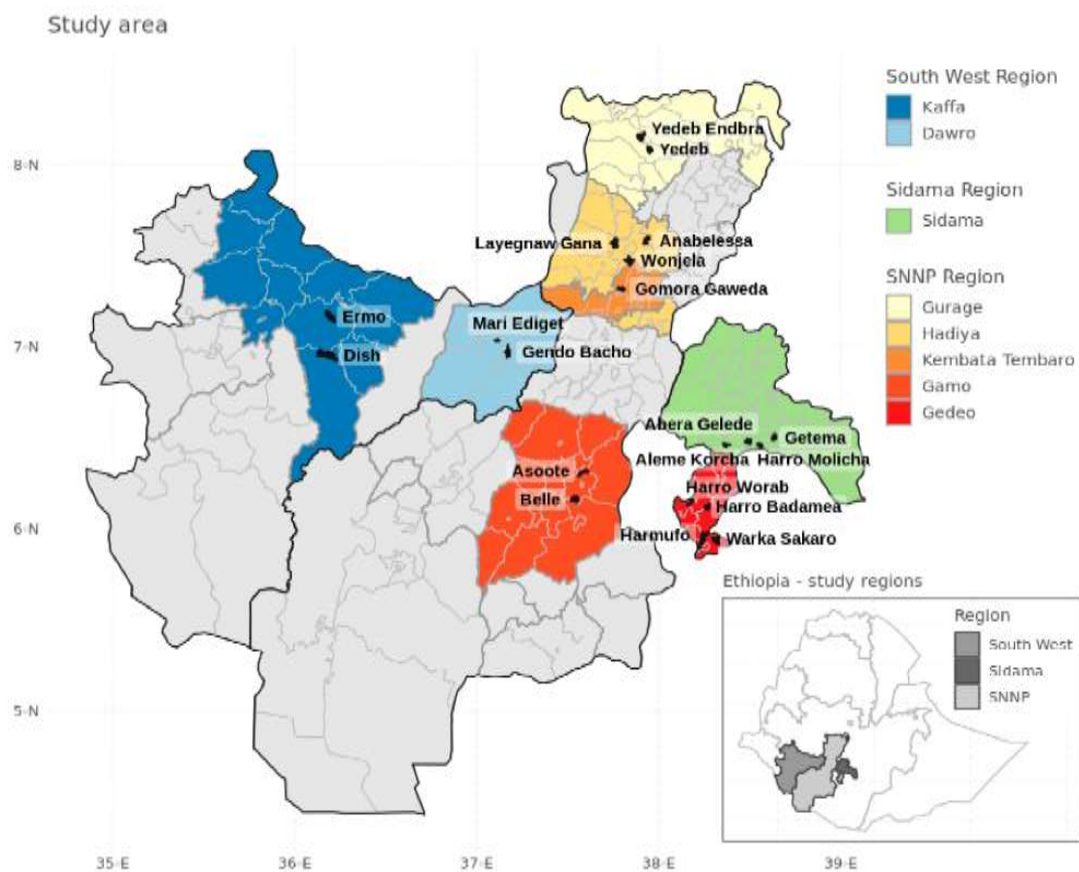
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- Strengthened local institutions and cooperatives

Southern Ethiopia—particularly Sidama, South Central regions, Arba Minch, and the Gamo highlands—offers high Enset diversity and agro-ecological suitability (Welde-Michael et al., 2023).

### ***Southern Ethiopia Scale Zones & SME Hubs***



### **Source:**

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/370243761\\_Enset\\_Production\\_System\\_Diversity\\_across\\_the\\_Southern\\_Ethiopian\\_Highlands](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/370243761_Enset_Production_System_Diversity_across_the_Southern_Ethiopian_Highlands)



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## **5. Africa Expansion Optionality: Platform Upside**

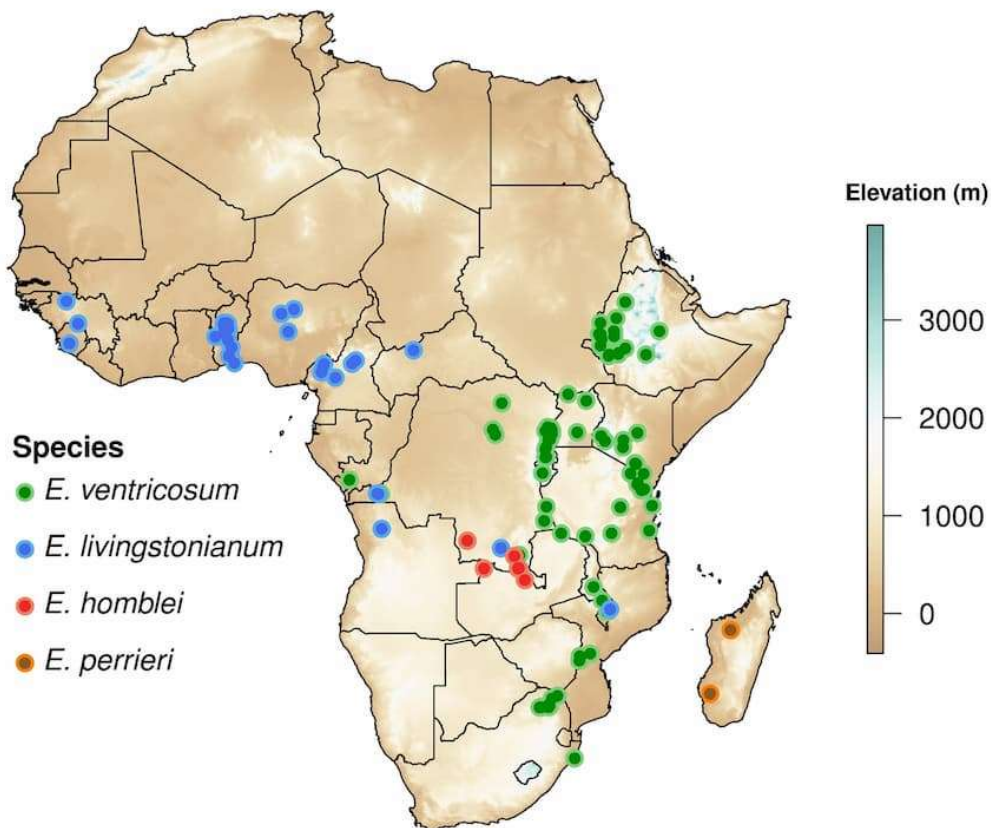
Enset's adaptability across the East African Highlands and comparable agro-ecologies positions it as a scalable continental model. Suitable regions include Uganda (southwestern highlands, Mt. Elgon), Rwanda, western Kenya, Burundi, eastern DRC (Kivu), western Cameroon, and southern Tanzania (Dawson et al., 2019; Harrison et al., 2019).

Expansion will follow a South–South learning model, beginning with:

- Regional research partnerships and field trials
- Policy engagement through IGAD, African Union, and CAADP platforms
- Gradual SME replication once agro-climatic and socio-cultural fit is confirmed

This positions Enset as a continental climate-adaptation asset, not a country-bound intervention.

### ***Africa Enset / Enset-Analog Agroclimatic Suitability***



Source: <https://botany.one/2019/07/the-poorly-known-ethiopian-crop-enset/>



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## **6. Financing Strategy & Use of Funds**

### **Catalytic Ask**

**USD 15 Million | 5 Years**

#### **Indicative Allocation:**

- SME scale-up and equipment
- Women's finance and capacity development
- MEL, applied research, and carbon MRV
- Digital tools and innovation
- Staffing, governance, and operational integrity
- Risk management and reserves

This is **core grant capital**, designed to unlock scale—not to be displaced by market finance.

## **7. Carbon & Co-Financing Optionality (Illustrative Upside)**

Enset-based agroforestry systems store **high levels of standing carbon stock** due to perennial biomass and deep root systems (Laekemariam & Kibebew, 2020). In addition, peer-reviewed studies suggest **annual sequestration rates of approximately 2.5–3.5 tCO<sub>2</sub>e/ha/year** under improved management (Tadesse et al., 2020).

Key principles:

- Carbon revenue is **upside optionality**, not a funding dependency
- Annual sequestration—not total stock—is used for crediting
- Methodological alignment with Verra VM0042 is anticipated, subject to validation

All carbon values presented are **illustrative**, contingent on verification, pricing, and registry approval.



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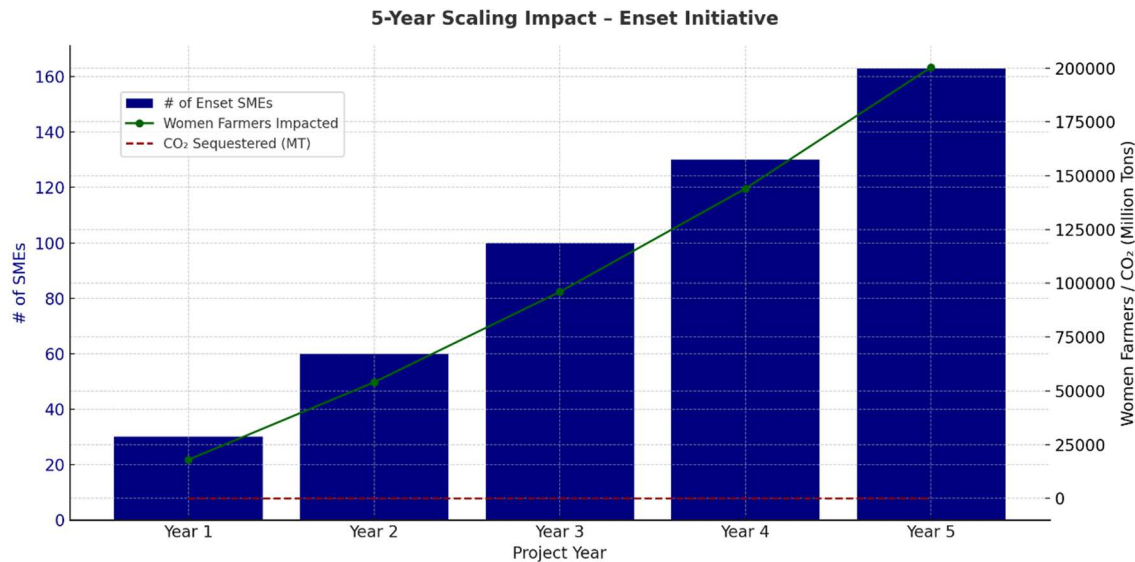
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**The Carbon Value Scenarios below is Modeled based on Tadesse et al. (2020) and aligned with Verra VM0042. Values are illustrative and subject to market, methodological, and verification outcomes.**

Year	CO <sub>2</sub> Sequestered (Mt)	Value at \$10	Value at \$15	Value at \$25
Year 1	2.5	\$25M	\$37.5M	\$62.5M
Year 2	6.2	\$62M	\$93M	\$155M
Year 3	9.6	\$96M	\$144M	\$240M
Year 4	11.4	\$114M	\$171M	\$285M
Year 5	12.5	\$125M	\$187.5M	\$312.5M
Total	42.2	\$422M	\$633M	\$1.05B

**The following chart visually compares annual carbon credit value against income uplift per hectare.**

### 5-Year Targets: SMEs, Women Farmers, and Carbon Credits





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<b>Year</b>	<b># of Women Farmers</b>	<b>Hectares Cultivated</b>	<b>Estimated CO<sub>2</sub> Sequestered (Million Tons)</b>
Year 1	18,000	4,500 ha	2.5 Mt
Year 2	54,000	13,500 ha	6.2 Mt
Year 3	96,000	24,000 ha	9.6 Mt
Year 4	144,000	36,000 ha	11.4 Mt
Year 5	200,400	50,100 ha	12.5 Mt

## **8. Governance & Hosting Models**

Three anchor pathways are available:

1. **Fully Hosted Program** (foundation-led)
2. **Anchored Initiative** (shared governance)
3. **Embedded Fellowship / Platform Model**

All models:

- Preserve Ethiopian institutional leadership
- Ensure fiduciary rigor
- Enable adaptive scaling

Final selection will be co-designed with the anchor partner.

## **9. Risk Management & Safeguards**

Key risks and mitigations include:

- **Funding risk:** diversified donor pipeline
- **Political risk:** geographically distributed implementation
- **Community risk:** women-led co-design and governance
- **Technology risk:** phased deployment and feedback loops

A formal risk register and adaptive management framework are embedded from Year 1.



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## **10. Why an Anchor Partner Matters**

An anchor partner gains:

- Leadership in a globally distinctive, African-led food system
- Measurable climate, gender, and food security outcomes
- A scalable African innovation platform
- Strategic visibility across SDGs and climate adaptation agendas

This is **catalytic capital with system-level returns.**

### **APA REFERENCES (WITH LINKS)**

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