

Executive Summary

Hiwi Connect Ethiopia is a volunteer-driven consulting initiative designed to empower young and aspiring Ethiopian entrepreneurs. Founded by Hiwot Tsegaye and Marian Veenker, the initiative combines Hiwot's practical experience as an entrepreneur in Ethiopia with insights gained from engaging with European business environments, and Marian's international strategic perspective. Together, they provide strategic guidance, market insights, and meaningful professional connections. Operating primarily through LinkedIn and a dedicated website, Hiwi Connect Ethiopia addresses critical gaps in access to information, business advisory services, and social support, thereby fostering sustainable business growth in Ethiopia.

Mission Statement

To empower young and aspiring Ethiopian entrepreneurs by providing pro bono consulting, facilitating strategic connections, and sharing globally informed business insights to foster a resilient and vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem in Ethiopia.

Vision Statement

To become the leading volunteer-based platform connecting Ethiopian entrepreneurial talent with the knowledge and networks necessary to thrive locally and internationally.

Strategy & Value Proposition

Hiwi Connect Ethiopia is built on two core service pillars: strategic business consulting and connection facilitation.

Strategic Business Consulting:

- Business model development
- Market analysis and segmentation
- Growth strategy and operational efficiency
- Digital transformation and customer acquisition

Hiwot Tsegaye leverages her international perspective from the Netherlands while grounding her advice in deep, first-hand knowledge of the Ethiopian business landscape. Marian Veenker contributes strategic insights from her international background. This dual lens allows the team to offer context-sensitive and forward-thinking guidance.

Unique Value Proposition:

Hiwot's and Marian's combined experience bridges Ethiopian and European business cultures, enabling them to:

- Introduce modern frameworks and innovative solutions
- Act as cultural translators between local entrepreneurs and international investors
- Address not only technical but also psychological and emotional challenges through empathetic mentoring

This holistic approach helps entrepreneurs develop both business acumen and resilience.

Services Offered (Pro Bono)

Business Consultation & Guidance

- Idea refinement and USP identification
- Market research and competitive analysis
- Scalable business model development
- Strategic planning and execution
- European business mindset training (efficiency, innovation, long-term focus)

Funding Navigation

- Information on local and international funding opportunities
- Pitch deck reviews and feedback
- Explanation of investor expectations and funding criteria

Networking & Connection Facilitation

- Direct introductions via Hiwi Connect's network
- Guidance on relevant incubators, accelerators, and business associations
- Training on professional networking via LinkedIn and other platforms

Information Hub

- Curated resources, templates, and articles tailored to the Ethiopian context
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Target Market

Primary: Ethiopian individuals (18–35) who are aspiring or early-stage entrepreneurs (0–5 years in operation)

Secondary: Members of the Ethiopian diaspora interested in business or investment opportunities in Ethiopia

Geographic Focus: Primarily Ethiopia, with global accessibility through digital platforms

Operational Model (Volunteer-Based)

Legal Structure: Initially informal; potential to formalize as a non-profit or social enterprise in the Netherlands if scaling is required.

Team Composition:

- Co-Founders and Consultants: Hiwot Tsegaye and Marian Veenker
- Future potential: diaspora volunteers and collaborators

Engagement Channels:

- LinkedIn: primary outreach and content platform
- Website: central hub for resources, contact, and blog content

Consultation Workflow:

1. Inquiry via LinkedIn or website
2. Initial needs assessment
3. Virtual consultation (Google Meet/Zoom)
4. Follow-up support when needed

Resources Required:

- Personal expertise and time
- Professional network access
- Internet and communication tools

Funding:

- Entirely self-funded
- No revenue generation planned

Risk Management:

- Clear communication of non-legal, non-financial advisory nature
- Time management and boundary setting for volunteer services

Marketing & Outreach Strategy

Digital Presence:

- Active use of LinkedIn and a professional website

Content Marketing:

- Regular posts featuring business tips, insights, and success stories

Networking Activities:

- Collaboration with business associations, diaspora groups, and incubators

Testimonials:

- Collect and share success stories from beneficiaries (with permission) to build credibility and attract new clients
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Impact Measurement**Quantitative Indicators:**

- Number of consultations conducted
- Number of individuals/businesses supported
- Website traffic and LinkedIn engagement
- Connections and partnerships facilitated

Qualitative Indicators:

- Feedback from entrepreneurs
 - Case studies and anecdotal success stories
 - Testimonials reflecting perceived value and impact
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End of Business Plan