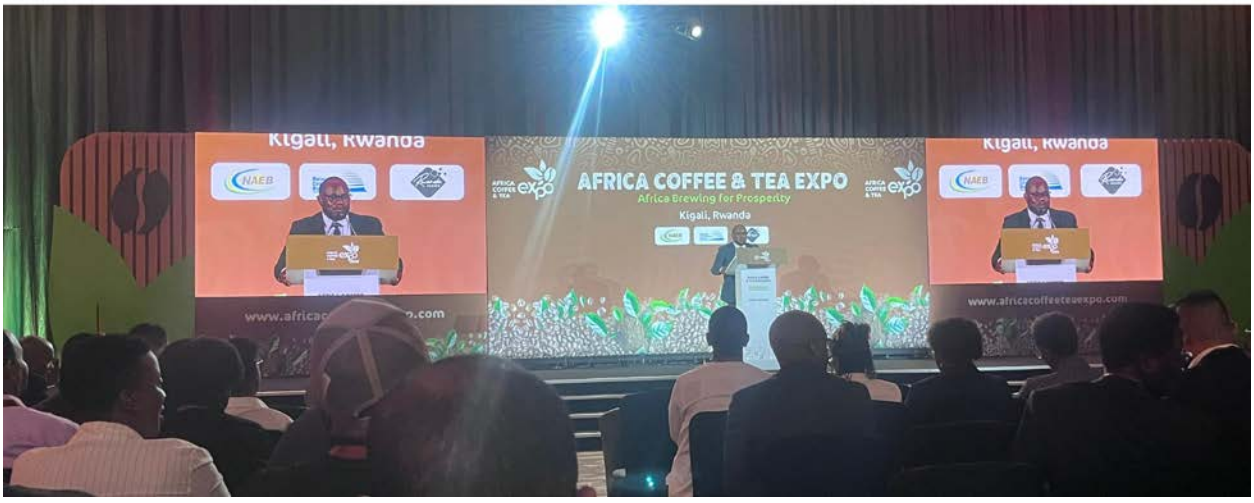
Comprehensive Rwanda Mission Report

Participation in Africa Coffee and Tea Expo 2026 and South-South Learning Mission

Mission Period: 7–10 July 2026
Location: Kigali, Rwanda
Main Event: Africa Coffee and Tea Expo 2026
Venue: Kigali Convention Centre
Field Learning Site: Dukunde Kawa Musasa Coffee Cooperative, Ruli Sector, Gakenke District, Northern Province, Rwanda
Project: *Empowering Ethiopian Coffee: A South-South Approach to Climate Finance and Carbon Credits*
Implementing Organisation: Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA)



1. Executive Summary

The OSSREA team (Alemu and Dr. Yonas) participated in the Africa Coffee and Tea Expo 2026 in Kigali, Rwanda, from 7 to 10 July 2026. The mission combined field-based learning, exhibition, stakeholder engagement, project visibility, and technical knowledge exchange. It was directly linked to OSSREA's project, *Empowering Ethiopian Coffee: A South-South Approach to Climate Finance and Carbon Credits*, which aims to enhance climate finance and carbon-credit opportunities in Ethiopia's coffee sector through women-led coffee agroforestry, pilot implementation, and South-South cooperation.

The mission began with arrival in Kigali on 7 July 2026. On 8 July, the team joined a field visit to Dukunde Kawa Musasa Coffee Cooperative, located about two hours from Kigali. The visit provided valuable lessons on cooperative governance, women's leadership, nursery management, coffee agroforestry, climate-smart farm practices, coffee processing, cupping, roasting and packing, handicrafts, childcare, dairy development, and farmer support systems. Musasa Cooperative, established in 2000 under the initiative "Let's Have Coffee Together" has grown into a strong cooperative with 1,238 members and significant support from development partners including the World Bank and other multilateral donors.

On 9 and 10 July, OSSREA participated in the Expo at the Kigali Convention Centre. Day 2 of the expo was the "Official Opening, Trade, Policy and Economic Impact Day," with high-level government engagement, media visibility, trade dialogue, and strategic partnerships. It included the official opening ceremony, strategic addresses, ministerial and VIP Expo walkabout, networking, and welcome reception. Day 3 focused on market access, consumer activation, sustainability, climate resilience, youth and women in value chains, Ethiopian coffee culture, and the official closing.

The mission generated several important outcomes. OSSREA showcased its women-led coffee carbon project to a wide range of actors, including ambassadors, coffee-sector institutions, universities, Fairtrade Africa, Rwandan women coffee cooperatives, European coffee importers, development organizations, and private-sector actors. The project received diplomatic attention from Ethiopian Embassy representatives in Rwanda, including H.E. Ambassador Mesfin and Mr. Kedir, Embassy Counselor, the officials visited the OSSREA booth, appreciated the initiative, and discussed opportunities for future visibility, including COP32.

The mission confirmed that carbon markets in coffee agroforestry remain a new and emerging area for many African coffee-producing countries. Several stakeholders expressed interest in learning from OSSREA's model through the EthioLatinCoffee Community of Practice. The mission also demonstrated that the challenges faced by Ethiopian women coffee producers—limited access to finance, weak value addition, leadership gaps, ageing farmer populations, climate vulnerability, and care responsibilities—are shared across the continent. This reinforces the need for African and South-South platforms to develop collective solutions.

2. Background and Purpose of the Mission

OSSREA's participation in ACT 2026 was organized within the framework of the project *Empowering Ethiopian Coffee: A South-South Approach to Climate Finance and Carbon Credits*.

The project's overall objective is to contribute to climate change mitigation in Ethiopia's coffee sector by supporting climate finance mechanisms and facilitating South-South knowledge exchange. Its specific objective is to enhance the comprehension, mapping, and development of climate finance mechanisms in Ethiopia's coffee sector through collaborative South-South cooperation.

The project includes four interrelated results: identifying and assessing climate finance schemes and carbon-credit opportunities in Ethiopia; supporting comparative learning between Ethiopia and Latin American coffee-producing countries; designing and implementing a pilot carbon-credit scheme for women coffee producers; and sustaining a Community of Practice for South-South knowledge sharing through EthioLatinCoffee.

Implementation is now taking place in Kaffa Zone, particularly in Sheda and Gaweti Kebeles of Bita Woreda. The project supports women coffee producers through coffee-based agroforestry, improved coffee seedlings, shade trees, banana as temporary shade, vermicompost, cooperative engagement, and carbon-credit readiness.

The Rwanda mission served several strategic purposes. It enabled OSSREA to learn from Rwanda's cooperative coffee sector, present its Ethiopian coffee carbon model to African and international actors, promote the EthioLatinCoffee platform, identify future partners, and explore opportunities to showcase the project in major climate and coffee-sector forums, including COP32.

3. Mission Objectives

The overall objective of the mission was to strengthen South-South learning, visibility, and partnership development for OSSREA's women-led coffee carbon project.

The specific objectives were to observe Rwanda's coffee cooperative model, especially women's leadership, nursery management, coffee agroforestry, value addition, and social services; present OSSREA's coffee carbon project at ACT 2026; engage coffee-sector actors, development partners, diplomats, buyers, universities, women's cooperatives, and NGOs; promote the EthioLatinCoffee Community of Practice as a platform for continued learning; identify potential areas of collaboration with Fairtrade Africa, Musasa Cooperative, Power du Women, and other actors; and draw practical lessons for the Ethiopian pilot in Kaffa.

4. Arrival in Kigali

The OSSREA team arrived in Kigali on 7 July 2026. The first day was dedicated to arrival, orientation, and preparation for participation in ACT 2026. The team prepared project visibility materials, including brochures and EthioLatinCoffee business cards, which were later shared with Expo visitors and potential partners.

These materials helped present the project as a practical women-led coffee agroforestry and carbon-credit initiative in Ethiopia. They also provided contact points for stakeholders who wished to continue discussions after the Expo through the EthioLatinCoffee platform.

5. Day One: Field Visit to Dukunde Kawa Musasa Coffee Cooperative

Date: 8 July 2026
Location: Ruli Sector, Gakenke District, Northern Province, Rwanda
Travel: Approximately two hours from Kigali
Departure: 8:00 a.m. from Kigali Convention Centre
Return: Approximately 6:00 p.m. to Kigali

5.1 Overview of The Field Visit

On 8 July 2026, the team travelled from the Kigali Convention Centre to Dukunde Kawa Musasa Coffee Cooperative. The ACT 2026 agenda identified the first day as an industry engagement, business-to-business, and technical exchange day, including field visits for buyers and delegates.

The visit to Musasa Cooperative was highly relevant to OSSREA's project because it provided practical exposure to a well-established coffee cooperative that combines production, processing,

women's participation, seedling distribution, value addition, member support, childcare, dairy development, and market linkage.

5.2 Background of Musasa Cooperative

Musasa Coffee Cooperative was established in 2000 under the initiative "Let's Have Coffee Together". The cooperative received startup support from international development partners, including the Rwanda Defense Force, World Bank and other multilateral donors. It currently has 1,238 members.

The cooperative's members primarily engage in coffee production during the coffee season. During the off-season, many members supplement their income through handicraft production and diary farming. This mixed livelihood approach helps reduce seasonal income gaps and provides an important lesson for women coffee producers in Ethiopia, where dependence on coffee alone can expose households to climate and market shocks.

The cooperative operates a coffee washing station and a dry mill, and it markets coffee to both domestic and international buyers. This demonstrates the importance of moving beyond primary production and building cooperative capacity in processing, quality control, and market access.

5.3 Cooperative Leadership and Women's Participation

Upon arrival, the delegation was welcomed by the cooperative's President and Finance Manager. The cooperative has been led by a female chairperson since the 2025, reflecting increasing women's leadership in Rwanda's coffee sector. This was a major learning point for OSSREA's project, which seeks to empower women coffee producers not only as beneficiaries but also as leaders in cooperative governance, farm-level implementation, and future carbon-benefit arrangements.

The cooperative has about 1,238 members. According to the information shared during the visit, 350 members are women, and the women have their own group within the cooperative. This arrangement allows women to participate in the broader cooperative while also maintaining a platform for addressing their specific economic and social interests.

The cooperative also reported that the average age of members is approximately 59 years. This ageing membership has pushed the cooperative to actively encourage youth to take over coffee farming from their parents. This is an important lesson for Ethiopia as well. If coffee farming is to remain viable, young people must see economic opportunity in the sector. Carbon finance, value addition, digital traceability, nurseries, coffee quality work, and agro-processing can help make coffee more attractive to youth.

5.4 Women-Managed Nursery and Seedling Distribution System

The first site visited during the facility tour was the cooperative nursery. The nursery is managed by women. The cooperative pays the women to manage the nursery, and when seedlings are ready for planting, the cooperative buys them back and distributes them to the community free of charge.

Farmers self-organize into groups of 10–15 based on geographic proximity and submit their total seedling requirements. Group leaders then collect and transport the seedlings. For farms located close to the nursery, the cooperative directly dispatches seedlings. This model is highly relevant to OSSREA's work in Kaffa. It shows how seedling distribution can be organized in a way that combines women's income generation, farmer self-organization, local accountability, and efficient logistics. For the Ethiopian project, similar systems could be adapted in Sheda, Gaweti, and future expansion areas. Women-managed nurseries could produce coffee seedlings, shade trees, fruit trees, and other agroforestry species, while farmer groups could help organize demand and distribution.

5.5 Coffee-Based Agroforestry and Climate-Smart Farm Management

After the nursery visit, the team visited nearby coffee farms. Several climate-smart coffee farm-management practices were observed. These included the use of temporary banana shade, indigenous permanent shade trees, intensive mulching with grasses, and the planting of pumpkins as living mulch. These practices help conserve soil moisture, reduce evaporation, protect the soil surface, improve microclimatic conditions, and support food security.

The use of pumpkins and other crops was particularly relevant. It showed that coffee agroforestry can support food security in addition to coffee production and carbon sequestration. For women coffee producers in Ethiopia, this lesson is important because households need food and income while coffee and trees are growing. In Sheda, women farmers have already expressed appreciation for agroforestry's benefits for food security and soil conservation.

The team also learned about a rejuvenation practice known as bending technology. In this practice, old coffee stems are bent and replaced by two to three vigorous new shoots. This improves long-term productivity and extends the productive life of coffee plants. In the earlier notes, this was described as stamping or stumping the mother tree so that the younger plant can flourish and produce higher yields.

This practice is relevant for Ethiopia because carbon-credit projects must also deliver livelihood and productivity benefits. If farmers see improved yields and better farm performance, they are more likely to maintain agroforestry systems and comply with long-term project requirements.

5.6 Coffee Processing, Cupping, Roasting and Packing

The delegation visited the cooperative's coffee-processing facilities, including its washing station and dry-processing operations. The cooperative demonstrated washed and dry coffee-processing processes, showing the team how quality is maintained from harvest through post-harvest handling.

The team also visited the coffee laboratory, where cupping was demonstrated. This provided practical exposure to how coffee quality is assessed and how cupping supports market positioning. The visit then continued to the roasting and packing station, where the cooperative demonstrated further value addition.

The lesson for OSSREA is that coffee-sector transformation cannot depend only on farm-level production. Value addition through washing, drying, cupping, roasting, packing, traceability, and quality management is essential if farmers and cooperatives are to capture more value. While OSSREA's current project focuses on carbon-credit readiness and agroforestry, future phases could link women coffee producers to quality improvement, cooperative marketing, and buyer engagement.

5.7 Women's Handicrafts and Off-Season Income

The team visited women's shops where handicrafts and other local products are sold. The practice shows how cooperatives can help members diversify income beyond the coffee season. For OSSREA's women coffee producers in Kaffa, this is an important lesson. Carbon revenues will take time, and coffee income is seasonal. Complementary income-generating activities such as handicrafts, nursery work, beekeeping, vermicompost production, dairy, and small-scale processing can help women maintain income throughout the year.

5.8 Childcare, Nursery School and Social Support

The cooperative has established a childcare centre to support staff working long hours. The OSSREA team also observed a nursery school that is being constructed. These services show that cooperative development can go beyond production and marketing to address the social conditions that affect women's participation.

This is an important gender lesson. Women's participation in farming, training, leadership, cooperative meetings, and economic activities is often constrained by care responsibilities. By providing childcare services, cooperatives can reduce barriers to women's participation and improve productivity and wellbeing.

5.9 Member Lending Scheme

Musasa Cooperative operates a member lending scheme, providing small loans for farm inputs and other productive investments. This is an important institutional service because access to credit is often one of the main constraints faced by smallholder farmers, especially women.

For OSSREA's project, this provides a useful model for thinking about future cooperative-based financial services. While carbon finance may eventually create an additional revenue stream, farmers also need access to small, timely, and affordable loans for inputs, labour, farm maintenance, nursery materials, and household needs.

5.10 Dairy Development Initiative

One of the strongest lessons from Musasa was its dairy development initiative. The programme began with 18 cows distributed to members and has now expanded to about 460 cows. This has improved household income through milk production while also supplying organic manure for coffee farms.

This is highly relevant for OSSREA's project because organic soil fertility is a core part of climate-smart coffee production. The Ethiopian project is already promoting vermicompost and organic

soil management. The Musasa dairy model shows how livestock can contribute to coffee productivity through manure while also diversifying income through milk and yoghurt production.

The team also visited the dairy processing plant where milk and yoghurt are processed. This demonstrated how the cooperative integrates coffee and non-coffee value chains for broader livelihood development.

5.11 Overall Assessment of Musasa Cooperative

The performance of Musasa Cooperative is commendable. It presents an integrated cooperative model that combines coffee production, nursery management, women's leadership, youth succession planning, coffee processing, domestic and international marketing, member lending, off-season income, childcare, education, dairy development, and organic soil fertility.

For OSSREA, the visit showed that a successful women-centred coffee initiative should not focus only on production. It should also address governance, services, markets, family welfare, youth engagement, and livelihood diversification. This lesson is directly relevant to the long-term sustainability of the women-led coffee carbon pilot in Kaffa.

6. Day Two: Official Opening, Exhibition and Strategic Engagement

Date: 9 July 2026
Venue: Kigali Convention Centre

6.1 Official Opening Ceremony

The second day of ACT 2026 was dedicated to official opening, trade, policy, and economic impact. The event brought together coffee actors, ambassadors, NGO representatives, UN agencies, development partners, buyers, exhibitors, and private-sector institutions.

Keynote and strategic addresses were delivered by high-level speakers, including the Minister of Agriculture of Rwanda, FAO representatives, EU representatives, and others. These sessions emphasized the importance of coffee and tea for African economies, trade, market access, rural livelihoods, climate resilience, and value addition.

For OSSREA, the opening ceremony confirmed that the project is aligned with continental priorities. The project addresses climate resilience, women's empowerment, value-chain upgrading, climate finance, and cooperative development, all of which featured strongly in the Expo discussions.

6.2 VIP Walkabout and Diplomatic Engagement

After the opening ceremony, dignitaries visited the Expo floor. During this period, **H.E. Mr. Mesfin, Ethiopian Ambassador to Rwanda**, and **Mr. Kedir, Embassy Counselor** visited our booth. The discussion focused on the project, opportunities to showcase Ethiopian initiatives to visiting dignitaries, and ideas for future collaboration, including climate-related opportunities

connected to the COP process to be hosted in Ethiopia. This engagement was important because it helped connect the project with Ethiopia's diplomatic representation in Rwanda.

They appreciated the initiative and promised to include it in their weekly report to be shared with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia. This was a significant visibility outcome because it positioned the project within diplomatic communication between Rwanda and Ethiopia.

6.3 Exhibition Booth and Visitor Engagement

Following the field visit and during the Expo, OSSREA presented its project at the exhibition booth allocated to the organization. The booth attracted many visitors who wanted to understand the project's model, especially the link between women coffee producers, agroforestry, carbon credits, and climate finance.

Some visitors were also interested in Ethiopian coffee trade and asked whom to contact to import coffee from Ethiopia, where to obtain samples, and how to connect with Ethiopian coffee actors. Since OSSREA was the only Ethiopian exhibitor at the Expo, the booth became an important point of reference for visitors interested in Ethiopia's coffee sector.

OSSREA shared project brochures and EthioLatinCoffee business cards. These materials helped visitors understand the project and created a basis for continued communication through the Community of Practice.

6.4 Engagement with Fairtrade Africa

Fairtrade Africa was among the most important organizations engaged during the Expo. The team met **Dr. Susan**, Gender Coordinator of Fairtrade Africa, based in Kenya. Fairtrade Africa is planning to support smallholder coffee farmers in Ethiopia's Kaffa Zone through coffee seedling distribution. Dr. Susan connected OSSREA with Fairtrade Africa's Ethiopia representative in Addis Ababa for future collaboration.

This is a particularly important outcome because there is a direct geographic and thematic overlap between Fairtrade's planned work and OSSREA's pilot in Kaffa. Both initiatives focus on coffee farmers, and both have potential relevance for women's empowerment, climate-smart production, and improved livelihoods.

6.5 Engagement with Musasa Cooperative

During the exhibition, OSSREA met again with the Finance Head of Musasa Coffee Cooperative. The discussion was constructive, and he accepted OSSREA's invitation to participate as a resource person in an upcoming webinar. This is a valuable outcome because it will extend the learning from the field visit to a wider audience through the EthioLatinCoffee platform.

His participation in a future webinar would strengthen South-South learning within Africa and allow Ethiopian stakeholders, including women coffee producers, local government actors, cooperatives, and project partners, to learn directly from Rwanda's cooperative experience.

6.6 Engagement with Power Du Women

The team also met representatives of **Power du Women**, an organization working in Rwanda's coffee and tea sectors. Their mission aligns closely with efforts to empower Ethiopia's coffee sector. They have established strong partnerships with organizations in Latin America, creating opportunities for broader South-South cooperation.

Power du Women is planning to organize a regional workshop in Kigali and indicated that OSSREA may be invited to participate either virtually or in person. This connection is highly relevant because it can link OSSREA's Ethiopia-focused initiative with Rwanda-based actors and Latin American networks, expanding the reach of EthioLatinCoffee and strengthening triangular and South-South cooperation.

6.7 Evening Reception

In the evening, the team participated in the Expo's reception cocktail. The official programme scheduled the welcome reception from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. as a networking event for buyers, exhibitors, and high-level delegates.

The reception allowed the team to continue conversations with stakeholders who were interested in the project model. It also provided an informal space to identify potential collaborators, share contact information, and explain how interested actors could remain engaged through EthioLatinCoffee.

7. Day Three: Sustainability Panel, Women and Youth Dialogue, Ethiopian Coffee Culture and Closing

Date: 10 July 2026
Venue: Kigali Convention Centre

7.1 Sustainability, Climate Resilience and Future-Proofing African Coffee And Tea

The third day of ACT 2026 focused on market access, consumer activation, industry recognition, sustainability, women and youth, and closing strategic conversations. The programme scheduled a high-level panel from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on **Sustainability, Climate Resilience and Future-Proofing African Coffee and Tea**, including a presentation by **Dr. Yonas Yohannes**, a presentation by Fairtrade, a presentation by RainForest Alliance and panel participation from other actors.

This was one of the most important sessions for OSSREA. Dr. Yonas shared the model that OSSREA is bringing to Ethiopia's coffee sector. He explained how the project integrates coffee agroforestry, women's empowerment, climate resilience, carbon-credit readiness, and South-South knowledge exchange.

The presentation helped demonstrate that carbon finance can be linked with sustainable coffee production when farmers are properly organized, trained, and supported. It also clarified that carbon-credit projects require strong governance, monitoring, transparent benefit sharing, safeguards, and long-term commitment.

The interest generated by the presentation showed that coffee agroforestry and carbon markets are still new to many coffee-growing countries. This creates an opportunity for OSSREA to position its project as a learning case for Africa and beyond.

7.2 Youth and Women in Coffee and Tea Value Chains

The third day also included a session on **Youth and Women in Coffee and Tea Value Chains**, held from 10:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. as a fishbowl discussion. The ACT agenda lists participants from the Uganda Tea Association, Fairtrade, NAEB, AGL Tanzania, and others.

The session discussed the challenges faced by women and youth across the coffee and tea value chains. The discussion confirmed that many of the constraints faced by Ethiopian women coffee producers are also faced by producers in other African countries. These include limited access to finance, limited leadership opportunities, weak participation in higher-value segments of the value chain, ageing farmer populations, low youth engagement, limited control over income, and heavy care responsibilities.

This reinforced an important lesson: coffee-producing countries need collective solutions. Platforms like ACT 2026 are valuable because they allow countries, cooperatives, development partners, buyers, and researchers to compare experiences and identify common responses. For OSSREA, this validates the importance of EthioLatinCoffee as a platform for ongoing knowledge exchange.

7.3 Continued Booth Engagement and Carbon-Market Awareness

On the third day, visitors continued to come to the OSSREA booth to learn about the project. Many expressed interest in the project model and indicated that carbon markets in coffee agroforestry are still new to them. They wanted to know how women farmers participate, how carbon benefits may be generated, how monitoring is conducted, and how the project will ensure fairness and transparency.

These questions showed that there is strong demand for practical knowledge on carbon finance in the coffee sector. OSSREA should therefore continue using EthioLatinCoffee to explain carbon markets, Plan Vivo, MRV, benefit sharing, farmer responsibilities, safeguards, and the practical realities of project implementation.

7.4 Second Visit by The Deputy Ambassador and COP32 Opportunity

On the same day, **Mr. Kedir, Counselor, Ethiopian Embassy in Rwanda** visited the OSSREA booth again. He appreciated the work and pledged support for showcasing the project at the upcoming COP32. This was a significant outcome because COP32 would provide an important platform to present Ethiopia's women-led coffee carbon initiative to a global audience. OSSREA should follow up with both the Ethiopian Embassy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to explore how the project can be positioned in future COP-related events, exhibitions, or side sessions.

7.5 Ethiopian Coffee Culture Showcase

Another important highlight of the third day was the Ethiopian coffee ceremony presented by Meti Shewaye, an Ethiopian living in Rwanda. The ACT agenda included a session on **Hospitality, Cafés, Tourism and Consumer Market Growth**, with a spotlight on Ethiopia's coffee culture.

The ceremony made the day enlightening for many participants. It showcased Ethiopian coffee not only as an agricultural product but also as a cultural heritage and social experience. Since OSSREA was the only Ethiopian exhibitor, many visitors came to the booth asking about Ethiopian coffee, import contacts, samples, and trade opportunities. This experience showed that Ethiopia's coffee culture is an important communication asset. It can be used to promote not only trade but also sustainable production, women's empowerment, climate resilience, and responsible coffee sourcing.

7.6 Closing of the Exhibition

The Expo concluded after the final panel sessions, booth visits, barista and cupping finals, and official closing remarks. The programme included an ACT 2026 Barista and Cupping Competition Final and official closing remarks with a winning coffees and teas showcase.

By the end of the Expo, OSSREA had successfully presented its project, expanded its network, identified follow-up partners, promoted Ethiopian coffee, and strengthened the visibility of the EthioLatinCoffee Community of Practice.

8. Key Outcomes of the Mission

The mission produced several important outcomes:

First, the team gained practical lessons from Musasa Cooperative on cooperative governance, women's leadership, nursery management, farmer group organization, coffee rejuvenation, agroforestry, processing, cupping, member lending, childcare, dairy development, and value addition.

Second, the project gained strong visibility at ACT 2026. Many visitors were interested in the women-led carbon-credit model, especially because carbon finance in coffee agroforestry is still new to many coffee-producing countries.

Third, the mission strengthened diplomatic engagement. The team met representatives of the Ethiopian Embassy in Rwanda. These discussions created opportunities for future collaboration and COP32 visibility.

Fourth, Fairtrade Africa emerged as a highly relevant potential partner, especially because of its planned work with smallholder coffee farmers in Kaffa Zone and its interest in women's empowerment.

Fifth, the renewed contact with Musasa Cooperative created an immediate opportunity for South-South learning through an EthioLatinCoffee webinar, as the cooperative's Finance Head accepted an invitation to participate as a resource person.

Sixth, the engagement with Power du Women opened a new pathway for cooperation with Rwanda-based actors who also have links with Latin American organizations.

Seventh, the mission confirmed strong interest in Ethiopian coffee. Many visitors asked about import contacts, samples, and sources, demonstrating the continued attractiveness of Ethiopian coffee in regional and international markets.

9. Lessons Learned for OSSREA's Coffee Carbon Project

9.1 Cooperative Strength is Essential for Carbon Project Success

The Musasa experience showed that cooperative strength is central to long-term sustainability. A carbon-credit project needs farmers to be organized, informed, accountable, and able to participate in collective decision-making. The Ethiopian pilot should therefore continue strengthening cooperatives and local project committees.

9.2 Women's Leadership Should be Built into Governance

Musasa's female chairperson demonstrated that women can lead coffee cooperatives. OSSREA's project should ensure that women are not only participants but also leaders in cooperatives, project committees, nursery management, benefit-sharing systems, and future carbon governance.

9.3 Nursery Systems Can Create Women's income and Improve Seedling Supply

The women-managed nursery model is one of the most practical lessons from Rwanda that aligns with our approach. It should be expanded further to other sites in Kaffa to support women's income, improve seedling availability, and strengthen local ownership of agroforestry expansion.

9.4 Farmer Grouping Can Improve Seedling Distribution

The Musasa model of organizing farmers into groups of 10–15 based on geographic proximity is useful for logistics. It can reduce distribution problems, improve accountability, and simplify monitoring.

9.5 Coffee Agroforestry Should Combine Climate, Productivity and Food Security Benefits

The observed use of banana shade, indigenous shade trees, grass mulching, pumpkins as living mulch, and coffee rejuvenation shows that agroforestry should be practical and livelihood-oriented. Farmers will remain committed when they see improved productivity, food security, soil moisture, and income.

9.6 Value Addition Matters

The cooperative's washing station, dry mill, cupping lab, roasting and packing station, and dairy processing facility showed that farmers gain more when cooperatives move up the value chain. Future project phases could explore how women coffee producers in Kaffa can link carbon-credit readiness with coffee quality, traceability, and value addition.

9.7 Social Services Support Women's Participation

The childcare centre and nursery school show that women's participation is strengthened when care responsibilities are addressed. Gender-sensitive project design should consider the social conditions that allow women to participate fully.

9.8 Carbon Markets Need Continuous Awareness Creation

Many Expo visitors were unfamiliar with carbon markets in coffee agroforestry. This confirms the need for continuous communication through EthioLatinCoffee, webinars, policy briefs, farmer trainings, and partner dialogues.

9.9 Youth Engagement Is Becoming Urgent

Musasa's average member age of around 59 years shows that coffee farming faces an ageing farmer challenge. OSSREA should consider how the Ethiopian project can create roles for youth in nurseries, digital monitoring, coffee quality, cooperative services, beekeeping, vermicompost, and climate-smart extension.

10. Conclusion

The Rwanda mission was highly successful and strategically relevant to OSSREA's coffee carbon project. The field visit to Dukunde Kawa Musasa Coffee Cooperative provided practical lessons on women's leadership, cooperative management, seedling systems, climate-smart coffee production, coffee processing, value addition, childcare, member lending, dairy development, and livelihood diversification.

Participation in ACT 2026 created strong visibility for the project. OSSREA presented its model to a diverse group of actors and attracted interest from diplomatic representatives, Fairtrade Africa, the University of Rwanda, Rwandan women coffee cooperatives, EU importers, Power du Women, and other stakeholders. The sustainability panel gave OSSREA an opportunity to explain its model to a wider audience, while the women and youth panel confirmed that the challenges facing women coffee producers are shared across Africa.

The mission confirmed that OSSREA's model is timely, innovative, and relevant. Carbon finance in coffee agroforestry is still new to many coffee-producing countries, and there is strong demand for practical learning. This creates an opportunity for OSSREA to position the Ethiopian pilot as a learning case through EthioLatinCoffee, future webinars, policy briefs, and COP32 visibility.

Overall, the mission strengthened South-South learning, expanded partnerships, promoted Ethiopian coffee, and generated practical lessons that can improve the implementation and scaling of the women-led coffee carbon project in Kaffa.