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ORAL REPORT FOR THE WOMEN FORUM

PRESENTED BY

**HON. MINISTER MONICA MUTSVANGWA
MINISTER OF WOMEN AFFAIRS, COMMUNITY, SMALL
AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE**

**AT THE
11TH SUMMIT OF OACPS HEADS OF STATE AND
GOVERNMENT**

**SUNDAY, 29 MARCH 2026
MALABO, EQUATORIAL GUINEA**

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Presentation of Key Recommendations and Commitments

1. The OACPS Women's Forum was held on 26 March 2026 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, under the theme: "Women and Agriculture: Advancing Food Security, Resilience, and Economic Empowerment."
2. The Forum provided an important platform to highlight the central role of women in agriculture, food systems and community resilience across the OACPS regions, while also drawing attention to the persistent barriers that continue to limit their full participation and leadership.
3. The Forum considered the following themes:
 - i. **Women in Agri-Food Systems and Value Chains: Finance, Climate-Smart Innovations and Market Access**
 - ii. **Women, Climate Resilience, Green Transitions and Food Security**
4. The main conclusions of the Women's Forum were:
 - a. The need to strengthen women's participation and leadership across agri-food systems and agricultural value chains, including through improved access to finance, productive resources, innovation, technology and markets;
 - b. The need for stronger policy and institutional support to address persistent barriers affecting women, particularly in relation to land rights and ownership, access to services, decision-making spaces and equal economic opportunity;
 - c. The importance of promoting climate-smart agriculture, disaster risk reduction, early warning systems and community-based resilience approaches that respond to the realities faced by women, especially in rural, coastal, island and arid areas;
 - d. The need to pay particular attention to young women in agrifood systems, including by expanding access to skills, innovation, leadership opportunities and decent economic participation;
 - e. The importance of considering issues such as menstrual health management for women to ensure equal participation in agriculture and other key economic activities.
 - f. The value of women's knowledge and community-based practices in preserving biodiversity, strengthening resilience and supporting sustainable food production;

- g. The importance of strengthening partnerships with Member States, development partners, international organisations, financial institutions, producer organisations and the private sector to mobilise technical and financial support for scalable initiatives that benefit women in agriculture;
 - h. The need to promote stronger South-South and triangular cooperation, including knowledge-sharing, exchange of practical experiences and support for regional collaboration across the OACPS.
5. The Forum concluded by presenting key recommendations to inform the Summit Declaration, including:
- a) Support for an initiative, under the leadership of the First Lady of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, to champion and promote women's participation and empowerment in agriculture, with particular emphasis on food security, resilience and economic opportunity for women across OACPS regions
 - b) The creation of an OACPS Women in Agriculture Network as a platform to connect women leaders, entrepreneurs and cooperatives, promote exchange of best practices and support improved market access;
 - c) The establishment of a regional mechanism aimed at collectively addressing menstrual health needs. This mechanism should facilitate the development of standardised guidelines, knowledge sharing and practices which are monitored through agreed indicators.
 - d) Promoting innovation and research for women in agriculture should be prioritised. States should fund research and development, support technology adoption, and foster innovation hubs. This will enable women entrepreneurs in agriculture to participate in high-value sectors and move up the value chain.
 - e) Policy harmonisation across OACPS member states should be pursued. Aligning regulatory frameworks, simplifying cross-border trade procedures, and facilitating regional financing agreements will create an enabling environment where women in agriculture can grow beyond domestic markets and compete regionally and globally.
 - f) The strengthening of regional and international partnerships to mobilise technical assistance, investment and financing in support of women in agriculture and women-led resilience initiatives; and
 - g) The identification of shared priorities and follow-up actions to guide OACPS work on gender equality beyond the Summit, including through relevant institutional frameworks and delivery mechanisms under PACTE 2025–2030.