



Support rural women farmers —GAFAPAW

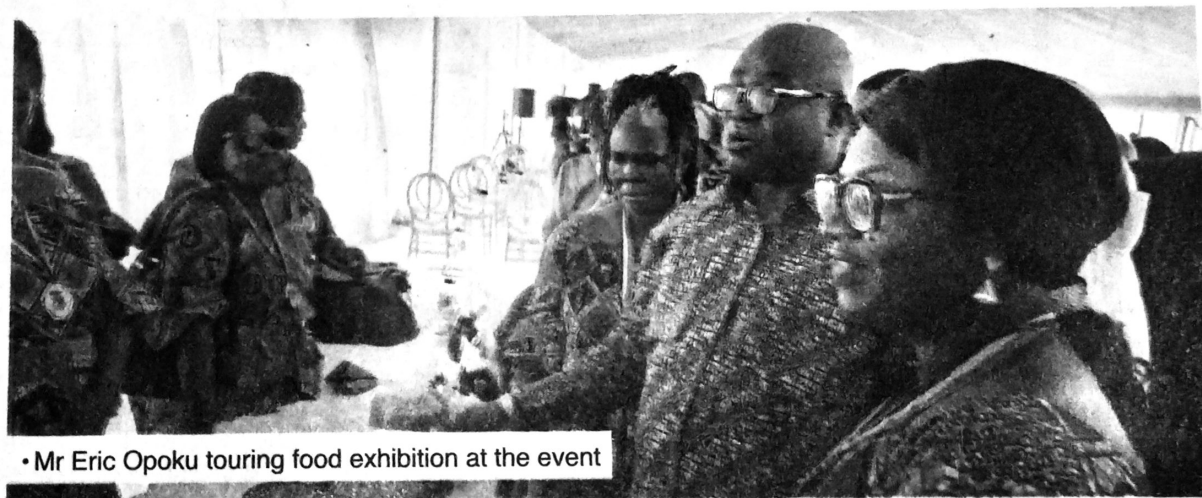
BY CECILIA YADA LAGBA

THE Chairperson of Ghana Association of Female Agricultural and Fish Farmers Award Winners (GAFAPAW), Ms Ernestina Osei-Tutu, has called on the government and institutions to recognise and support rural women farmers.

According to her, rural women remained central to the country's agricultural transformation and economic development.

Ms Osei-Tutu made the call at the 2nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) and induction ceremony of GAFAPAW in Accra on Tuesday, on the theme; "Rooted in Experience, Rising in Leadership: Rural Women at the Heart of Agricultural Transformation."

She said the association was founded to provide a collective voice for women farmers who, though individually recognised as award winners, needed a stronger platform to influence policy and



• Mr Eric Opoku touring food exhibition at the event

address systemic challenges.

"From our beginnings as 20 women drawn from all regions of Ghana, GAFAPAW has become a collective force for change. We are women deeply rooted in the soil of our communities and now rising as leaders to transform agriculture," she said.

Ms Osei-Tutu acknowledged challenges such as access to land, particularly in Northern and the Volta Region, the impact of climate change on farming activities, and limited access to credit and

equipment as the most pressing women faced.

According to her, GAFAPAW had continued to make progress despite setbacks, noting that the Members have excelled in national, regional, and district award schemes, built strong partnerships with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, and secured support from private sector entities such as Yara Ghana.

Addressing the newly inducted members, she urged them to see themselves not only as successful

farmers but also as leaders with a responsibility to mentor others and advocate for rural women's inclusion in decision-making processes.

"Through GAFAPAW, we are ensuring that rural women remain at the heart of all agricultural transformation efforts in Ghana. We are the women feeding the nation, and together, we stand stronger than ever before," Ms Osei-Tutu asserted.

Delivering the keynote address, the Minister for Food and

Agriculture, Mr Eric Opoku, commended GAFAPAW for its contributions to advancing women's leadership in agriculture.

He said rural women formed the "backbone of Ghana's agricultural economy," noting that they play multiple roles as farmers, processors, traders, and innovators who sustain households and national food systems.

"Rural women farmers are custodians of indigenous knowledge, champions of food security, and key actors in our drive for agricultural transformation. Yet, too often, their contributions go unrecognised and their potential underutilised," he said.

The Minister reaffirmed government's commitment to empowering women through the Agriculture for Economic Transformation Agenda, implemented under the Feed Ghana Programme, outlining measures such as, improved access to modern farming technologies and extension services, support for value addition and agro-processing, promotion of climate-smart agriculture, and the facilitation of market and financial access.

Mr Opoku further applauded GAFAPAW for its achievements since its establishment in 2023, particularly its advocacy role in national policy dialogues and its mentorship of smallholder farmers.