

**THE INAUGURAL FANRPAN CIVIL SOCIETY POLICY MOVERS AND SHAKERS
AWARD**

GOES TO

MS. CELLINA COSSA

THE CITATION READS AS FOLLOWS:

In 1980, Madame Celina Cossa founded the General Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, an organization of 10,000 peasants, 95 percent of whom are women. The 200 cooperatives under UGC produce food for their members and their families. The surplus they have generated is supplied to markets in Maputo, the Mozambican capital.

After Years of devastating war destroyed the livelihoods and productive capacity of the people of Mozambique, Madame Cossa, mobilised the women of Mozambique to become food producers and this became the foundation for their personal empowerment.

A former school teacher by training, Madame Cossa, had a vision for building food supply in her country and empowering the poorest people, most of whom are women. She started small cooperative groups of women growing vegetables to supplement family income. Initially some were reluctant to join but soon realised her vision. From a network of six cooperatives around Maputo these soon increased to more than 224. The vegetable farming soon expanded into other commercial enterprises such as poultry production and marketing, credit, insurance, industry, and construction. The ventures were complemented with training programmes to give women accounting, banking and project management skills.

Today, Madame Cossa, is a source of inspiration as a fighter for food security and a proponent of an African Green Revolution led by women in Mozambique.