

# **HSA4A Signs Partnership Agreement to Address Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in East Africa**

by THE HSA4A PARTNERSHIP

Maternal mortality is the number one cause of death in sub-Saharan Africa. Despite the fact that maternal mortality is high on the international agenda, the goal to reduce maternal mortality by 75 percent by 2015, is still far from being reached. By advocating and influencing the availability of affordable medicines and contraception and increasing the availability and accessibility of skilled health workers, the Health Systems Advocacy for Africa (HSA4A) works to build stronger health systems to reduce maternal mortality.

The agreement between the HSA4A partnership, comprising Amref Health Africa, the African Centre for Global Health and Social Transformation (ACHEST), Health Action International (HAI), Wemos and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was signed on 12 November, 2015. The aim of the partnership is to strengthen the capacity of local organisations to advocate and influence the sexual and reproductive health and rights of marginalised groups and vulnerable populations.

The partnership falls within the policy framework 'Dialogue and Dissent' of Dutch Minister Lilianne Ploumen, whereby 25 partnerships (or alliances of) social organisations work together with the Ministry to strengthen civil society in low- and low-middle income countries in the areas of advocacy and influence. The focus on advocating and influencing is essential to address to governments and businesses because of their responsibility to contribute to growth and development and reducing inequality.

The strategic partnership between the Ministry and HSA4A will mostly be active in East Africa. The collaboration between the organisations provides the opportunity for joint use of instruments and methods of advocacy and influence, which can improve their effectiveness.