



*No Woman Should Die While Giving Life*

August 18, 2010  
For Immediate Release

**PRESS RELEASE**

**KENYAN WOMEN MARCH FOR INCREASED FINANCING FOR MATERNAL HEALTH**



Close to five hundred Kenyan women today held a peaceful procession to the nation's Parliament, urging Members of Parliament to increase budgetary allocations to the health sector to 15% of the national budget, in accordance with commitments made in Abuja in 2001 and at the recently concluded African Union summit in Kampala, Uganda.

Organizers of the East African Caravan on Maternal Health – ABANTU for Development, UN Millennium Campaign – Africa, and the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), participated in the march organized by World March for Women – Kenya, bearing petitions signed by hundreds of thousands of East Africans, calling on leaders to *ACT NOW – No Woman Should Die While Giving Life!*

The march was flagged off at Freedom Corner and proceeded to the parliamentary buildings. En route His Excellency the President of Kenya, Mwai Kibaki, drove by and witnessed the droves of Kenyan women calling for women's reproductive health to be prioritized as a matter of urgency.

At the gates of Parliament, a petition was read calling on MPs to increase allocation to the health budget, which currently stands at a dismal 5.5%, to the 15% minimum agreed to by Heads of State in 2001 and reaffirmed in 2010. The women also asked Parliament to establish a select committee to look into maternal and child deaths in Kenya.

Several MPs including Honourables Millie Odhiambo, Sophia Abdi Noor and Joyce Laboso received the public petition, and pledged to submit it to the Speaker of the House and thereafter share its contents on the floor of Parliament. Hon. Odhiambo commended Kenyan women for being the first to claim their rights under the new Constitution, which guarantees women the right to reproductive health.

For more information, contact Naisola Likimani at [advocacy@femnet.or.ke](mailto:advocacy@femnet.or.ke).

To read more on the journey of the East African Caravan on Maternal Health, visit <http://eacaravan2010.wordpress.com/>

