

Devex - What does the 90 day pause mean?

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Trump also — [as you know](#) — hit pause on U.S. foreign aid, with a 90-day freeze to review what stays and what goes. The executive order seems to **paint the aid system as a “political and cultural battleground,”** writes my colleague Michael Igoe, one riddled with progressive policies at odds with American values.

Although widely expected, the pause and heavy hand that signed the order shocked the U.S. development sector, with USAID staffers, contractors, and advocacy groups [scrambling to decode its implications](#). USAID, which manages a \$40 billion annual budget, is now navigating legal and logistical uncertainties. Some speculate that uncommitted funds could be reclaimed for other uses, a process that might sidestep Congress.

“This is a really **big moment of uncertainty for U.S. foreign aid,**” says Walter Kerr, co-executive director of the aid reform coalition [Unlock Aid](#).

The impact of the pause hinges on whether the Trump administration uses it to **selectively target a handful of programs it opposes or embark on a sweeping overhaul** of the entire foreign assistance portfolio, George Ingram, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, tells Michael.

“If it’s a quick review focused on their priorities, like family planning and climate change, then it’s going to have an impact on a particular subset of what USAID does,” Ingram says. But a full-blown review of the “complicated, multilayered beast” that is USAID, would take “a lot of people more than three months to do.”

One person who could be involved in the review process is Peter Marocco, a former USAID official who multiple sources tell Devex has been chosen to be director of the Office of Foreign Assistance at the State Department. Marocco made headlines during the first Trump administration for trying to restructure and eliminate programs — and sparring with career staff, Michael writes.

Michael also has the scoop on a few other USAID appointments Trump has made: **Matt Hopson** as chief of staff, **Joel Borkert** as deputy chief of staff, and **Meghan Hanson** as director of policy.

Read: [Trump's foreign assistance freeze generates uncertainty and confusion](#)
