

OneUSAID Community Updates

March 3, 2025

Key Updates

- **Secretary Rubio's so-called life-saving waivers still don't work, and the Trump Administration continues to fire any whistleblowers who report otherwise.** [USAID's acting Assistant Administrator for Global Health was placed on administrative leave](#) after he shared a memo with USAID staff describing how political leadership's actions have prevented the bureau from delivering life-saving assistance under the waivers.
- **UN and NGO leaders express alarm over catastrophic impacts worldwide from the Trump Administration's [cancellation of thousands](#) of USAID programs last week** In an attempt to skirt its legal obligations. As of the release of today's updates, OneUSAID Community also learned that UNICEF is in the process of laying off 300 employees as a direct result of the cuts.
- **Keep Calling!** Call or email your senators and representatives, pick one of the programs that has been cut, and ask them to demand a specific explanation for why it has been cut. [Members of Congress are reacting](#) in large part to concerns by their constituents over the chaos and cuts unleashed by DOGE in the federal government.

More details below...

The Acting Assistant to the Administrator for Global Health Was Placed on Leave After Issuing a Whistleblower Memo—and a Second Memo Details Death Toll

- A [memo issued by USAID's acting Assistant Administrator for Global Health](#) describes in detail the actions taken by the Trump Administration since Secretary of State Marco Rubio issued the Stop Work Order for all foreign assistance on January 24th. This memo describes the ineffective waiver process and lack of payments for those activities that were issued a waiver. It also describes the haphazard nature of the award termination process and links to a separate memo detailing the staffing issues and indiscriminate firings of Bureau for Global Health staff since the Stop Work Order was implemented. The memo concludes that **“This will no doubt result in preventable death, destabilization, and threats to national security on a massive scale.”**
 - Responding to reports that the [waiver process](#) is not allowing aid groups to continue live-saving work, the Trump Administration has issued denials and threats ([ProPublica](#)). The memo confirms that “USAID's failure to implement lifesaving humanitarian assistance under the waiver is the result of political leadership...who have created and continue to create intentional and/or unintentional obstacles that have wholly prevented implementation... including contradictory and shifting guidance regarding approval for required activities and failure of Agency leadership to process disbursement of funds for activities once approved.”
 - Leadership has changed waiver approval criteria and processes multiple times in the last few weeks, required re-approvals for activities previously approved, failed to respond to re-approval requests, terminated awards that manage approved activities under the waiver, and said some “may have been... in error”.

- Staff reported to leadership that access to USAID financial systems “had been completely turned off by DOGE...preventing the flow of any funds” to approved life-saving activities. **Significant staffing disruptions also hamstrung efforts. On this memo’s clearance page, 25% read “no staff left to clear”.**
- **None of the 72 life-saving humanitarian activities identified by the Bureau for Global Health Bureau have been approved nor paid, fully preventing their implementation—and nearly all have since been terminated.**
- A second, [unfinished memo](#) that details the loss of life and other impacts due to the Stop Work Order was also leaked to the [New York Times](#). These are the first estimates on the human impact of the Stop Work Order to come directly from the Agency.
 - **The unfinished memo estimates a minimum of 2.5 million additional deaths per year due to the termination of USAID’s global health projects. These death estimates are from a range of causes including malaria, Ebola, mpox, and childhood immunizations, but do not include increased incidents of severe malnutrition, tuberculosis, or polio nor do they include deaths that will come from a lack of maternity and post-natal care, malnutrition, pneumonia, or diarrhea, all major causes of death for women and young children.**

UN and NGO Leaders Express Alarm Over Trump Administration Cuts to Foreign Aid Following Program Terminations Last Week

- [UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres](#): *“I want to start by expressing my deep concern about information received in the last 48 hours by UN agencies — as well as many humanitarian and development NGOs — regarding severe cuts in funding by the United States. These cuts impact a wide range of critical programmes. From life saving humanitarian aid, to support for vulnerable communities recovering from war or natural disaster. From development, to the fight against terrorism and illicit drug trafficking. The consequences will be especially devastating for vulnerable people around the world... American funding directly supports people living through wars, famines and disasters, providing essential health care, shelter, water, food and education — the list goes on. The message is clear. The generosity and compassion of the American people have not only saved lives, built peace and improved the state of the world. They have contributed to the stability and prosperity that Americans depend on. United Nations staff members around the world are deeply proud of what we’ve accomplished together — as partners. Now going through with these cuts will make the world less healthy, less safe and less prosperous. The reduction of America’s humanitarian role and influence will run counter to American interests globally.”*
- [UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Tom Fletcher](#): *“The U.S. has been this humanitarian superpower, a leader in that space for decades and U.S. support from the taxpayer has saved hundreds of millions of lives. And look, it's right that the public in any country asks are we getting value for money. It is right that the politicians respond to the need to deliver at home as well as overseas. But the impact of those cuts is a blow to our work. But it's not about us. It's about the people we are there to serve. And it will have a massive impact on programs. Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, Gaza, globally.”*
- [UNFPA Executive Director Dr. Natalia Kanem](#): *“This devastating decision will force*

thousands of health clinics to close. Women in crisis zones will be forced to give birth without medicines, midwives or equipment, putting their lives and their babies' lives in jeopardy. Rape survivors will be denied counselling and medical care. Midwives delivering babies in the world's worst humanitarian crises will lose their ability to function. Shipments of life-saving medical supplies to refugee camps will be disrupted. UNFPA hopes that the U.S. Government will reconsider its stance and retain its position as a global leader working in partnership with UNFPA to alleviate the suffering of women and their families, often as a result of catastrophes not of their own making. So much good has been achieved during our more than five decades of close collaboration with the USA, a founding partner. With U.S. support, UNFPA has helped strengthen health systems, save the lives of women, adolescent girls and newborns, and improve the economic prospects of families, communities and countries."

- [Interaction - 60+ NGOs Respond to Terminations of Life-Saving Programs](#): "Programs that save hundreds of thousands of lives are being shuttered. Education for young girls seeking a better life will become unattainable, infectious disease tracking for deadly viruses like Ebola will go offline, and vital treatment for malnourished children in conflict zones will no longer reach them. Programs fostering good governance and economic development—crucial for global stability—will end. We urge the Administration: Reverse course immediately. Restore and fund these vital programs."
- [Partners in Health CEO Shelia Davis](#): "The Trump administration is eliminating 90% of USAID foreign aid contracts and \$60 billion in overall U.S. assistance around the world, including previously exempted humanitarian programs. This immoral systemic targeting of already vulnerable people is a man-made catastrophe that directly results in death and suffering for millions including vulnerable HIV patients, starving children and refugees today, tomorrow and years to come."
- [Danish Refugee Council Secretary General Charlotte Slente](#): "The Danish Refugee Council is appalled at the announcement from the U.S. Government to terminate nearly all its aid contracts and we warn of catastrophic consequences for millions of people forcibly displaced and living in conflict affected and fragile states."
- [Human Rights Watch Washington Director Sarah Yager](#): "The Trump administration's abrupt elimination of so many vital human rights and humanitarian programs is reckless, cruel, and will wreak havoc on efforts to promote democracy and rule of law around the world," said Sarah Yager, Washington director at Human Rights Watch... There are plenty of responsible ways to tailor foreign aid to an administration's agenda without needlessly causing deaths and suffering... No member of Congress, regardless of their party, should be comfortable allowing the State Department to unilaterally terminate tens of billions of dollars that Congress specifically appropriated for human rights and humanitarian assistance. The House and Senate need to stand up for the rule of law and demand answers from the administration."
- [Mercy Corps CEO Tjada D'Oyen McKenna](#): "The U.S. Government's decision to end thousands of aid programs will have devastating consequences for people in urgent need of food, clean water and shelter in Sudan, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo. It will stop programs that help prevent youth radicalization by violent extremist groups in West Africa, and stop assistance to help Venezuelan refugees who fled to Colombia."

These programs not only saved lives, they prevented conflict and instability, and helped communities recover from crisis, reducing long-term reliance on aid. Ending these programs so suddenly will be destabilizing and have devastating consequences for trust in the communities that relied on them. We urge the U.S. Government to urgently revisit these decisions and immediately resume essential foreign assistance programs.”

- [Save the Children CEO Inger Ashing](#): *“The cut in foreign assistance globally is a dark and difficult moment for a world already struggling to meet the growing needs of children facing conflict, poverty, hunger and climate disasters. It comes at a time when children’s needs have never been greater. This withdrawal of support will have a direct and deadly impact on some of the world’s most vulnerable children...The loss of U.S. funding alone will widen the funding gap at a time when about one in every 11 children globally needs humanitarian assistance...Now is not the time to turn our backs on children in need. Now is the time to come together to build a better and safer future.”*
- [International Rescue Committee Senior VP Hans Van de Weerd](#): *“The U.S. refugee resettlement program has long been an effective partnership between the federal government, states, and everyday Americans to welcome refugees as our new neighbors. The decision to end these resettlement agreements comes at a cost not only to the families whose lives are now endangered stranded overseas, but also to the American communities that will miss out on the cultural and economic contributions, resilience, and ingenuity that refugees bring.”*

Consistent Topline Messages (Talking Points)

Preserving Foreign Assistance as a U.S. Foreign Policy Tool

- An effort from the Trump administration and Congress to reform and streamline U.S. foreign assistance is welcome, but **the current approach is not a serious reform effort**: it is an ineffective, sloppy power grab that is—unintentionally or not—destroying the U.S. foreign assistance apparatus and depriving the U.S. of a critical soft-power tool. Foreign assistance keeps us safer here at home while demonstrating American generosity and saving millions of lives around the world.
- The clearest examples of this are both the **broken waiver process, which never functioned appropriately or had a clear standard operating procedure, and the cancelling of over 10,000 State and USAID contracts last week, some of which had received waivers.**
 - **Despite the Administration’s claims, even those life-saving and critical national security projects that were approved by Secretary Rubio to receive waivers were not able to receive funding. This is due in part to** hurried and careless efforts to alter USAID’s financial system (Phoenix) that have left it non-operational and unable to process payments. This includes efforts to stem an Ebola outbreak that could infect Americans, HIV prevention and treatment, and sensitive work in conflict zones.
- The Trump Administration’s efforts to dismantle USAID have now **left the U.S. without the systems, experienced personnel, or partners necessary to responsibly and strategically implement foreign assistance.**
- Americans agree: foreign assistance is a powerful U.S. soft-power tool, and [89 percent](#) of

Americans support spending at least 1 percent of our federal budget on foreign aid. For this reason, **Congress must halt these illegal actions by DOGE and instead implement a more strategic, sensible reform effort that restores the legislative branch's important oversight function.**

USAID: The first, but not the last

- USAID is the playbook for President Trump and Elon Musk's plan for a **rapid and potentially illegal overhaul of the U.S. Government.** This is being done without the Congressional approval and oversight required for those agencies codified by statute. Reform is welcome, but what DOGE is doing is not reform, it is taking a sledgehammer to destroy a vital tool of U.S. national security.
- Rep. Bacon (R-NE) underscored this in his comments to the Wall Street Journal: *"[USAID was] funding a lot of stupid stuff—that's a fact. But they're also doing a lot of good stuff too. So you don't want to throw the baby out with the bathwater. Instead of taking a sledgehammer, let's get out the scalpel."*
 - **Some Republican Senators have joined their Democratic colleagues in expressing alarm** over the Trump administration's foreign aid freeze and gutting of USAID. [Lindsey Graham \(R-SC\)](#), [Lisa Murkowski \(R-AK\)](#), and [Susan Collins \(R-ME\)](#) wrote to Secretary Rubio to express that they believe the State Department is not operating in accordance with the law by neglecting to notify and consult with Congress during the process.
- Instead of undertaking a reform effort—working closely with Congress as is required by law—DOGE has taken a "burn it all down" approach including mass firings and major infringements on Congress's power of the purse. This may work for tech firms, but it is a **dangerous approach for government institutions that must remain accountable to taxpayers, enforce and follow laws, and deliver public goods.**

Current Impact

American Economy and Jobs

- **Confirmed Job Losses:** 13,604 Americans have lost their jobs, been furloughed, or placed on administrative leave. 57,502 jobs globally (non-American) have been lost as of February 27, 2025.
 - Details on specific USAID partners forced to make cuts, furloughs, and suspensions across their workforces can be found on [Devex](#).

Health

- In **Senegal**, the biggest malaria project has closed, which distributed bed nets and medication to tens of thousands of people. Maternal, child health and nutrition services have also closed, which provided lifesaving care to tens of thousands of pregnant women and treatment that would have prevented and treated acute malnutrition. ([AP](#))
- In **South Sudan**, the International Rescue Committee closed a project providing access to quality health care and nutrition services to more than 115,000 people. ([AP](#))
- In **Somalia**, 50 health centers servicing more than 19,000 people a month closed

because health workers are not being paid. ([AP](#))

- In **Thailand**, hospitals helping 100,000 [refugees from Myanmar](#) have shuttered. ([AP](#))
- In **Vietnam**, a program assisting disabled people through training caregivers and providing at-home medical care have stopped. ([AP](#))
- In **Bangladesh**, 600,000 women and children will lose access to critical maternal health care, protection from violence, reproductive health and other lifesaving care. ([AP](#))
- In **Pakistan**, the shutdown of USAID-funded initiatives designed to provide clean drinking water to residents could lead to severe hardship in places already struggling with intense heat waves and water scarcity. Summer temperatures in Jacobabad, located in southeastern Pakistan, regularly exceed 122 degrees F. ([The Media Line](#))

Humanitarian Assistance

- Last week, the Trump Administration cancelled USAID's contract with American food producer MANA Nutrition, whose factory in Georgia makes a nutrient-fortified peanut butter to treat malnutrition, which put 300,000 children at risk of losing critical treatment for malnutrition ([HuffPost](#)). MANA had 400,000 boxes of the USAID-branded product ready and waiting to be shipped out. ***"Every one of those packets has printing on it that says, 'From the American people. USAID.' And if... I don't deliver it through USAID contracts, it's trash. I can't distribute it,"*** the CEO said ([CNN](#)).
 - As of today, MANA's contract with USAID was reinstated after Musk said he would "investigate" and "fix it" ([CNN](#)).
- In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, aid group Action Against Hunger will stop treating tens of thousands of malnourished children from May, which the NGO said will put the children in "mortal danger." ([AP](#))
- In **Ethiopia**, food assistance has stopped for more than 1 million people. The Ministry of Health was also forced to terminate the contract of 5,000 workers across the country focused on HIV and malaria prevention, vaccinations and helping vulnerable women deal with the trauma of war. ([AP](#))
- In **Sudan**, 90 communal kitchens closed in the capital, Khartoum, leaving more than half a million people without consistent access to food. ([AP](#))
- In **Kenya**, more than 600,000 people living in areas plagued by drought and persistent acute malnutrition will lose access to lifesaving food and nutrition support ([AP](#)). In Kakuma refugee camp, refugees face severe food and water shortages ([Tuko](#)).
- In **Mali**, critical aid such as access to water, food, and health services was cut for over 270,000 people. ([AP](#))
- In **Nigeria**, 25,000 extremely malnourished children will stop receiving food assistance by April. ([AP](#))
- In **Burkina Faso**, over 400,000 people lost access to services such as water. Services for gender-based violence and child protection for thousands are no longer available. ([AP](#))
- In **Ukraine**, cash-based humanitarian programs that reached 1 million people last year have been suspended. ([AP](#))
- In **Afghanistan**, hundreds of mobile health teams and other services were suspended, affecting 9 million people. ([AP](#))
- In **Syria**, aid programs for 2.5 million people stopped providing services. A dozen health

- clinics, including the main referral hospital for the area, have shut down. ([AP](#))
- In **Yemen**, 220,000 displaced people will lose access to critical maternal health care, protection from violence, rape treatment and other lifesaving care. ([AP](#))
 - In **Colombia**, a program shuttered by the Norwegian Refugee Council has left 50,000 people without lifesaving support including in the northeast, where growing violence has precipitated a once-in-a-generation humanitarian crisis. The support included food, shelter, clean water and other basic items for people displaced in the region. ([AP](#))
 - In **Haiti**, 13,000 people have lost access to nutritional support. The cuts will affect in total at least 550,000 people who were receiving aid. ([AP](#))
 - In **the Philippines**, a program to improve access to disaster warning systems for disabled people has stopped. ([AP](#))

Media Review

- ProPublica: [The Trump Administration Said These Aid Programs Saved Lives. It Canceled Them Anyway](#)
- ABC News: ['Many of them will die': Hammer drops on USAID with organizations left reeling](#)
- International Crisis Group: [U.S. Aid Cuts Make Famine More Likely and Easier to Hide](#)
- CBC - Radio Canada: [How Trump's USAID freeze amplifies suffering in world's largest refugee camp](#) - Video
- The Irish Times: ['We've become used to being betrayed': US aid cuts affect camps for people accused of Isis affiliation](#)
- Washington Post (Opinion): [What I saw in the Peace Corps](#)
- USGLC (Opinion): [Malaria Fight Abroad Keeps America Safe at Home – The Epoch Times](#)
- Billboard: [Elton John Slams Trump Administration's USAID Cuts: 'Devastating Effects on the HIV Response'](#)
- Chattanooga Free Times Press (Opinion): [Cutting aid, like USAID, threatens all of us and may be just the tip of the iceberg](#)
- Jerusalem Post (Opinion): [Trump USAID shutdown could spark a global humanitarian crisis](#)
- The Japan Times: ['Total panic' as USAID cuts jobs from Syria to Haiti](#)
- ACLED: [The Raleigh Report: February 2025](#)

Additional Resources for Information and Messaging

- [USAIDStopWork website](#) and [USAIDStopWork Bluesky](#)
- Friends of USAID: [Instagram](#), [X/Twitter](#), [YouTube](#)