

Dismantling of USAID:

Personnel and Operational Presence

Last updated: April 11, 2025

USAID Personnel and Presence Snapshot (Pre-January 20):

- Prior to the transition of administration, USAID's staffing footprint included **13,000 staff across all hiring mechanisms**, including approximately 6,500 people based overseas. USAID's staffing footprint included approximately: 4,500 direct hires (USDHs); 1,000 personal service contractors (USPSCs); 2,600 institutional support contractors (ISCs); and 5,000 Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs).
- USAID had staff in country and regional missions in more than **60 countries** and active programs in approximately **130 countries**.

USAID Personnel and Presence Snapshot (as of early April):

- On March 28, Jeremy Lewin, who is performing the duties of USAID Deputy Administrator, sent an email informing all staff that substantially all non-statutory positions at USAID will be eliminated. As a result, USAID personnel globally—USDH civil service and foreign service officers—are subject to a consolidated reduction in force (RIF) action.
- Following the notice, USAID personnel received emails specifying one of two final separation dates: July 1, 2025, or September 2, 2025. According to internal USAID sources, every position has been or will be RIF'd. By July 1, the State Department will have assumed responsibility for USAID's remaining programming and by September 2 the Agency's operations will have been substantially transferred to the State Department or otherwise wound down. According to internal USAID sources, all USAID USDHs and USPSCs will be recalled to the United States by August 15.
- More than 3,500 staff received the July 1 RIF separation date. Those staff who received the September 2 date are individuals the Agency has identified as needed to close out, off board, and shut down the Agency. Individuals with the latter date include the Mission Director, Deputy Mission Director, Executive Officers, and Controller overseas and members of the Bureau for Management, Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, Office of the General Counsel, and other designated personnel in Washington, DC, required to close USAID. Contracting officers/agreement officers received a July 1 date as all programming will be closed out by then.
- Prior to the wide scale RIF action, USAID had shared a memo with Congress stating that 869 USDHs were actively working across all headquarters and overseas posts, with the majority of USDHs on administrative leave.
- Reports indicate that all remaining USPSCs also received RIF notices the week of March 31, with termination dates that align with USDH dates.
- On April 9, USAID circulated an email informing all 5,000 FSNs that they are being RIF'd, with a final separation date no later than August 15. FSNs have often served at Missions for decades and provide critical local context and serve as the institutional memory for the U.S. government.
- With these latest RIF actions, the Agency has confirmed that there will be no crossover of USAID staff to the Department of State.
- Looking ahead, new non-career appointments and locally employed staff positions will be created to manage active programs; however, the creation, classification, and competition for these positions will be led by the Department of State in Washington, DC. In the coming years, the Department of State is expected to create a new development/humanitarian assistance cone for the Foreign Service; the anticipated end state of USAID overseas is that it will be integrated into existing embassy sections and not exist as a standalone office or section.

A Look Ahead: Significant Human Capital and Operational Limitations for Foreign Aid

- The current trajectory of staff drawdowns and transfer of USAID to the State Department by September 2025 will significantly impact the U.S. government's capability to provide foreign aid. The actions to USAID are amplified by the wide scale termination of foreign aid grants and contracts at other federal agencies, including the US Department of Labor and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as foundations and the US Institute of Peace.
- With the majority of USDHs returning to the United States by mid-June in advance of July termination dates and the recent RIF notice to all FSNs, USAID will have **no overseas capacity or presence** to make awards, implement programs, or provide oversight. The withdrawal of USDHs coupled with the termination of FSNs will further erode relationships with host governments, challenging the administration of non-terminated awards. The administration has also shared that back office functions (e.g., procurement, human resources) will be consolidated in Washington, DC, along with design work for all new programs. The longer-term vision for a minimal overseas staffing significantly **limits staff ability to develop context-specific awards and monitor active awards** at a time when the administration continues to highlight their concerns related to fraud, waste, and abuse.
- While USAID stated that the State Department will assess its needs and conduct a separate and independent hiring process to which USAID employees will be eligible to apply, the RIF of all USAID staff **reduces technical expertise and award management capabilities** not just during an interim period, but **long-term**.
- **State does not have the capability to rapidly deploy staff, make grants, or facilitate the procurement and movement of commodities and in-kind assistance.** With the RIF of the entire workforce and dismantling of USAID payment systems, the Department of State is unable to absorb the capabilities to be operational even if some contracts—such as the urban search-and-rescue contracts—remain in place. USAID has also maintained the relationships with the UN and NGOs to facilitate US Department of Defense (DoD) engagement in international disaster response. As such, DoD is also unable to fill the disaster response gap left by the dismantling of USAID.

Case Study: Myanmar Earthquake


On March 28, a magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck Myanmar. A three-person USAID assessment team arrived in Myanmar on April 2 for a three-day period. U.S. President Donald Trump has pledged to provide up to \$9 million in humanitarian aid. However, USAID has only one active partner in Myanmar following recent program terminations. The absence of USAID staff on the ground and existing partnerships have led to a slow U.S. government response while other countries—including the People's Republic of China and Russia—have quickly stepped in. The U.S. government response today is in sharp contrast to when a 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal in 2015. USAID immediately deployed a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), including urban search-and-rescue (USAR) specialists, and programmed (not pledged) \$12.5 million to partners in less than one week.

Snapshot:

Timeline of the Dismantling of Personnel and Operations

**STAND UP
FOR AID**

2025



Jan 27	Fifty-six senior career staff put on administrative leave.
Jan 28/29	Stop work order results in the furlough or lay-off of ISCs.
Feb 4	1,000+ employees put on administrative leave. Agency announces nearly everyone will be put on leave soon.
Feb 6	Administration notifies Agency officials that global workforce will be reduced to just a few hundred. The American Foreign Service Association and American Federation of Government Employees file a complaint against the administration.
Feb 8	U.S. District Judge issues a temporary restraining order (TRO), temporarily halting administrative personnel actions and ruling that some Agency employees on leave must be reinstated.
Feb 19/20	A significant number of PSCs received termination notices, notifying them their final day is March 6.
Feb 21	U.S. District Judge dissolves TRO stopping Agency from putting additional staff on leave.
Feb 23	Approximately 4,000 personnel placed on administrative leave and at least 1,600 employees receive RIF notices, informing them their last day is April 23 if based in D.C. and May 26 if based overseas.
Mar 10	An email directive is sent to FSOs and FSLs overseas, notifying them that they must return to the United States by April 6. [Note: Timeline may be adjusted to mid-May].
Mar 12	USAID BHA Assistant Administrator shares anticipated future structure and overseas staffing footprint.
Mar 28	Email informs USAID personnel globally—USDH civil service and foreign service officers—staff are subject to a consolidated RIF action. USAID USDHs receive emails specifying one of two final separation dates: July 1, 2025, or September 2, 2025. USPCs receive termination notices over the coming week with the same separation timeline.
Apr 9	An email informs all FSNs that they are subject to a RIF no later than August 15.