

AID cuts impact on health programs. By Jenny Lei Ravelo, Devex, 1 May 2025

In his first 100 days back in the White House, U.S. President Donald Trump unleashed a series of decisions that are already **having a harsh and potentially long-lasting impact on global health.**

After the administration froze and eventually axed thousands of USAID foreign aid awards, organizations were forced to shut down offices and [furlough or lay off thousands of staff](#). That includes some of the biggest global contractors and NGOs, such as [Chemonics International](#), which had to furlough around 63% of its American workforce.

Local organizations were hit just as hard — Anova Health Institute in South Africa laid off [nearly 3,000 workers](#), including HIV counselors, health workers, and data capturers. Thousands of USAID staffers, including many from the Bureau of Global Health, also lost their jobs.

One WHO health official [estimated the direct job losses](#) in the health and care economy at over half a million — though others say that’s likely a low estimate.

The ripple effects? **Countless health facilities shuttered and services suspended** — from HIV programs to sexual and reproductive health services. [A new survey](#) by the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease found disruptions in tuberculosis care and prevention in at least 10 national TB programs in Africa. Lifesaving interventions such as providing clean water and medical care in Gaza have also been gutted “for the convenience of the U.S. government,” some [termination letters](#) stated.

And it’s not just statistics — it’s lives. In South Sudan, at least five children and three adults died of cholera while trying to find treatment, according to [The New York Times](#). They simply couldn’t access the care they needed in time.

Some groups are calculating the human cost each day services aren’t restored. As of publication, a [live tracker](#) supported by Boston University estimates that **more than 42,000 adults and over 4,400 children have died** due to cuts to [PEPFAR](#) programs. [Another tracker](#) attributes **over 18,000 additional TB deaths** to the discontinuation of USAID funding.

And sadly, this might just be the beginning.

Layoffs are anticipated in multiple U.N. agencies and programs, including at the [World Health Organization](#) and [UNAIDS](#), as the cuts leave [a gaping hole in their budgets](#) — which will no doubt have an impact on the assistance they’re providing in countries.

Leaked budget recommendations from the White House’s Office of Management and Budget also propose **further cuts to global health funding under the State Department,**

as well as cuts to programs in the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#) that could have global implications.

Read: [How Trump's first 100 days have meant chaos for US foreign aid](#)