

GAO Questions for Meeting with USAID Alumni Association Board Members

Background

Congress has asked GAO to assess any savings or costs incurred by the U.S. government as a result of the pause and termination of foreign assistance awards and the workforce reductions completed since January 2025. This includes the reviews conducted following Executive Orders 14150, 14169, and 14210,¹ among others.

GAO's Research Questions:

1. To what extent has the pause and resumption of foreign assistance awards* since January 2025 resulted in any significant savings or costs to the U.S. government?
2. To what extent has the termination of foreign assistance awards since January 2025 resulted in any significant savings or costs to the U.S. government?
3. What were the associated costs and savings resulting from workforce reductions at State and USAID from January 20, 2025, through December 31, 2025?

** For purposes of these questions, when using the term "awards" we are referring to contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, or any other type of funding agreement.*

This work was requested by Ranking Member Jeffrey A. Merkley of the Senate Committee on the Budget; Ranking Member Jeanne Shaheen of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Ranking Member Gregory W. Meeks of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs; and Ranking Member Sara Jacobs of the Africa Subcommittee.

Please note: The information from this meeting is for background and contextual purposes and may inform official requests or questions we pose to agency officials during our audits. We will not disclose your name(s) in our publicly issued report. If asked by agency officials, we will not share your name. However, we document every interview in a workpaper. While these workpapers are internal, should Congress request a document, GAO is obligated to provide it, although we will not include your name(s) in our engagement documentation. Additionally, documents in GAO records are subject to public disclosure regulations. If a document were the subject of a public disclosure request, GAO would determine whether the document is exempt from disclosure under those regulations.

Current Timeframes

- Trying to identify people who are willing to provide background information within the next month.
- Reporting timeframes = TBD. We are in the early design phase of our work and facing challenges accessing agency information, which is leading to early delays in our work.

¹Executive Order 14150, America First Policy Directive to the Secretary of State; Executive Order 14169, Reevaluating and Realigning United States Foreign Aid; and Executive Order 14210, Implementing the President's "Department of Government Efficiency" Workforce Optimization Initiative.

How the USAID Alumni Association Could Further Support Our Work

1. Help identify grants officers who may be willing to speak with us about the process for closing grants and cooperative agreements prior to January 2025 and how that process changed, if at all, after January 2025.
2. Help identifying any Human Capital and Talent Management officials who may be willing to speak with us about:
 - a. The systems used to track personnel data pertaining to positions, salaries, time in service, etc. for U.S. direct hires (foreign service and civil service) and locally employed staff, as well as data regarding PSCs and ISCs, if any such data was available to USAID.
 - b. The systems used to track final payments, including severance packages, annual leave payouts, etc. for U.S. direct hires (foreign service and civil service) and locally employed staff, as well as data regarding PSCs and ISCs, if any such data was available to USAID.
 - c. Any information about the types of data that may be available for part (a) and part (b) and any challenges we may face in collecting and analyzing such data.
3. Help identifying program officers who may be willing to discuss the following topics or have suggested contacts who could discuss the following topics (with two related GAO teams):
 - a. Humanitarian, Economic Development, and Global Health Programs:
 - i. How, if at all, have the programs, locations, and mechanisms for implementing economic development, humanitarian, and global health assistance changed since 2024?
 - ii. How, if at all, have personnel changes affected the U.S. government's ability to implement these programs?
 - b. Diplomacy and Global Influence:
 - i. How, if at all, have changes in U.S. foreign assistance affected the U.S. government's ability to engage with foreign governments in key regions and maintain leadership in multilateral institutions?
 - ii. To what extent have China and Russia increased their foreign assistance and diplomatic engagement in countries where the U.S. has reduced its own foreign assistance and diplomatic engagement?

Questions

1. Are you aware of any associations or entities that may represent USAID award recipients (contractors/grantees) who may be able to provide aggregate information regarding USAID award recipients' costs resulting from the pause, resumption, and/or termination of awards?
2. Are there any additional resources that you recommend we contact for other USAID personnel perspectives on these topics?