

Key Points on USAID

February 7, 2025

Today's Key Messages

America's Adversaries Cheer On USAID's Demise

- Moscow Times Headline on February 6, 2025: [Russia Welcomes USAID Cuts, Calls Agency 'Machine for Interfering'](#)

Secretary Rubio Dismantles 94% of USAID's American Workforce

- On February 6th, the Agency announced that only 611 employees worldwide will remain at USAID as essential staff, out of a total of 10,000 current American staff. The remaining employees were placed on indefinite administrative leave, locked out of their email systems, and told not to come into work.
 - All but a small handful of Institutional Support and Personal Service Contractors—approximately 3,000 people—were “terminated.”
- The plan is clearly to pull a shell version of USAID under the Department of State, but the loss of expertise and almost the entire workforce through the expected reduction in force and termination of contract employees will make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to bring the Agency's capabilities back online in any capacity in the near future.
 - Many programs, if not formally cut through the foreign assistance review, will effectively be shut down due to staffing shortages at USAID and implementing partners who will close if they have not already, as a result of this action.
- The loss of USAID Washington and Mission staff will severely hinder all remaining humanitarian and development programs, including life-saving activities like PEPFAR and critical assistance approved under Secretary Rubio's waiver, issued on January 28, 2025.
 - Congressionally required oversight of these programs funded by American taxpayers will also come to a halt without USAID staff present to conduct it.
- **The dismantling of USAID will cost the American taxpayer:** One estimate puts the sunk cost of the abandonment of USAID facilities and forced repatriation of all American USAID Foreign Service Officers and their families, who have been ordered to return to the U.S. within 30 days, **at almost \$1 billion.**

Foreign Assistance Stop Work Order Harms the U.S. Economy

- From farmers in Kansas to NGO workers in North Carolina, the Foreign Assistance Stop Work order is hurting American workers and the U.S. economy. **The loss of USAID means U.S. states will lose an estimated \$3.34b in direct economic benefit.**
- Implementing partners, which include NGOs and development companies based across 42 states in the United States - will be facing mass furloughs or layoffs, and some may even have to close their doors entirely in the coming days and weeks.

- This is estimated to **impact a total of 52,000 American jobs**, with 10,275 American jobs (USAID and partners) already being confirmed to be lost, furloughed, or on leave, as well as the imminent fear of unemployment and jobs lost for 15,100 people (non-American) globally.
- USAID provided **\$1 billion in contracts** to U.S. small businesses last year. The foreign assistance freeze is likely to have devastating impacts on these small businesses.
- American farmers supply over 40% of the food aid USAID delivers, and on average, the U.S. government purchases **\$2.1 billion in crops from American farmers each year**.
 - While a food assistance waiver was issued, payments have not been flowing to implementing partners and thus American farmers are not getting paid and food is rotting on shelves. The Department of State Director of Foreign Assistance, Peter Marocco, stated that he does not know why funding is not flowing to partners under the waivers; however, reports continue that funds are not being received.

Avian Flu Spreads Amid USAID Disease Surveillance Shutdown

- The H5N1 avian flu has spread across all 50 states, killing 156 million birds and even affecting dairy cattle in Nevada. The bird losses have driven egg prices to record highs, with some areas reporting over \$10 per dozen and retailers imposing purchase limits.
- If USAID staff were still allowed to do their jobs, they could help with critical actions they are experts in to stop the spread globally, as they have done with Ebola and other diseases, such as disease tracking, emergency health management, infection prevention, public communication, personal distribution, and eventual vaccine delivery. This work helps prevent infectious diseases from reaching the United States.
- Ongoing attacks on the agency's workforce and critical programs weaken the government's ability to fight this pandemic, putting all Americans at greater risk

Current Impact

USAID's Structure and People

- There is grave concern about the complete hollowing out of USAID staff and that this will mean USAID will cease to exist. The plan is clearly now to pull it under the Department of State, but the loss of expertise and the damage done will make it difficult to bring back online in any capacity in the near future.
- On February 4, the entire USAID direct hire workforce globally was notified that they are now on administrative leave indefinitely, and all "non-essential" Institutional Support and Personal Service Contractors—approximately 3,000 people—were "terminated."
- USAID has more than 13,000 total employees worldwide, including direct hires (foreign and civil service), locally employed foreign service national staff, and contractors. This includes:
 - More than 1,900 American Foreign Service Officers (FSOs), who will now need to return home with their families
 - More than 1,600 American civil service employees, who have all been placed on administrative leave

- More than 4,100 American contractors, most of whom were already furloughed, and now officially laid off
 - More than 5,000 locally employed foreign service national staff, who will now be out of work as Missions stop work and shutter
- USAID was founded by an executive order (EO) but was codified in statute by Congress and only Congress has the power to approve the modification/merger of USAID or its closure. This cannot be done unilaterally by the Executive Branch.

American Farming and Shipping

- Title II emergency food and nutrition assistance, which constitutes the bulk of USAID's food assistance, is currently suspended. This suspension will drive more people into famine conditions, and impact the American farmers who grow the food, as well as the U.S. ocean freighters that ship these commodities around the world.
- More than 475,000 metric tons of American food commodities—valued at more than **\$450 million**—are currently scheduled or in transit and at risk of being wasted. This food, grown by American farmers in the country's heartland, is enough to feed more than **36 million people** and includes corn and cornmeal, lentils, pinto beans, rice, sorghum, vegetable oil, wheat, and yellow split peas.
- In addition, more than 29,000 metric tons of food commodities—valued at nearly **\$39 million**—are sitting on the floor in USAID warehouses in Houston, Texas, unable to be loaded onto waiting US-flagged ships for transportation to hungry people abroad. Food is also waiting to be loaded at ports in Boston (MA), Chicago (IL), Lake Charles (LA), Miami (FL), Newark (NJ), New York (NY), Norfolk (VA), and Savannah (GA). A continued pause will hurt the American shipping industry which handles the majority of USAID food commodities.
- [Senator Moran](#) (R-KS) is right: This aid must be distributed immediately. The scale of this disruption underscores the far-reaching consequences of the funding pause on global food assistance efforts.

National Security

- USAID should be reformed to better align with an America First foreign policy agenda and adapt to a new era of strategic competition, but Elon Musk and Peter Marocco's actions are not doing this, they are robbing the United States of a critical soft power tool. Because many of those actions are sloppy, they are likely to end up costing U.S. taxpayers much more than an orderly reform process.
- In the absence of USAID leadership, vulnerable people will turn to others for help, not only China and Russia, but potentially violent extremist organizations.
- USAID food aid supports national security by maintaining a strong U.S.-flag merchant fleet, ensuring sealift capacity for military operations, and sustaining the domestic maritime industry.

American Democracy

- On February 6, [The New York Times](#) reported Musk and his team tried to gain access to the Treasury's payment system in order to freeze USAID payments. The report details

how career staff at the Treasury raised concerns about the legality of using the system to halt payments that had been authorized and certified by the agency.

- Personnel associated with DOGE eventually gained access to the sensitive payment system.
- Congress has lost control of the power of the purse and oversight of USAID through the actions of Elon Musk, DOGE, and the White House.

Humanitarian Assistance

- In Somalia, with the purging of USAID staff, there is more than \$400 million in USAID humanitarian funding that now lacks appropriate oversight, including for emergency food aid that is reaching over one million hungry people each month.
- In Bangladesh, food assistance for one million refugees is at a critical point, with full rations running out at the end of this month and a reduction of 50% for rations in March. By April, food assistance is likely to shut down if the freeze continues. That's mothers, fathers, and young children without food to thrive.
- In South Sudan, there is approximately \$200 million in emergency food aid (Title II) and \$100 million in Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) funding on the way or sitting in Mombasa, Kenya, to feed an estimated five million people, where 60 percent of the population is extremely food insecure. One in four children under five is suffering from severe acute malnutrition.

Health

- Cases of Ebola in Uganda are no longer being contained by American foreign aid and technical expertise. This disease can quickly spread to become another pandemic if USAID is not present. USAID was responsible for containing the 2013-2015 Ebola outbreak, preventing a global pandemic from occurring, and saving millions of lives.
- The freeze on USAID's global health programs will shut down malaria spraying in multiple countries leaving close to 6 million people vulnerable to this disease.
- Bird flu, which has already killed an American in Louisiana, is no longer being monitored in 49 countries as a result of the stop work order. Without USAID, efforts to prevent this virus from mutating into a more dangerous strain will be significantly weakened.
- Without USAID's health and nutrition assistance, approximately 4.5 million children under the age of five are facing acute malnutrition in the Democratic Republic of Congo, a country facing growing conflict and instability.