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Congress must insist critical health and development programs restart

Piecemeal reversals, no funding, and no clear answers from the administration

The Trump Administration's destruction of foreign aid has been catastrophic for communities around the world. The administration has **terminated more than 80 percent of all USAID programs**. This includes work that had gotten lifesaving and humanitarian waivers: huge swathes of programs for tuberculosis (TB), nutrition, HIV, and much more.

Congress must intervene. These actions fly in the face of decades of bipartisan consensus, congressional mandate, court order, and basic human decency.

In the last two weeks, the administration has reversed some of their initial terminations, thanks to public outcry and congressional action. But many more programs remain stopped. And even the programs allowed to continue haven't been paid for months. Meanwhile, most of the staff who could restart work, process payments, or provide clear direction from the administration have been laid off.

Lifesaving medicines are locked in warehouses. Health workers cannot care for people in need. Nutrition, TB treatment, education, safe childbirth — all are in disarray.

Reviewing how and what the U.S. funds is a valid exercise. This review could have been a chance to strengthen the impact of health, education, and poverty programs. But instead it has demolished them. Congress holds the authority and responsibility to intervene. Bipartisan leadership created these programs and needs to defend them now.

Congress must protect the future of U.S. foreign aid:

- ✓ **Demand the State Department reinstate terminated programs** — especially critical humanitarian and development programs: TB, HIV, malaria, nutrition, maternal and child survival, education, and more.
- ✓ **Reassert congressional authority over foreign aid** — Appropriations Committee leadership must exercise their constitutional authority over spending.

A growing death toll. Congress must intervene.

A staggering 238,000 newborns weren't breathing at birth but were then resuscitated thanks to USAID supported programs in 2023 alone. That's more than 650 every day.

The same year, thanks to USAID funding, more than 113,000 people sick with antibiotic-resistant TB — a deadly, airborne disease — started lifesaving treatment. Nearly 30 million children under 5 received quality nutrition. Twelve million women had access to a safe facility for childbirth. Over 40 million kids accessed quality basic education.

All of this is at risk moving forward.

A real reform process would treat the type of outcomes listed above as the *minimum* for U.S. foreign assistance. Instead, the administration is making them all but impossible.

What does this look like in real terms? Read more:

[***Tuberculosis Resurgent as Trump Funding Cut Disrupts Treatment Globally***](#)

The United States was the major funder of tuberculosis programs. Now hundreds of thousands of sick patients can't find tests or drugs, and risk spreading the disease.

For decades, members of Congress from both parties have rallied behind this work to make it possible. Across the aisle, Congress agreed: wherever a baby is born, they deserve access to care in the earliest, most dangerous moments of their lives. They agreed education was a path to a brighter future. They agreed everyone deserved clean drinking water. They agreed letting people die of preventable, curable diseases was unacceptable.

Congress has exercised its power of the purse to fund USAID on a bipartisan basis for years. They need to stand up for these transformational programs.

In his confirmation hearing, Secretary Rubio said he would ask three questions about our foreign aid. "Does it make America safer? Does it make America stronger? Does it make America more prosperous?" Haphazard freezes and terminations takes us backwards on all three of these points. The impact will be irreparable.

Congress must act.