

# **Social Listening Analysis of the US Funding Freeze Impact on Africa: Insights from Nigeria and Kenya**


April 8, 2025



# Introduction

- Following the announcement of the cut of the United States Official Development Assistance (ODA) and Foreign Aid by the President, Donald Trump on January 20th, 2025, various public discussions has been going on this discourse
- In an attempt to capture the conversations around the funding freeze, Nigeria Health Watch carried out an online social listening from January 1st to April 4th, 2025
- This social listening analysis examines public discourse surrounding the US foreign aid suspension in Africa, focusing on the impact and response from Nigeria and Kenya alongside other Western, Eastern, and Southern African nations
- Using social listening insights from digital platforms, key discussions, and emerging trends surrounding the funding halt varied across the reporting periods
- This presentation provides an overview of the social listening findings and how various stakeholders are responding to and being affected by the policy shift

## Objectives

-  Analyse public perceptions to U.S. aid suspension
-  Identify emerging themes shaping the conversation around the US funding freeze
-  Assess concerns related to healthcare access and delivery
-  Highlight key influencers and narratives in digital discourse, including responses

# Overview of the analysis of the social listening findings on US funding freeze

## Public Concerns Over Funding Freeze Impact

Amidst the funding freeze, significant public anxiety surrounding healthcare service disruptions is evident

## Shifts in Public Sentiments Over Time

Initial fears of healthcare crises have evolved into broader discussions on financial independence for African nations

## Role of Social Media in Shaping Narratives

Digital platforms have amplified public discourse, influencing perceptions and responses regarding the funding suspension

## Key Stakeholders and Their Reactions

Various stakeholders, from healthcare workers to policymakers, have expressed deep concerns about the funding impacts

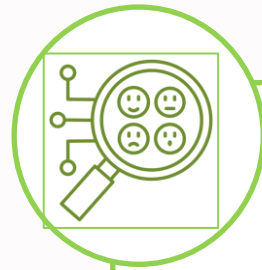
*“People don't know what is about to come forth. Our health system will be [shaken](#). All gains will be lost.”*

*The W.H.O. is facing a \$2.5 billion budget deficit, worsened by the U.S. freezing foreign aid and skipping \$260 million in dues, leaving the agency with a \$600 million shortfall this year. [Director-General Tedros](#)*

*African countries should start [depending](#) on their own not relying on foreign aid all the time”*

*“It is crucial that we position ourselves at the forefront of any discussions on pandemics and proactively develop strategies to ensure we are fully prepared for such challenges”. [Kenyatta emphasised](#)*

# Public sentiment trends on healthcare financing in Africa



## Sentiment Analysis Overview

A comprehensive analysis reveals an overall negative sentiment dominating discussions around healthcare funding



## Positive and Negative Sentiments Identified

While most sentiments are negative, a thread of optimism about self-reliance is also emerging among leaders



## Impact of Healthcare Crises on Public Opinion

Concerns about humanitarian consequences of the funding freeze have intensified public discussions on healthcare



## Emerging Themes from Social Listening Efforts

Key themes such as aid dependency and self-reliance have surfaced prominently in public dialogues

# Thematic evolution of public discourse (January – April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025)

- In **January**, the early rising of the conversation surrounding the official development assistance (ODA) and foreign aid.
- The overall sentiment is largely negative and concerned, particularly regarding aid suspensions

*[Africa](#) is facing an unprecedented convergence of crises that threaten to undo decades of progress in health security. The number of health emergencies in Africa surged from 153 outbreaks in 2022-2023 to 242 in 2024. “The repercussions are dire”*

- Africa CDC

*This is not just an African crisis—it is a global crisis in the making” says [Africa CDC](#).*

*It could also lead to more than 10 million additional cases of HIV and three million HIV-related deaths, he added, noting this was “more than triple the number of deaths last year.*

- WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

- By **February and March**, the dominant sentiment reflected a strong undercurrent of determination and a push for [self-reliance](#) was evident in the discourse from African leaders and commentators,
- The [immediate impact](#) of the aid freeze fueled significant worry about humanitarian crises and instability

However, the initial shock, some African leaders adopt a neutral and analytical tone, framing aid changes as catalysts for self-reliance

*“It is crucial that we position ourselves at the forefront of any discussions on pandemics and proactively develop strategies to ensure we are fully prepared for such challenges”*

Former Kenya president, [Kenyatta emphasised](#)

*“Nigeria, Kenya, Lesotho, South Sudan, Burkina Faso and Mali - as well as Haiti and Ukraine - would run out of live-saving anti-retroviral (ARV) medicines in the coming months”*

- WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

By the end of March and beginning of **April**, the dominant discussions were calls for health system reform, reduced donor dependence

*“Health needs a multi sectoral approach, it works on partnerships, there are certain things you shouldn't do alone as a country. Going through resource pulling from many partners and stakeholders is a recommended approach to financing health activities”*

- General Secretary of the Health Sector Reforms Coalition, Ndeayo Iwot

*“We are a capable country, and we are determined to own up to that responsibility. If others step in and support us, we appreciate it but we are not begging,” said Nigeria’s health and social welfare minister”, [Muhammad Ali Pate](#).*

# Impact of the US funding freeze on Africa

- The [U.S. foreign aid freeze](#) has profoundly affected Africa, a continent where numerous countries rely heavily on such assistance for health, education, and infrastructure development.
- The abrupt suspension of aid has resulted in the following impact among many others

## Health System Impacts

- **Health programs dismantled:** Major initiatives for HIV/AIDS, malaria, and TB have paused operations, risking disease resurgence
- **HIV patients vulnerable:** Over 25 million people living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa—67% of global cases—now face treatment interruptions.
- **WHO warning:** “Immediate stop to services for HIV treatment, testing and prevention in more than 50 countries,” according to Dr. Tedros, could result in widespread mortality and setbacks in epidemic control.

## Threats to Social Services

- **Nutrition disruption:** 14 million children expected to lose access to nutrition services, heightening risks of malnutrition and child mortality. *At least 14 million children are expected to face disruptions to nutrition support and services because of recent and expected global funding cuts, leaving them at heightened risk of severe malnutrition and death*
- **Vulnerable groups suffer most:** Internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees—already in precarious conditions—face increasing mortality due to reduced access to food, shelter, and medical care
- **Aid dependency slashed:** U.S. support, previously covering 26% of humanitarian needs, has dropped to just 6%, leaving a massive gap.

## Economic Consequences

- **Growth contraction:** Sub-Saharan Africa’s economy is projected to be \$4.6 billion smaller by 2030 as a direct result of aid withdrawal.
- **Poverty spike:** An estimated 19 million additional people will fall into extreme poverty across the continent, exacerbating inequality.
- **Most affected countries:** DRC, Ethiopia, Somalia, Niger, Uganda, and Tanzania—due to their high populations and aid reliance—face the steepest economic and social declines

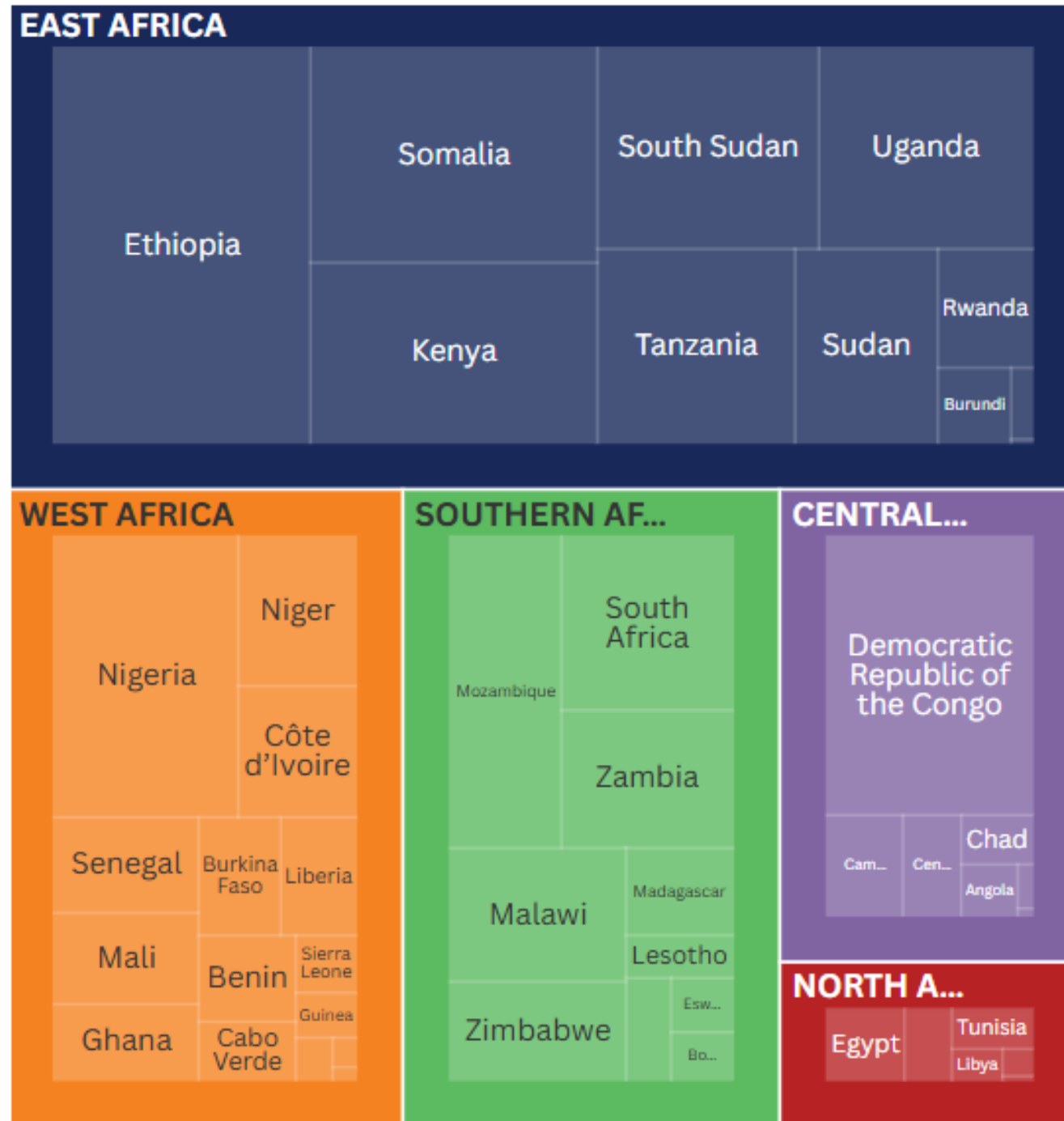
## Domino Effect Among Donors

- **Funding chain reaction:** Following the U.S. lead, other major donors—including Germany (2nd largest ODA provider), France, and the UK—have scaled back contributions.
- **Collapse of multilateral programs:** The sudden vacuum in funding has jeopardized collaborative donor-funded programs in healthcare, education, and governance..
- **Trust and stability at risk:** This withdrawal undermines long-term trust in international partnerships and may lead to political and social instability in affected regions.

# Impact of the US funding freeze on Africa: Highlights of other Africa regions

## East Africa received more than a 40% of US aid flowing to Africa in 2023

Amount of official development assistance (ODA) received from the US, measured in millions of US dollars



Source: [OECD](#)



The amount of official development assistant (ODA) received from the US by each African countries

Ethiopia was the largest recipient of USAID funds, receiving more than US\$1.7 bn, other large recipient of the US funds include the listed countries (in the attached image)\_ each receiving more than US\$400 million in 2023

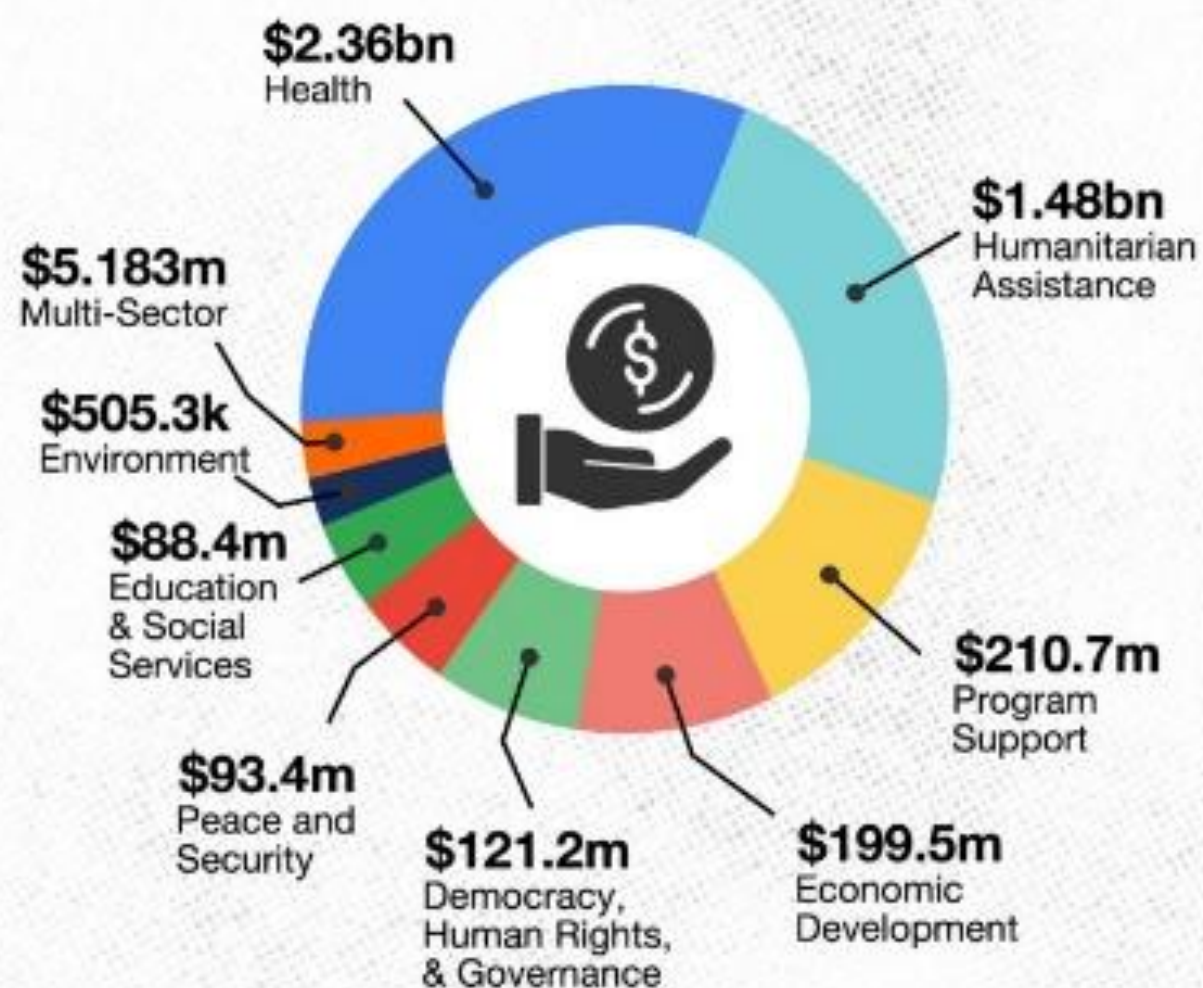
- **Security and Economic Setback:** In North Africa, countries like Egypt and Libya have experienced disrupted counterterrorism efforts and halted economic reforms previously backed by U.S. aid
- The suspension may intensify migration flows to Europe, worsening regional instability and social-political tensions
- Countries in the Eastern part of Africa face severe **healthcare system breakdown**; severe disruptions in HIV and TB services, including ART, PrEP, and PEP, particularly in PEPFAR-funded clinics
- **Humanitarian Fallout:** Ethiopia's refugee support, previously backed by \$240M in U.S. aid, is collapsing, with over 1 million refugees at risk. However, [Ethiopia's](#) parliament introduced a new tax for all workers as part of measures to fill the financial gap left by the USAID funding pause.
- **Maternal Health Collapse:** Disrupted early infant diagnosis and nutritional programs place HIV-positive mothers and children in life-threatening situations
- **Economic Disruption:** In Southern Africa: South Africa faces broader industrial slowdowns due to similar tariff hikes, risking major job losses
- **HIV Response in Crisis:** Namibia is struggling to maintain HIV programs reliant on U.S. aid. Emergency waivers issued funds without disbursement, causing cash-flow issues and legal risks for NGOs under labor law compliance

- **West Africa**
- With over \$600M U.S. health aid in 2023, Nigeria was highly dependent; the country has diverted \$200M internally to cover the gap, straining other services

# Impact of the US funding freeze on Nigeria

## What is USAID Funding in Nigeria?

Over the five-year period, 51.73% of USAID spending in Nigeria was allocated to health, while humanitarian assistance accounted for 32.58% of total funds.



Source: ForeignAssistance.gov, Civic Hive Analysis

In 2023 alone, the U.S. provided over **\$600 million** to Nigeria's health sector—representing **21%** of the national health budget, with a primary focus on targeted malaria prevention, HIV/AIDS treatment, and vaccine distribution, forming the backbone of Nigeria's public health initiatives

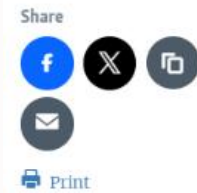
- In the last 5 years, over 51.73% of USAID funds during this period were invested in healthcare through the Global Health Supply Chain, and about 32.58% of funds went to humanitarian efforts, supporting displaced populations and crisis affected regions.
- Additionally, this bolstered Nigeria's medical logistics, ensured steady availability of medicines, and enhanced maternal and infectious disease response systems
- However, since the sudden freeze in aids, vital services such as HIV testing, antimalarial campaigns, and maternal care are now under threat due to funding gaps
- Many Nigerian community health organizations reliant on U.S. funding face operational paralysis, affecting service delivery in remote areas
- Approximately 28,000 health workers—funded by U.S. aid—are now out of work, triggering a crisis for thousands of families and rural health networks
- Volunteer and ad hoc staff essential to community outreach programs have lost stipends, affecting disease surveillance and immunization drives

# Impact of the US funding freeze on Nigeria: How the Nigerian Government is responding



## Nigeria announces measures to soften impact of USAID programs' suspension

February 04, 2025 4:07 PM  
By Timothy Obiezu



FILE - Workers sit in a queue to test for HIV/AIDS, in Lagos, Nigeria, May 1, 2023. USAID funding for Nigeria, which was recently suspended by President Donald Trump's administration, plays a pivotal role in the country's HIV/AIDS treatment programs.

ABUJA, NIGERIA — Nigerian officials have launched a committee to develop a transition and sustainability plan for USAID-funded health programs following U.S. President Donald Trump's 90-day halt of most foreign aid. The multi-ministerial committee aims to secure new financial support for critical health programs.

Nigeria's health minister said the committee—comprising officials from the ministries of finance, health, and environment—intends to ensure that patients receiving treatment for HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria do not experience setbacks amid the uncertainty over U.S. foreign policy.

Shortly after taking office two weeks ago, U.S. President Donald Trump ordered a 90-day pause on U.S. foreign aid. But days later, he approved a temporary waiver for life-saving humanitarian assistance, covering medicine, medical services, food, and shelter.

Despite the exemption, concerns remain over the future of U.S. funding for global health programs.

### Related



US foreign aid programs face major restructuring under Trump



US says life-saving HIV treatment can continue during aid pause



State Department says Trump froze foreign aid to 'root out waste'



Trump administration freezes foreign development assistance

- Domestic reallocation: In response to the expected shortfall, Nigeria approved \$200 million in February 2025 to sustain critical health functions
- Long-term reform plan: The Federal Executive Council greenlit a \$1 billion healthcare sector reform and an extra \$3.2 million for HIV treatments covering four months

- Policy shift: Officials advocate for a multi-sectoral, partner-driven approach to health financing
- *“Health needs a multi sectoral approach, it works on partnerships, there are certain things you shouldn't do alone as a country. Going through resource pulling from many partners and stakeholders is a recommended approach to financing health activities”*. Ndeayo Iwot

- New tone of resilience: Health Minister Muhammad Ali Pate emphasized national responsibility, stating Nigeria is not begging but prepared to lead its health transformation
- *“We are a capable country, and we are determined to own up to that responsibility. If others step in and support us, we appreciate it but we are not begging,”* \_ [Muhammad Ali Pate](#).

- Coalition voice: Health Sector Reforms Coalition supports leveraging pooled funding from local and international partners to build a self-reliant health system
- *[Health needs](#) a multi sectoral approach, it works on partnerships, there are certain things you shouldn't do alone as a country. Going through resource pulling from many partners and stakeholders is a recommended approach to financing health activities”*\_ Ndeayo Iwot

# Impact of the US funding freeze on Kenya

## USAID Suspension Sparks Crisis in Kenya

by 254 — February 6, 2025 in Africa, Health, Lifestyle, North America, World

395 25 0

The sudden suspension of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) has thrown hundreds of thousands of Kenyans into uncertainty, disrupting essential healthcare, education, and economic programs. For many, USAID-funded projects were lifelines, and the abrupt halt has left approximately 40,000 employees—both direct and indirect—facing an uncertain future, alongside countless others reliant on contractor engagements.

Numerous NGOs dependent on USAID funding now grapple with mass job losses and the devastating impact on healthcare services. Programs supporting maternal health, HIV/AIDS treatment, and primary healthcare access are at risk, posing a major setback to Kenya's health infrastructure. Among the affected initiatives is the USAID Private Sector Engagement program, designed to expand healthcare access through private sector partnerships. Originally set to run from 2023 to 2028, its termination deals a severe blow to Kenya's health system.

- Kenya ranks 7th globally among the most affected countries, receiving \$1.7 billion in U.S. aid over the past three years
- Funding concentrated on HIV/AIDS programs, economic development, and agriculture, making U.S. aid essential to both public health and livelihoods

- As of January 24, 2025, Kenya had secured \$359.2 million in humanitarian aid for the year, a decrease from the \$440.5 million received in 2023
- The U.S. government was the largest donor, contributing \$207 million, or 58.8% of total donations
- The suspension of this aid poses significant challenges to ongoing humanitarian efforts, particularly in addressing food security amid severe drought conditions described as the worst in 40 years

- Critical health programs for HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria are suffering. Facilities like Nyumbani Children's Home, reliant on PEPFAR, report severe shortages of antiretrovirals
- Kenya's Ministry of Health warns ARV supplies are dwindling; WHO fears a reversal of two decades of HIV progress, risking millions of lives

- Around 40,000 workers, both direct and indirect, connected to USAID-funded programs now face unemployment
- The freeze disrupts food security interventions during the worst drought in 40 years, escalating hunger risks across arid regions
- Organizations supporting maternal health and basic care are scaling down or shutting operations due to halted cash flows

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HEALTH

## US aid freeze puts HIV-positive orphans in Kenya at risk as medical supplies dwindle

Nyumbani Children's Home is the reason Evans is still alive. But political decisions made thousands of miles (kilometers) away might spell the end of his short life. Nyumbani provides him and around 100 other children with antiretroviral medication, which they have been receiving from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Kenyan government.

U.S. President Donald Trump's recent executive order to freeze USAID's funding means Nyumbani's access to life-saving antiretroviral drugs, which stop the HIV virus from replicating in the body, may end soon.

Trump's order seeks to review almost all U.S. foreign aid for 90 days and his administration has moved to shut down USAID. The effects are beginning to set in, with thousands of people losing their jobs globally and humanitarian programs around the world disrupted.

# Impact of the US funding freeze on Kenya: How the Kenyan Government is responding

## CS Barasa Details Changes Being Made to Health Programmes After Trump Pauses USAID

Feb 05, 2025 at 03:22 PM • By Washington Mito



File image of Health CS Deborah Barasa Mulongo addressing the media on February 5, 2024.

- Policy redirection: Health CS Deborah Barasa announced resource reallocation to safeguard key services like HIV drug access
- "We are reallocating resources to ensure that critical health services continue uninterrupted." This includes prioritizing the distribution of antiretroviral drugs and other essential medications to prevent shortages
- Emphasis on local system strengthening and reducing dependency on external aid to ensure long-term health service continuity.
- "We must build resilient health systems that are less dependent on external aid." This approach aims to enhance the sustainability of health services in the face of funding uncertainties
- **Advocacy for Financial Independence:** Former President Uhuru Kenyatta has called on African nations to pursue financial independence to reduce reliance on foreign aid
- *"It is imperative for African countries to develop self-sustaining economic strategies."*
- These statements reflect Kenya's proactive stance in addressing the challenges posed by the suspension of USAID programs, focusing on resource reallocation and advocating for greater economic self-reliance
- Coalition voice: Health Sector Reforms Coalition supports leveraging pooled funding from local and international partners to build a self-reliant health system
- *Health needs a multi sectoral approach, it works on partnerships, there are certain things you shouldn't do alone as a country. Going through resource pulling from many partners and stakeholders is a recommended approach to financing health activities"*\_ Ndeayo Iwot

1

**Exploring alternative funding models for African health systems**



## **Examining Local Financing Solutions**

Investigating sustainable local funding options that can enhance healthcare system resilience in Africa



## **Innovative Financing Mechanism**

Exploring creative financial instruments like social impact bonds that can mobilize resources for health initiatives

2

## Domestic resource mobilisation strategies for sustainability



### Strengthening Taxation Systems

Discussing the importance of enhancing local taxation frameworks to generate revenue for healthcare funding.



### Engaging Local Communities

Encouraging community involvement in funding initiatives to foster ownership and investment in health outcomes.



### Enhancing Government Budget Allocations

Analyzing strategies for increasing governmental commitment to allocate more budgetary resources towards healthcare.

### Innovative partnerships with private sectors for healthcare funding

#### **Leveraging Corporate Social Responsibility**

Exploring how private companies can invest in health services through their corporate social responsibility initiatives.

#### **Collaborations with Philanthropic Organizations**

Identifying potential collaborations with philanthropic bodies to enhance funding for local health projects.

#### **Health Tech Partnerships**

Investigating partnerships with health tech companies to innovate and finance health solutions effectively.

#### **Strengthening Initiatives that Promotes Private Sector Engagement**

Discussing capacity-building initiatives that equip local businesses to engage meaningfully in healthcare funding.



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